

cles, was fully developed; in a third place, the transparent serous fluid had become opaque and milky; and in a fourth perfectly purulent; while in certain situations the softened cuticle had been rubbed off, and displayed the highly vascular surface of the cutis, from which a large quantity of irritating ichorous fluid was discharged.

I ordered him the local steam baths, and fomentations of warm water, which he used assiduously, and enveloped the hands, in the intervals of this treatment, in lint dipped in warm water and oiled silk,—the common water dressing; administering at the same time a tonic-aperient medicine to regulate the digestive functions.

New crops of impetiginous pustules, of small size, and few in number, appeared from time to time; the disease rapidly improved, and on the 20th of February he was quite cured.

Upper Charlotte-street, Fitzroy-square.

TREATMENT OF
DISEASE OF THE HIP-JOINT,
BY
SALIVATION WITH MERCURY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—The treatment of morbus coxæ by rapidly mercurialising the system, which originated with me, is not, it would seem, much known in England, although it has now been nearly six years before the profession, and has proved strikingly successful, not only in my hands, but in those of Lisfranc,* Carmichael,† Sir Philip Crampton, Dr. Bellingham, Professor Porter, and others. I trust, therefore, that you will give insertion to the inclosed letter, containing two cases, which are very well detailed, and which appear to me to be valuable in other respects. For example, it will be seen that in these cases the patients resumed, with impunity, their usual occupations in less than a fortnight after the commencement of the plan of treatment, and without either that confinement to the horizontal posture, or the use of sarsaparilla, for weeks, which I have hitherto thought absolutely necessary, but which much more extended observation can alone induce me to relinquish. Other circumstances, however, are observable in these cases, which call for some practical observations from me:—

In the first place, I do not give purgatives, in order that the combination of calomel and opium may more quickly affect the mouth.

Secondly, I do not apply leeches, or make use of cupping.

Thirdly, I do not apply blisters, or use any kind of counter-irritation, until pytalism has declared itself.

Fourthly, I confine the patient to the horizontal position, and give, daily, either a pint or half a pint of the compound infusion of sarsaparilla, for three weeks or more, according to the standing or intensity of the disease. I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient, humble servant,

JAMES O'BEIRNE, M.D., &c.

“TO JAMES O'BEIRNE, M.D., Surgeon-
Extraordinary to the Queen.

“DEAR SIR:—Two cases of morbus coxæ, in the first stage, having presented themselves, I adopted the treatment which originated with, and was first employed by, you with success, in the Richmond Surgical Hospital. I beg leave to forward to you a report of their history, and remarkably favourable issue, as a trifling mark of my respect and esteem, and a grateful acknowledgment of the many practical lessons which I received from you, while a pupil in that hospital.

“CASE I.

“John Short, aged 7, of weak, delicate, and scrofulous constitution—previously healthy—had been lying on wet grass for some hours, two or three days after which he complained of pain in his left hip, referred to the groin and trochanter major; shortly after, the left knee became painful, gradually increasing in intensity, for which (pain in knee) I was requested to visit him on the 20th of August, 1839. On my visit, he had a large poultice applied to the knee, the principal pain being referred to that part, complaining but little of the pain about the hip-joint. On being placed upright, resting on his right hand, the disease presented the following characters:—

“Limb apparently lengthened; knee flexed and advanced forward; limb decreased in size; the left nates appeared flatter, broader, more protuberant, and elongated; its fold obliterated, and the normal depression behind the trochanter filled up. On gently pressing the trochanter inwards, or tapping the heel, he complained of great pain in the hip-joint. The pains in the knee and hip-joint were much increased in intensity at night, the pain in the former becoming excruciating; frequent starting of the limb, so much so, as to produce the little intelligent fellow's expression, “I must die if the pain continues;” countenance indicative of much suffering; pulse 100, compressible and weak; thirst and anorexia.

“I ordered him a scruple of our cathartic powder, which is composed of calomel, aloes, and jalap; to be cupped over the left gluteal region to 8 ounces, and to be afterwards well fomented; and when his bowels had

* See LANCET for 1834-5, vol. ii., p. 174, et seq.

