

and to suffer from palpitation. When he was twenty years old, on the 1st of June, 1826, he walked over from Southwell to Nottingham, and while in a very heated state drank some cold ale; this was followed by very severe pain in the back, gnawing at the epigastrium, craving appetite, and a most intense thirst, followed by great emaciation. His weight before this attack was nine and a half stone. He tasted his urine frequently, at the direction of his medical man, and found it very sweet; it also fermented in the hot weather. At the close of the year 1827, he had an attack of hepatitis, during the continuance of which his diabetes subsided, only to return when the inflammation was subdued; this was followed by severe orchitis. From 1835 to 1838, the diabetes subsided gradually, and he gained strength and flesh very rapidly, so that in January, 1838, his weight was sixteen stone, and since then it has reached eighteen stone. At this time he noticed that his thirst diminished, and his urine was less and less sweet, until at length the sugar altogether disappeared, and the skin then became moist. At present, his appetite is very moderate, not being so keen as that of many men in health; the tongue is clean; thirst such that he drinks six quarts of fluid daily; bowels regular; motions at times pipe-clay coloured; urine pale, faintly acid, specific gravity 1002; skin moist, with a scaly eruption on the back; nails corrugated; venereal appetite, which was defunct during the existence of sugar in the urine, is now restored.

The treatment which afforded him the largest amount of relief was, at first, an emetic every other morning, followed by decoction of cinchona, and afterwards, frequent and free bleeding from the arm, and leeches on the epigastrium, followed by flying blisters on the epigastrium, and across the loins.

Milk, whey, buttermilk, caused more thirst, and the sense of emptiness at the pit of the stomach, than a meat meal. Coffee also increased the thirst, as also did ale and beer. The more saccharine the latter, the more noxious were they. The liquor pressed from the hops after brewing afforded him considerable relief, soothing and quieting more than anything else, and diminishing his thirst; but the liquor from the Kent hops were not so serviceable as that from the North Clay hop, (the ale brewed with the latter not being so viscid as that in which the former is used.) Small quantities of gin and whisky would afford relief to the languid pain in the back, and the smarting in the urethra, arising from the excessive micturition. Soft water afflicted the thirst less than either hard spring or river water, which always increased it. Full draughts appeased it more than frequent sipping. He obtained most service from using a diet, of which cow-heels formed the chief part; he had them either plainly boiled, or made into a soup. Tripe and fresh meats agreed well; but all meats which were preserved with salt, or cooked with it and with pepper, increased his thirst. Bacon, if all fat, agreed well; but the lean of it was injurious. Potatoes boiled, then roughly mashed, and afterwards fried in fat, taken with a meat supper, insured a more comfortable night than any other meal, and he had taken it, in consequence, for many years. He takes fresh meat thrice daily, cooked for him at each meal. His general health, spirits, and appearance, are those of a man entirely void of disease.

(To be concluded.)

#### A DEATH ATTRIBUTABLE TO MIASM.—DETAIL OF THE CASE AND POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION, WITH REMARKS.

By W. U. WHITNEY, Esq., M.R.C.S.E., Westminster.

A SHORT paragraph in a late LANCET, in reporting that "Westminster School has been broken up by a malignant fever spreading rapidly amongst the scholars," adds, "Popular ignorance in this locality attributes the fever to the cleansing out of the cesspools by the sanitary commission." That the popular opinion was not altogether "popular ignorance," I am inclined to believe, from the circumstances of a case which within the last day or two has come under my own observation. The patient, an infant four months old, a fine healthy boy, lived in Bowling-street, near to Dean's-yard, a locality always subject to noxious effluvia arising from drains; but within the last few weeks the effluvia have been more than usually prevalent and powerful. The child in question was the youngest of three. The eldest had had an eruption, like chicken-pox, which passed off with little or no constitutional disturbance. A few days after, a similar eruption appeared on the other two children, pursuing its course in the same

