

Having had occasion to go through the published French evidence bearing upon the cholera accession of last year, I find that practitioners in France have come to the conclusion that the diarrhoeal stage of cholera is the only one in which any treatment has much chance of success. French physicians do not regard that stage as premonitory, but as an integral phase of choleraic incidence.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. SCOFFERN, M.B. Lond.

Cambridge-terrace, Kensington-park, Aug. 1866.

A VISIT TO THE FRANKFORT MILITARY HOSPITALS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Happening to pass through this city while on a short holiday tour, I determined to visit the Prussian military hospitals. It was necessary to procure permission for this purpose; this, however, was readily granted on application to the commandant of the town, who provided me with a *passir schein* to all the hospitals. There are three at present occupied by the wounded troops.

I went in the first instance to the Waisenhaus (orphan asylum), a large building in temporary use as an hospital. Three days' notice had sufficed to convert it into a military hospital complete in all its arrangements. I was kindly shown over the wards by Dr. Heinrich Schmitz, the resident surgeon in charge. He, with several other civilian practitioners, has devoted himself voluntarily to this service, and, as may be supposed, uncommon opportunities for observation and practice are afforded to these gentlemen.

The most remarkable of the cases were pointed out, and in many instances the various wounds were undressed. Prussians, Austrians, Hessians, and Bavarians were lying side by side in the wards, and the greater number of them had received their wounds in the battle of Aschaffenburg. Most of the injuries appeared to be in the limbs, and resulted from rifle bullets. The wounds looked very healthy, and, being mostly of about five weeks' duration, were in a granulating condition. Dr. Schmitz informed me that all the wounds left to themselves had done well, but that those cases which had required interference, or which had become the subject of operation, had almost invariably been unfavourable. This was the more remarkable in that there was a total absence of erysipelas. It was the practice to inject the sinuses in the track of the balls with a weak nitric acid lotion; and cold water dressing, with abundance of charpie, was the common application to the granulating wounds. The worst cases were those resulting from cannon balls or portions of shell, involving loss of integument and muscular structure; exhausting discharges and abscesses in neighbouring parts caused them to assume a grave character. Cases of excision of the head of the humerus and of the elbow were numerous, and, as Dr. Schmitz informed me, conservative surgery had been diligently practised throughout the campaign. One case, said to be of rare occurrence in military surgery, was shown to me—viz., a wound of the glans penis. A portion of the upper surface had been carried away, and no further injury sustained about the genitals. The man, a Prussian infantry soldier, had, however, a second wound from a rifle ball in the right shoulder.

The majority of cases in this hospital were doing well; many had capital appetites, and were able to enjoy the cigars, with which they were amply provided. There appeared to be full supplies of comforts of all kinds, and every want received attention. The Prussians were certainly the most cheerful patients, while the Austrians appeared somewhat depressed and sullen.

In some of the wards were ladies occupied in feeding the more helpless cases. Free permission is accorded to all interested in the sick to visit them and convey such comforts as are allowed by the medical staff.

I next visited the garrison hospital, a small building, but now, by the addition of several tents, containing about two hundred beds. These tents were about sixty feet in length by twenty in width, and contained from fourteen to twenty beds. Here were cases of a more serious nature than in the Waisenhaus, and amongst them I observed a number suffering from typhus fever. Some of the latter appeared very prostrate. Dr. Kirchheim, the resident surgeon, told me there had been no deaths from the disease, and he attributed the good re-

coveries to the abundant supply of fresh air which was secured by the tent system. The nursing here appeared to be most careful; numerous Sisters of Charity were engaged upon this work, and their tender efforts seemed to be very gratefully appreciated by the men. Two visits were paid daily by the staff, at eleven A.M. and five P.M. I saw no cases of cholera in the hospitals, though I was told that the disease was prevalent in the town.

I left with the impression that the sick were well cared for, and that in every respect the greatest credit was due to the Prussian authorities for their admirable and comprehensive arrangements.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

Frankfort, August 29th, 1866.

D. D.

DR. GREENHALGH'S CASE OF CÆSAREAN OPERATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The multiplied instances of failure of the Cæsarean operation in this country cannot fail to attract the attention of medical men. Whether this be due to the magnitude of the operation itself or the circumstances under which it is performed or otherwise is not for me to define. There is evidently a missing link, which careful obstetric operators will one day supply for the better guidance of the operation and its subsequent treatment.

