

it was the most feasible one to teach; it was, as Sir Wm. Gull puts it, a "working theory," one best adapted to the native mind to comprehend; and this drilling the native mind into the contagion idea was, I submit, a very great point, considering that the youths would go away into their native towns and villages, far away, perhaps, from a white doctor's help or advice.

I remain, Sir, yours &c.,
R. BATESON, Surgeon-Major,
late Civil Surgeon, Umballa District, Punjaub, &c.
Lancaster, April, 1874.

TREATMENT OF NÆVUS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The frank communication by my friend, Mr. West, of the fatal case of embolism occurring to him from the injecting a nœvus with perchloride of iron, induces me to relate my experience of a mode of treatment I have adopted during the past two years with great satisfaction and success, and of which I find no notice in any of the standard works on Surgery. Previously to the time I mention, I had pursued the various plans advocated and practised, with results more or less satisfactory. When, however, I became possessed of a Weiss's constant-current battery, I took an early opportunity of treating a capillary nœvus of the scalp by electrolysis, and since then I have used it with unvarying success in some eight or ten cases, the size varying from a quarter of an inch in diameter, to an inch and a half long by an inch wide. I have used, according to the size of the tumour, two to four needles, with 12, 15, 18, or 21 cells.

The plan of procedure has been to give the child chloroform; the requisite number of gilt needles is then inserted into the serres-fines conductor recommended by Dr. Althaus, and made by Messrs. Weiss, and connected with the negative pole of the battery. The positive pole, with sponge-holding electrode, being applied to an indifferent portion of the surface in the neighbourhood, the needles are passed into the base of the tumour towards the centre. Being charged with electricity, this is done easily. Within a few seconds bubbles of hydrogen gas are seen issuing from each needle puncture, while the portion of tumour around the point of each needle becomes livid, changing to a dirty white. If the nœvus is extensive, the needles are withdrawn and inserted at other points, till the whole substance has been attacked. No hæmorrhage ensues, and no dressing is required. The crust formed dries and falls off after a few days, leaving, in the case of small nœvi no mark, and in the case of larger ones minute white cicatrices. In three of the cases operated on two or more sittings have been required, and that only because it was difficult to judge whether enough had been done. In one case, which was very vascular, too many cells were, I think, employed, and a granulating sore was produced such as results from ligation; this, therefore, might easily have been avoided.

The advantages of this method of treatment I should sum up as being—(1) its simplicity, (2) its rapidity, (3) its effectiveness, (4) its safety, (5) its entire freedom from hæmorrhage, (6) the avoidance of any breach of surface, (7) the absence of scar in the case of small nœvi, and its very modified existence in the case of larger ones; and, lastly, though I have not myself had the opportunity of putting it in practice in cases presenting a very extensive surface, I can yet see no limit to its applicability on that score, the tumour being treated in detail.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
JOHN PENHALL, F.R.C.S.
St. Leonards-on-Sea, March 24th, 1874.

THE "VICTOR EMANUEL."

(From a Correspondent.)

THE *Victor Emanuel* military hospital ship left Cape Coast Castle on the 26th of February, and arrived at Sierra Leone on the 5th of March. The vessel was quite full of sick and wounded, and a few deaths occurred before reaching Sierra Leone. Lieutenant Johnston, 23rd Regiment, died on the 28th of February from dysentery, and Major Baird, of the 42nd Highlanders, died on the 6th of March, and was buried

with full military honours on shore at Sierra Leone. The latter officer died from the effects of wounds received in action—especially a wound of the left profunda femoris artery—and from the effects of climate. The vessel left Sierra Leone on Saturday evening, the 7th, and just before starting received on board, from the mail steamer *Liberia*, Dr. Florence McCarthy, of the Army Medical Department, suffering from remittent fever and great prostration. The ship arrived at St. Vincent on the morning of Saturday, the 14th of March. The day after arrival, Dr. McCarthy, who had been delirious for some days, and was under the special charge of an attendant, managed to get alone into the water-closet attached to his cabin, and contrived to throw himself or fall into the sea from the water-closet window, at 9.30 P.M. or thereabouts. The night was rather dark, and though the splash in the water caused an alarm, before any competent assistance arrived the poor fellow had disappeared. The body has not been found up to this date, and it is improbable that it ever will be, as the place literally abounds with voracious sharks.

I believe there have been upwards of sixteen deaths on board the *Victor Emanuel* since her arrival on the Coast, including four officers. I am told that there are at present 100 on the sick list, and 50 or 60 convalescents.

Steam transport No. 17, the *Candia*, arrived in harbour on Monday evening with a detachment of blue-jackets and men of the Army Hospital corps, en route for Cape Coast.

St. Vincent, Cape de Verd Islands, March 23rd, 1874.

PARIS.

(From our own Correspondent.)

You lately recorded the sudden death of Dr. Joulin, one of the vice-professors of the Paris School of Medicine, and editor of the *Gazette Obstétricale*. The *Gazette Médicale* publishes some interesting biographical particulars respecting our regretted confrère, in which the results of indomitable purpose and energy are most strikingly illustrated. Joulin came to Paris at the age of eighteen, to gain a livelihood. He began life as clerk in a dry-goods' store, invented a process for bronzing zinc by means of electricity, then became a writer in the political press and a caricaturist for the illustrated journals. After this he went to Brussels, began to study medicine, graduated as an *officier de santé* in France, and as Doctor of Medicine in Belgium, finally took his degree here, and was afterwards, by dint of hard work and through public competition, elected Vice-Professor in Obstetrics at the School of Medicine. He was remarkable as a writer for an easy, brilliant style and biting satire. Thus he made himself a great many enemies, and was universally dreaded. The writer in the *Gazette*, however, mentions that he was of a most amiable and kind disposition, ever ready to oblige and assist others.

The remarkable results obtained by Dr. Oré, the eminent surgeon of Bordeaux, with intra-venous injections of chloral in a case of tetanus, have not been borne out in two trials made lately by Dr. Labbé and Dr. Cruveilhier (the son). Both failed. The results of their unsuccessful injections of chloral were communicated to the Society of Surgery on Wednesday last.

Considerable sensation has been created here by the fact of a young man having swallowed a fork. The story has gone round all the papers, with strange and remarkable accounts of the case. The fact is absolutely authentic. The young man—a clerk at one of the *magasins de nouveautés* here—actually swallowed an ordinary table-fork whilst showing his talents to some of his friends. He has been taken to the Hôpital la Pitié, and is under the care of Dr. Labbé. Soundings with various instruments have been made, for the purpose of exploring the stomach and making out the exact position of the fork, but without much success up to the present time. The respiratory and digestive functions are scarcely at all disturbed. The only inconvenience which the patient complains of is a feeling as of a foreign body, only when the stomach is empty. I have been promised a detailed account of the case, which I will send immediately on receiving it. On Friday morning last, when I saw the patient, he assured me that he was doing perfectly well in every respect.