

# A Mirror

## OF THE PRACTICE OF

## MEDICINE AND SURGERY

### IN THE

### HOSPITALS OF LONDON.

Nulla est alia pro certo noscendi via, nisi quam plurimas et morborum et dissectionum historias, tam aliorum proprias, collectas habere et inter se comparare.—MORGAGNI. *De Sed. et Caus. Morb.*, lib. 14. Proemium.

#### ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL.

##### EPILEPSY BROUGHT ON BY A FRIGHT, TEMPORARILY CURED BY AN ATTACK OF ACUTE RHEUMATISM.

(Under the care of Dr. FARRE.)

THE supervention of other diseases upon epilepsy is not known usually to prevent the recurrence of the convulsions, although very probably it may modify their severity and duration. Experience has proved that sometimes the disease is staved off, as it were, by another malady, which may have some counteracting influence, difficult of explanation. We were much impressed with the truth of this, by watching a case recently under Dr. Farre's care.

The patient was a single young woman, aged twenty-three, who was admitted on December 5th, 1860, with frequently-recurring epileptic fits, (two or three every week,) which were brought on by a fright experienced a year and a half previously. Shortly before her admission she was seized with a well-marked and severe attack of acute rheumatism, and this was found to affect the joints of the arm and leg, accompanied by very severe pain. She was ordered a grain of opium night and morning, (besides other treatment,) and subsequently for four days this was taken every four hours, which produced no head symptoms, and relieved the pain. The extract of conium, in ten-grain doses, was then substituted with advantage. She had fits during the existence of the rheumatism the first three weeks of her stay in the hospital, the last fit occurring at Christmas. From that time they ceased, and she gradually became convalescent from the rheumatism.

Jan. 28th, 1861.—She was ordered a mixture of quinine and dilute sulphuric acid three times a day. She is almost rid of the rheumatic affection, except a slight pain in the left arm. Has had no fit since Christmas.

Feb. 18th.—The patient has had a seton put in the nape of her neck since the last report, and she has had no fit nor any return of the rheumatism. She was discharged to-day quite well.

At the latter end of March this patient was re-admitted, with a return of her epileptic malady, which had, however, remained in abeyance for nearly ten weeks; the fits were very few, and when she left the hospital a second time, she was again free from them.

##### PERICARDITIS FOLLOWING ERYTHEMA.

(Under the care of Dr. FARRE.)

A girl, aged thirteen years, was admitted on Feb. 26th, with erythema of the upper part of the body, associated with pain; it resembled a very mild attack of rheumatism. She had been subject to this complaint some years before, but had no disease of the heart then nor on admission.

Two days after her entrance into the hospital she was attacked with pericarditis; friction-sound was heard at the heart's base, and an endocardial murmur. The pericardial symptoms were still present, when, on March 12th, cerebral disturbance showed itself, which continued for three or four days, and then passed off. The action of the heart was strong, and the friction-sound continued. On March 25th she was much better, and was taking a mixture of dilute hydrocyanic acid, tincture of opium, carbonate of soda, and infusion of cascarrilla, three times a day.

We give a brief record of the case for the purpose of showing, that however mild an attack of rheumatism may be present, it is liable to bring on, or to become associated with, pericardial disease. In this patient there was probably a predisposition to rheumatism, from the circumstance of her having been formerly subject to it.

She left the hospital convalescent at the latter end of April. No. 1974.

#### GUY'S HOSPITAL.

##### TUMOURS INVOLVING THE HEAD OF THE TIBIA.

(Under the care of Mr. COCK and Mr. BRYANT.)

A YOUNG man was admitted, early in May, with a well-defined prominent tumour, situated upon the inner side of the left tibia. It appeared to be distinct from the bone, and had been twelve months growing. As the patient's general health was good, Mr. Cock thought he would remove the tumour. Chloroform was given on May 28th, and this proceeding was attempted; but in the course of the operation the growth was found to originate within the head of the tibia, occupying a cavity the size of a small orange, which extended to the junction of the epiphysis with the head of the bone. The tumour was entirely extirpated, and in some respects resembled myeloid disease, but subsequent examination proved it to be medullary. The cavity in the bone was filled with lint, and allowed to suppurate.

June 11th.—The hole in the bone is filling up, and discharges much matter; the patient's health is improving, and there is a prospect of recovery from the operation, but an eventual return of the disease is to be feared.

On the latter date, Mr. Bryant amputated through the thigh of a girl, for a tumour of the left tibia, extending to the knee, of but six months' duration, which had all the appearances of malignant disease.

##### SYPHILITIC DISEASE OF THE LARYNX; LARYNGOTOMY; RECOVERY.

(Under the care of Mr. BRYANT.)

A woman, aged thirty-two, who gave a clear history of syphilis, and had experienced some laryngeal affection for ten months, was admitted. Difficulty of breathing was very great, threatening suffocation, which induced Mr. Bryant to suggest an operation; this the patient only sanctioned when death appeared imminent. Laryngotomy was performed without difficulty, and steady convalescence followed. Five months have now elapsed, and the woman still wears the tube. On one occasion, some weeks since, Mr. Bryant removed it, but soon re-introduced it, as dyspnoea speedily appeared. Since the operation several pieces of bone have been expectorated, apparently portions of ossified cartilage. The reader interested in such examples may refer with profit to a chapter by Mr. Bryant in the last volume of "Guy's Hospital Reports."

##### EPULIS ENCROACHING UPON AND ENTERING THE ANTRUM; REMOVAL; RECOVERY.

(Under the care of Mr. BRYANT.)

An interesting example of this disease has recently been under observation in this hospital. It occurred in a young woman, aged twenty-four, who had noticed a tumour in her gum, on the left side over the bicuspid teeth, for a month. The growth being somewhat rapid, removal was suggested; and, having excised the tumour of the gum, it was found to dip upwards and backwards into the antrum; with the handle of the knife this was, however, readily scooped out, and the cavity left quite clear. A speedy convalescence ensued, and although seven months have passed no return has taken place. Microscopically, the elements of the new growth were found to be those of the fibro-plastic.

#### ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL.

##### DILATATION OF STRICTURE IN A CASE OF LONG STANDING.

(Under the care of Mr. COULSON.)

EVERY day's experience in the hospitals shows that patient dilatation by bougies, although a method of treatment which will in some cases fail to overcome intractable and obstinate stricture, yet can afford the most satisfactory cures of minute and firm urethral contractions, when carefully and perseveringly applied.

In a case treated with success by Mr. Coulson, the patient, a man aged forty-one, had been the subject of stricture during twenty years. The legs and abdomen were oedematous; the urine had for a long time passed slowly in drops only; and as he had not applied for treatment until his stricture was at the worst, no instrument had yet been passed through the stricture, although many trials had on various occasions been made.