The phases, symptoms, and condition of the patients appear to me to run almost identical in every case. On reading Dr. Hall's letter in your last impression on the above operation, I was led to refer to a case upon which I operated in 1862, and published in THE LANCET, dated November 1st. I extract the following:—

"I performed the operation at one o'clock on Friday in the usual manner, in a temperature of 76°. There was little hæmorrhage, and she bore the operation with great fortitude, and at its completion expressed herself greatly relieved. At two her pulse was 134, and weak; there was a little oozing through the vagina, and she complained of pain. I gave her two grains of solid opium, which relieved her. At four the abdomen was considerably swollen, but not tender. She had vomited twice since my last visit. At six she seemed better, and retained everything on her stomach; had passed urine several times. At eight the abdomen was very tympanitic, and there was great pain across the chest; respiration hurried; tongue very dry; the pulse had mounted to 141; no sickness; slept well, and expressed herself better. From this time she went on satisfactorily until Sunday morning, when rigors and vomiting set in, pulse rising to 144, respiration 40, breathing laboured, face flushed, and wandered a good deal. I visited her at eleven, and there was a decided improvement. Soon after I left she desired to be raised in bed, in accomplishing which she sank instantly."

The immediate cause of death in this case was clearly failure of the heart's action, produced by raising her from the horizontal to the recumbent posture, although pyæmia existed.

The close analogy between this and Dr. Greenhalgh's case must form my apology for troubling you with these remarks.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

Old Kent-road, Sept. 4th, 1866.

D. JOHNSON, M.D.

EXTRACTION OF STONE FROM THE FEMALE BLADDER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having noticed the very plain and admirable remarks of Dr. G. M. Humphry in THE LANCET of July 30th, 1864, for the extraction of stone in the female, I determined to adopt his *modus operandi* whenever an occasion offered.

An opportunity lately presented itself, of which I send you a report for insertion in THE LANCET, and which will add one more to the long list of successful cases treated upon Dr. Humphry's plan.

Mrs. C—, between fifty and sixty years of age, has complained for the last two years of sharp pain in the lower part of the left side, and lately of an acute pain in the bladder, accompanied with fetid and ammoniacal urine; her distressing condition thus rendering her life miserable. She desired my assistance, and upon examining the bladder and finding a stone, I proceeded to operate in the following manner:—

At nine P.M. I inserted five catgut bougies of about four inches in length, along the urethra into the bladder; at ten P.M., three more; at twelve A.M., four more; at four A.M., two more; at eight A.M. they had all fallen out, whereupon I then inserted fifteen bougies; at ten A.M., three more; at eleven A.M., four more, making in all twenty-two bougies. The passage then seemed to be well dilated, so I drove into Newbury to fetch my friend Mr. Bursey, who had undertaken to give the lady chloroform. I had to see some patients at home, so that it was well on in the afternoon when I again reached her house.

At five minutes to six P.M. Mr. Bursey began to give chloroform; at twenty-five minutes past that hour the stone was in my hand. It was of a lithic character, measured three inches and three-quarters in its longer circumference, and three inches in its shorter, and weighed half an ounce and twelve grains.

In three days the patient fully retained her water; and when I saw her in about a fortnight after the operation she was quite well.

The only manner in which I deviated from the rules laid down by Dr. Humphry was, in the not using the thread for tying the bougies together, and in discarding the bandages over the os externum and round the waist. I applied them at the outset, but found that the movements of the patient displaced the vertical bandage and thus disturbed the bougies, tending to draw them out of the urethra.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

F. E. RYOTT,

Newbury, Sept. 1866.

Surgeon to the Newbury Infirmary.

ON THE DISINFECTING METHOD OF TREATING CHOLERA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I notice in your number of August 11th, in a communication from Dr. W. C. Maclean, a proposal from Dr. Parkes to give a fair trial to the disinfecting method of treating cholera.

As I had long determined to adopt this treatment in any cases that might come under my care, deeming it to be the only rational method, I think it my duty to request a small space in your journal for the insertion of my views upon the matter. Starting from the known fact that the choleraic poison in the discharges becomes inert when attacked by disinfectants, it seems to me of the utmost importance that the same principle of treatment should be applied internally. The indications are to meet this poison as far as possible throughout the system—in the lungs, in the stomach and bowels—by agents which may be taken largely, while at the same time no injury shall accrue through their action to the system. With this view I propose to administer incessantly large doses of animal charcoal and other innocuous disinfectants, and to impregnate the air with chlorinated and ozonised oxygen vapours.