† “Dublin Medical Press” for January 8th, 1840.

acted, to take one of the following pills every four hours:—

Calomel, one scruple;

Watery extract of opium, four grains;

Extract of liquorice, q.s. to make ten pills.

"21. Thinks he is somewhat relieved by the cupping and purging, but still describes the pain in the knee as intolerable at night, and preventing sleep; general pyrexia somewhat abated.

"22. Mouth not affected; symptoms much the same. Repeat the pills of calomel and opium.

"23. I was much surprised to find the marked change in my little patient's countenance; he had completely lost his former look of suffering; ptyalism was present, from which he dated the cessation of pain; he had enjoyed a night's sleep, to which, for many nights, he had been a stranger, and was now comparatively free from pain; pulse 84, same character; appetite returning; thirst much lessened; perfect rest was enjoined, with farinaceous diet.

"25. I found my little patient sitting by the fire, complaining only of the itching, the effects of the incisions of the scarificator; could now place the affected limb on the ground; the physical signs were sensibly diminished; the lengthening and breadth of the nates much less, as was also the length of the limb.

"27. The physical signs have now nearly disappeared; the normal depression now exists behind the trochanter; the nates have regained the fold, and the limb its usual size; the flattening and elongation of the nates have disappeared, and he can walk with but a very slight degree of lameness; appetite good; sleep undisturbed.

"In a few days, this boy was able to walk out of doors, and play about as usual; he is now quite well, and appears to have been in no way injured constitutionally by the treatment adopted."

"CASE II.

"Sarah Hive, aged 14, of spare habit, weak intellects, and scrofulous constitution, accustomed to poor diet, and exposed to the vicissitudes of weather—visited on the 12th September, 1839. A fortnight previous she had received a severe wetting, some few days after which she experienced a slight pain in the left hip-joint, attributed to rheumatism; this gradually increased, becoming worse at night, and was much aggravated by slipping off a small stone, whilst crossing a stream of water three days before my visit, since which she has been unable to place her foot upon the ground. Resting on the right limb, the following appearances were noted:—

"The left limb was lengthened, but flexed in such a manner as to appear shorter by

an inch; foot inverted; great toe of affected limb pointed, and resting on great toe of opposite foot; heel drawn upward; knee projected anteriorly; the adductors and gracilis muscles thrown in bold relief; limb much wasted posteriorly; the nates appeared broader, longer, and more protuberant; the fold obliterated; concavity of curve of spine on the right side; inversion of the limb caused a great increase of pain, as did abduction and extension; flexion caused but little pain; pressing the heel upwards, or the trochanter inwards, gave intolerable pain; pain chiefly referred to the groin; the pain at the knee not complained of till her attention was directed to it; pain much increased at night, preventing all sleep; pulse 100, weak; expression of suffering; general pyrexia.

"Ordered warm fomentations to the affected hip; a cathartic powder, as in the former case; a blister to be applied over the left gluteal region; and one of the following pills to be taken every fourth hour:—

Calomel, one scruple;

Opium, five grains; into ten pills.

"14. Ptyalism was present, from the accession of which she also dated the decrease of pain. 'To use her own words, "the pain stopped when my mouth began to run." She enjoyed an undisturbed night's rest, and is now comparatively free from pain; appetite returning.

"16. Has had no recurrence of the pain; sleeps undisturbed.

"On standing up the limb appears less flexed, not so much inverted; the characteristic appearances of the nates sensibly diminished. Ordered another blister.

"18. Is now walking about the house with the aid of a small stick; says she suffers no pain, except it is from the blister; 'has more confidence to walk;' the nates now present their normal appearance; the fold is regained, and the depression behind the trochanter has reappeared; limb of nearly its natural size and length.

"This patient, in less than a fortnight, resumed her laborious occupation as outdoor farm servant; she is now quite well.

"*Remarks.*—In these, the only cases I have seen since my residence here, the amendment was very marked when ptyalism was induced; the immediate cessation of pain, and the rapid disappearance of all the physical signs, were, I am induced to believe, wholly attributable to the mercury. In the first case I thought that some benefit had been derived from the cupping, but the amendment was equally marked where cupping was not used, owing to the inconvenient distance at which the patient resided.

