

The ventricles were filled with a thin, inodorous, puriform fluid ; and in each lateral ventricle was a mass, about ten lines in length and four in width, of coagulated albumen. There was no communication between the membranous cavity of the brain and the ventricles ; the thin flooring of the fourth ventricle remaining entire.

The walls of the tumor, composed of integument and lined with dura mater, were corrugated, dry and pale. The opening into the cranial cavity was two lines below the transverse ridge of the occipital bone ; it was circular, and two lines in diameter ; the ossification around it being perfect. Attached to this opening on two sides, by a membrane, was a pyriform, fleshy and perfectly solid body, about eleven lines in length and four in diameter at its thickest part. The neck projected far into the cranial aperture, and permitted of a slight motion out and in ; but not so as to be entirely withdrawn from the opening. It acted, consequently, like a bullet valve, permitting the egress of fluid from the cranial cavity, but closing the opening effectually against any return.

This fully accounted for the fact stated, of the impossibility of pressing out the contents of the sac at the first examination, and the consequent absence of any effect thereby produced upon the child. Had there been any yielding of the tumor under pressure ; any symptom of cerebral disturbance produced by these manipulations, the tumor would not have been interfered with.

Samuel Cooper, Copland and others, allude to cases like the present, of tumors, analogous to spina bifida, situated on the cranium ; but I do not remember to have met with any description of a case like this, in its curious valve.

UTERINE HYDATIDS.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

SEPTEMBER 27th, 1839. Mrs. A., aged 37, mother of two children, the last a nursing infant six months old, states that she has had her catamenia regularly until three months since. In six weeks after the last period, the abdomen became perceptibly enlarged, and she commenced flowing a little, for which she soon after consulted a physician. Not obtaining relief from his prescription, and the abdomen having increased rapidly, being at the expiration of the succeeding six weeks as large as the sixth month of pregnancy and attended with some anasarca of the lower extremities, she sent for an empirical practitioner, who pronounced her disease to be dropsy ; disregarded the almost continued hemorrhage, gave her a hot rock sweat, an emetic, and cathartic, and left her " roots and herbs " to be steeped in a gallon of gin to take for the water. He said that she would be " fit to tap " in a few days, and appointed the 28th, on which to perform the operation. He visited her that day for that purpose, but in the night of the 26th, the day she took the emetic, &c., she was taken with pain in the abdomen and increased hemorrhage, which occasioned my being called. When I arrived,

the distance being nine miles, her pains had ceased and the flowing abated. I found her much exhausted from the loss of blood and the effects of treatment. The conjunctiva of one eye was completely blood-shot from the violent operation of the emetic. Pulse 120 per minute. Upon examining the abdomen, there was no fluctuation, but the enlarged uterus could be distinctly felt. Per vaginam, the os uteri was found dilated to the size of a dollar, and within it coagulated blood only could be detected. From the rapid development of the uterus and the entire absence of motion, I supposed it to be some morbid growth. As it was evident that nothing short of its speedy expulsion would save her life, I gave her an infusion of ergot, which had its usual prompt effect to produce contraction of the uterus, and without increasing the hemorrhage. The os uteri gradually dilated to its full size, yet the contents of the uterus did not descend to aid in the dilatation. At the expiration of eleven hours from the exhibition of the ergot, and while using the vessel to pass her urine, the contents of the uterus escaped, attended with such profuse hemorrhage that she fainted and fell upon the floor apparently lifeless. Here was one of those appalling scenes which try the physician's soul, and make him choose, as Prof. Mussey once said to his class, rather to be a wood cutter. By the use of proper means she soon revived, and was placed upon the bed. The vessel was filled with a mass of hydatids, answering the description and representation given in Dewees's work on the Diseases of Females. In consequence of the great loss of blood, an effusion of serum took place into the cavities of the abdomen and thorax, accompanied with general anasarca. The respiration was hurried, and the pulse ranged from 140 to 160 per minute. Tonics, diuretics and laxatives were given for six weeks, without affording material benefit, excepting to allow the system to rally from exhaustion, when two hydragogue cathartic powders, composed of calomel, jalap, aloes and tartrate of antimony, the second given six hours after the first, carried off the effusion in forty-eight hours. The continued use of diuretics and tonics prevented any return of the effusion, and restored her to good health in a few weeks. She has not been enceinte since. **EZRA BARTLETT.**

South Berwick, Me., Feb. 18th, 1846.

SPURIOUS VACCINATION.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—In the last No. of the Journal, Dr. Mowe has related two cases of spurious vaccination, which are to me intensely interesting. I wish by inquiry to prompt a little further investigation of these cases. The matter was taken on the fourteenth day, and was a "foul secretion." At so late a period, whatever fluid has survived the desiccating process is pus. Can Dr. M. now ascertain whether the secretion was purulent only, or whether the ulcer presented any peculiarities? What was the age, and what the condition of health of the individual, from whom the matter was taken? On the fourteenth day, too, the vesicle, if a true one, must have