The Great Fire of London banished the plague: this effect was due doubtless to the disinfecting qualities contained in the vapours arising from the smouldering wood. Is it not of importance that we should imitate this tremendous lesson, and make use of it to meet this fearful and insidious foe? and would it not be a good plan for all attendants upon cholera patients to take occasional doses of the charcoal, and keep a lozenge of the same continually in their mouths? for assuredly cholera is a communicable disease, and by a poison which can be destroyed by disinfectants.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

Camden-road, Sept. 5th, 1866.

ROBT. WESTLEY, M.D.

LIVERPOOL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

CHOLERA must still be my theme. A great increase has occurred in the number of deaths, no less than 225 having died last week, which, as compared with the number of deaths (146) in the preceding week, shows an increase of 79. It is widening in its area, 33 deaths from cholera having occurred in the out-townships, against 19 the week before; the focus of the greatest intensity remaining the same—viz., in Scotland Ward, where

122 out of the 225 deaths took place; 50 of these were in the Ashfield cholera-sheds, which are situated in this ward. The total number admitted to these sheds up to September 3rd has been 309; deaths, 159; cured, 124; leaving 26 under treatment. To the cholera wards of the Liverpool Workhouse, the total number admitted has been 224: 101 deaths, 91 discharged, 32 under treatment. In the town 123 deaths have occurred during the week of patients at their own homes from cholera. The deaths from diarrhoea have been 78. The arrangements seem now very complete in all parts of the borough, except Toxteth-park, for combating the disease. In the latter township the guardians are evidently waiting in the "good" old style for a more violent onslaught of the enemy before adopting sufficient preventive measures; fifteen deaths in the week in their district not being sufficient to alarm them. In the other parts of the town five cholera dispensaries have been opened, with a staff of seven medical officers to each, three of whom are on duty four hours each, and attend all cases brought to the dispensary. The other four are on duty eight hours each, and visit cases at their own homes. From 150 to 200 applications are attended to daily at each of these dispensaries. Of course the great majority of the applicants are suffering only from the premonitory symptoms. Besides these, there are the cholera hospitals, three in number, for the reception of all cases willing to be removed to them.

The result of the licensing session, to which I alluded last week, has been that the number of public-houses in the borough has been reduced by twenty-two; forty-one licences having been revoked, and only nineteen new ones granted.

September 4th, 1866.

Medical News.

APOTHECARIES' HALL.—The following gentleman passed his examination in the Science and Practice of Medicine, and received a certificate to practise, on Aug. 30th:—

Charles Read, Falmouth.

The following gentlemen also on the same day passed their first examination:—

Charles Henry Furnivall, Westminster Hospital; Alfred Kelly, King's College Hospital; Frank Henry Laking, St. George's Hospital.

THE Board of Guardians of the Strand Union have declined by a large majority the services of lady nurses.

THE Bishop of London has paid another visit to the various institutions in connexion with the outbreak of cholera at the east end of London.

FROM the report of the London Dwellings Society (Limited) it appears that their capital has increased to £24,800.

CHOLERA still continues its ravages in various parts of Bohemia.

THE guardians of the Greenwich Union have determined to allow the medical officer an assistant, and to provide the drugs, &c., instead of requiring them to be furnished by the house-surgeon.

THE Prussian army lost many of its men from cholera in Bohemia.

ACCORDING to recent accounts the cholera is rather on the increase at Genoa, and some apprehension is felt at Florence.

STATURE OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS.—Dr. Gould states that men born in America reach their maximum height at twenty-eight years of age, but that the age for maximum stature comes earliest in the States where the height is found to be the greatest.

No less than 1100 Prussian soldiers have died of cholera at Brünn in the course of the last two months.

FOUR wards have been opened at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Chatham, containing twenty beds, for the treatment of ophthalmic patients.

THE Empress of Hungary has left Pesth in consequence of the prevalence of cholera there.

THE Commissioners despatched to the lazarets and field hospitals by the Patriotic Help Association (Hilfsverein) of Vienna, have just published a long and interesting report.