"In conclusion, I beg to state that the mercurial plan of treatment, so far as I can learn, is wholly unknown here; and that the quick and successful termination of the

foregoing cases, was the cause of much surprise to Mr. Alfred Davis, surgeon, by whom they were seen. I am, dear Sir, yours respectfully,

"GEORGE J. M'KENZIE.

"Cerne, Dorchester, January 31, 1840."

**IMPOSITIONS
OF THE
INDIAN FAQUEER,
WHO PROFESSED TO BE
BURIED ALIVE AND RESUSCITATED
IN TEN MONTHS.**

[The following extracts from the Hon. Mr. Osborne's recently-published Diary of a Mission to Lahore, in 1838,* is recommended to the attention of the Sikhs of Mesmerism in Europe. We copy it into this journal as an appendix to the account of the "burying Faqueer," which appeared in THE LANCET of May 13, 1837, taken from the "Calcutta Medical Journal," in which work the alleged proceedings of the man were published as well-authenticated events.]

"6th June, 1838. The monotony of our camp life was broken this morning by the arrival of a very celebrated character in the Punjab, and a person we had all expressed great anxiety to see, and whom the Maharajah had ordered over from Umritsir on purpose.

"He is a Faqueer by name, and is held in extraordinary respect by the *Sikhs*,† from his alleged capacity of being able to bury himself alive for any period of time. So many stories were current on the subject, and so many respectable individuals maintained the truth of these stories, that we all felt curious to see him. He professes to have been following this trade, if so it may be called, for some years, and a considerable time ago several extracts from the letters of individuals who had seen the man in the upper provinces, appeared in the Calcutta papers, giving some account of his extraordinary powers, which were, at the time, naturally enough, looked upon as mere attempts at a hoax upon the inhabitants of Calcutta. Captain Wade, political agent at Loodhiana, told me that he was present at his resurrection after an interment of some months, General Ventura having buried him in the presence of the Maharajah and many of his principal Sirdars; and, as far as I

can recollect, these were the particulars as witnessed by General Ventura:—After going through a regular course of preparation, which occupied him some days, and the details of which are too disgusting to dilate upon, the Faqueer reported himself ready for interment, in a vault which had been prepared for the purpose by the order of the Maharajah. On the appearance of Runjeet and his court, he proceeded to the final preparations that were necessary, in their presence, and after stopping with wax his ears, nostrils, and every other orifice through which it was possible for air to enter his body, except his mouth, he was stripped, and placed in a linen bag; and, the last preparation concluded, by turning his tongue back, and thus closing the gullet, he immediately died away into a sort of lethargy. The bag was then closed, and sealed with Runjeet's own seal, and afterwards placed in a small deal box, which was also locked and sealed. The box was then placed in a vault, the earth thrown in and trod down, and a crop of barley thrown over the spot, and sentries placed round it. The Maharajah was, however, very sceptical on the subject, and twice in the course of the ten months he remained under ground sent people to dig him up, when he was found to be in exactly the same position, and in a state of perfectly suspended animation. At the termination of the ten months, Captain Wade accompanied the Maharajah to see him disinterred, and states that he examined him personally and minutely, and was convinced that all animation was perfectly suspended. He saw the locks opened, and the seals broken by the Maharajah, and the box brought into the open air. The man was then taken out, and on feeling his wrist and heart, not the slightest pulsation was perceptible. The first thing towards restoring him to life was the forcing his tongue back to its proper position, which was done with some little difficulty by a person inserting his finger and forcibly pulling it back, and continuing to hold it until it gradually resumed its natural place. Captain Wade described the top of his head to have been considerably heated; but all other parts of the body were cool and healthy in appearance. Pouring a quantity of warm water over him constitutes the only further measure for his restoration, and in two hours' time he is as well as ever.

"He is apparently about thirty years of age, with a disagreeable and cunning expression of countenance. We had a good deal of conversation with him, and he volunteered to be interred for any length of time we pleased, in order to convince us that he is no impostor. We took him at his word, and he is to be buried on our arrival at Lahore, and to remain underground during our stay there, which will probably be three weeks or a month; and though he complains

* The Court and Camp of Runjeet Sing. By the Hon. W. G. Osborne, Military Secretary to the Earl of Auckland, Governor General of India. London. Colburn. 1840.

† *Sikh*, a term from the Sanscrit, denoting a disciple.