

symptoms is more easily explained, and the epidemics in which the pneumonic form was most frequently seen were true typhus, less frequently complicated with lesions of the brain.

SIMPLE APPARATUS FOR THE TREATMENT OF FRACTURES.
CASE—FRACTURE OF THE LEG IN AN EPILEPTIC.

[Read before the Norfolk District Medical Society, Nov. 14th, 1866, by WILLIAM H. CAMPBELL, M.D., of Roxbury.]

THE value of any useful invention is always enhanced by its simplicity, and yet further increased by its cheapness and the facility with which it can be obtained.

In the surgical branch of our profession, there is a constant stream of new methods and of new kinds of apparatus for the treatment of disease or injury. Many of these are very useful, but nearly all are expensive and require the skill of a practical mechanic to prepare them. In the treatment of fractures this is especially true. Most kinds of apparatus are so complicated and costly, that they are not available in private practice, except to a very limited extent, as it would require a small fortune to set up in business a practitioner who aspired to have the half of a required outfit.

Some of these disadvantages have been obviated (at least for the country practitioner) by such contrivances as the "fracture-bench," made use of and described some time ago by a member of this Society, and which recommends itself at a glance to any practical man at all acquainted with the subject (see *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, Feb. 13th, 1862, p. 37), and the simple apparatus for fracture of the thigh (*Ibid.*, Sept. 19th, 1861, p. 129) used and described by another member.

The object of the present paper is to call attention to a splint which I have tried and found to be all that can be desired—being cheap, easily obtained, very light, sufficiently strong for all practical purposes, and readily adjusted to fractures in almost any situation; and, further, it can be prepared on the spot by the surgeon himself, from materials which may be found in almost every house. It consists of a splint made from ordinary pasteboard (binders' board is better, but the fragments of an old pasteboard box will answer for most purposes), strengthened by a strap of hoop-iron.

The board should be cut to a suitable shape and the iron band

tion, resulting in the Missouri Compromise in 1821, and parties were so nearly equal that no election of President was made in 1824, and the choice devolved upon the House of Representatives. In 1846, the war with Mexico commenced and continued two years. In 1861 was the commencement of the late epidemic, synchronous with the late rebellion, though excitement existed previously in a slighter degree. In France, from 1836 to 1848, political excitement existed, which ceased only after Louis Napoleon became Emperor. Later, at Dantzic and other German cities, where the disease has prevailed, there has been the Schleswig-Holstein question, which has aroused the people.

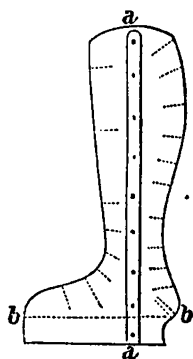
Thus, we see that, during each of the great epidemics, there has existed one or more questions upon which the people thought much, having their sympathies and passions excited. Had this mental agitation any influence in causing the cerebro-spinal form of the complaint?

riveted to it, which is a very simple process, requiring no tools but a hammer and a punch or brad-awl to make the holes in the iron. The rivets (the head ends of common nails will answer) may be placed at intervals of two or three inches, or thereabout. After the iron is secured, the board may be wet or otherwise softened, and formed to the shape of the limb. It may then be padded with cotton, applied to the part, and secured by a bandage in the ordinary way. This makes a very neat, light, and exceedingly firm apparatus.

In illustration of its value, I will give the following case:—Louis A., æt. 16; epileptic; in poor circumstances; fell from a fence and fractured both bones of the right leg—the tibia at the middle, the fibula about two inches higher. The lower fragment of the tibia rode upon the upper in front, and nearly penetrated the skin.

As the fits occurred daily, it was necessary to put on apparatus that would be firm, and not easily displaced. I was somewhat at a loss how to proceed—not being content with anything in common use—when a professional friend showed me one made as above described, which recommended itself at once as being most suitable. So without hesitation I adopted it.

I took two pieces of stout pasteboard, cut in the form of the figure in the margin, and wide enough to nearly encompass the limb, leaving only a small space before and behind. To each of these



pieces I riveted strips of hoop-iron, running longitudinally, *a a*. The lower part of the board, and the iron below the dotted line *b b*, were turned up to a right angle with the leg part, to form the foot-piece, and the leg part so bent as to fit the swell of the leg, and to prevent pressure upon the malleoli.

Thus prepared, the boards were dampened and moulded in proper form, and the fragments being adjusted, the splints, well padded with cotton wadding, were applied and secured by a single headed roller bandage from the toes to a short distance above the knee. The apparatus seldom needed re-adjusting, but I examined it occasionally to see that no undue pressure was made on any part.

The patient continued to have the fits—sometimes two or three in a day—during the greater part of the treatment, but without disarranging the apparatus. He even fell out of bed on one occasion, and was put in again by the family, without injury to the leg. He rolled about the bed at will, and took any position he desired, the lightness of the splint not hindering such motions, while the foot-piece prevented any displacement laterally or downward.

The result in this case was indeed very satisfactory. Applied as now recommended, I believe this pasteboard and iron splint to be as good as the starch bandage or plaster of Paris, in cases where they

are applicable, and better in some instances; besides being suited to a greater number of cases on account of its greater lightness and strength; and, further, it is more readily obtained and more easily applied.

Another advantage is, that it can be adapted to fractures in almost any part, a little ingenuity on the part of the surgeon being all that is necessary. The material is always at hand—a piece of bandbox and an old hoop being usually at hand in almost every house. Even if we have to go to a shop for the material, it is inexpensive, which is of great moment in practice among the poor.

I do not claim originality in this matter—possibly it may have been often tried before—but I merely wish to call the attention of the profession to the subject as one well worth consideration.

DISLOCATION OF THE HUMERUS FROM A SINGULAR CAUSE.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

MESSRS. EDITORS,—I send you a brief item of a dislocation of the humerus from a singular cause.

J. P., middle aged, tall, very muscular, knocked the bung from a large cider cask. The cider, fermenting, poured out, and he, with his extended arm, attempted to stop it, but the expansive force of the liquid threw his arm upwards and outwards so suddenly, and with such violence, as to dislocate the head of the humerus downwards and inwards under the pectoral.

The dislocation was readily reduced without ether, the patient being a little faint.

Among all the causes of dislocation that have occurred in my experience this stands alone, and I thought it might amuse you, if not the readers of the JOURNAL. Yours, G. J. TOWNSEND.

South Natick, Nov. 16th, 1866.

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HASCHISCH CANDY.

It is well known that quite serious, sometimes fatal effects are caused by eating confectionery which is colored by poisonous quantities of mineral salts, and analyses have frequently proved that the brilliant reds, greens and yellows, which are so attractive to children, are often only sugared preparations of arsenic, lead, and other dangerous substances. These pigments are not used, however, we are sure, by confectioners of good standing, and although the coloring matters generally employed for such purposes would not add to the