manner. But on Sunday last, about mid-day, the youngest child was seized with hurried breathing, accompanied at first with considerable fever. Towards evening the integuments beneath the chin began to swell, and the swelling rapidly extended, with hardness, to the submaxillary glands and cellular tissue. This sudden tumefaction was apparently arrested for a short time, and the chest relieved by emetics, fomentations, leeches, &c. But on Monday morning the enlargement and hardness were fast increasing, spreading rapidly above the jaw to the face, and below towards the clavicles. By Monday evening the entire front and sides of the neck were implicated, so that the head was fixed within a stiff circle or collar of glandular swelling, and hardened cellular substance. The skin about the chin had an erysipelatous blush, with a tinge of purple. The swelling was somewhat doughy under the finger, and putty beyond the line of hardness. The febrile action, perceptible at first, soon yielded to symptoms of great constitutional depression; the skin lost its heat, and the pulse, rapidly diminishing in power, became thready, and scarcely perceptible. To a general dullness of the senses succeeded stupor, with occasional subsultus tendinum. On Tuesday the chest symptoms were improved; but the evidences of cerebral congestion were more and more strongly marked, and deglutition (all along difficult) was now impossible. The swelling continued to extend upwards towards the orbits, and downwards to the chest beyond the clavicles; but, except this extension of the swelling, no change occurred, and the child gradually sank, and expired at four o'clock this (Wednesday) morning.

Shortly before death, discoloration began in the body, nearly the whole of which it rapidly invaded afterwards. A post-mortem examination disclosed some patches of pneumonia, in the first stage, in each lung; enlarged submaxillary and mesenteric glands; a dark and fluid state of the blood; and œdema, with yellowness of the cellular substance on the front and base of the neck. These pathological conditions appear to me inexplicable, except on the supposition of the agency of miasmatic poison. That the latter existed abundantly in the form of noxious effluvia emanating from drains, is certain; and, for the sake of confirmation, I may refer to the authorities of Dr. Copland and Laennec to show that the conditions presented in this case are capable of being produced by the cause suggested. "When," says Dr. Copland, "emanations from the decomposition of animal matters, and from drains and sewers, are concentrated in a warm and humid air, the resulting fever will assume more or less of the putro-adyamic character. Enlargement of the lymphatic glands, with a tendency to asthenic inflammation and disorganization of the surrounding cellular tissue, is sometimes seen in malignant cases of this disease." Laennec observes, "It is probable that peripneumony is often owing to deleterious miasms which have entered the system by means of the cutaneous or pulmonary absorbents; since nothing is more common than to meet with cases of this disease to which we can assign none of the commoner causes."

The unavoidable haste with which these observations have been put together must plead excuse for the brevity with which they are detailed.

Great College-street, Westminster, May, 1848.

#### REPORT OF A CASE OF TYPHOID FEVER, WITH EXTREME GENERAL PROSTRATION AND CEREBRAL EXCITEMENT.—REMARKS ON DELIRIUM.\*

ON Monday, Dec. 13th, 1847, the subject of the present narration, (a medical practitioner,) after close attention to a laborious rural practice, and a full share of the irregularities of the profession, as to weather, diet, sleep, &c.,—too often, moreover, "vexing the drowsy ear of night" in the service of the public press,—was seized (at an obstetric case, about two A.M.) with, he supposed, acute rheumatism or influenza, the familiarly known symptoms of which continued about twenty-four hours. He took chloride of mercury, two grains, every two or three hours, with a saline antimonial mixture. The mixture caused vomiting. Unequivocal premonitions now ensued of impending mischief in the brain; sluggishness of pupils; benumbed or falling-in sensation of fauces and upper part of pharynx; general anæsthesia; hair thinned. Ten leeches to temples; croton oil, one drop, on sugar; mustard-epithem to the legs; blister to the nape of the neck.

\* Authenticated by the writer, a highly respectable surgeon and former correspondent.—ED. L.