

the preceding occupy about five pages of the journal, and are specimens of what Copland so aptly denominated the "printed records of little value," or, it may be added, of no value at all. This worthy, we perceive, has another project in view, no less than to establish "an annual meeting of the medical graduates of Edinburgh, to be held in London." The meeting he says, "*may be merely a dinner,*" "and," he continues, "*it cannot be difficult to name a fit president or chairman for the day,*" meaning, we suppose, himself. This we doubt not is an attempt to resuscitate the departed Decad, and therefore caution all respectable physicians of the degradation which awaits them should they fall into the advocate's scheme.

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT.

ANALYSIS OF FOREIGN MEDICAL JOURNALS.

ARCHIVES GENERALES DE MEDICINE.

Memoir on Sciatica, or femoro-popliteal Neuralgia, by J. H. Réveillé Parise.

CASE 1.—Mr. D. 52 years of age, was attacked, without any evident cause, with a violent sciatica on the right side. The pain was intolerable; leeches applied along the course of the nerve, the use of emollients and rest procured some relief. Mr. D. fancied himself cured, but on attempting to walk, the pain again became so violent that he could scarcely set his right leg to the ground, he, therefore, rather dragged than made any use of it. A multitude of remedies which he tried were all found unavailing.

The patient had been three months in this state when M. Parise saw him. Desiring to try, in a positive manner, the virtues of the oil of turpentine, which had gained such repute in England, for curing sciatica, M. P. began by administering it in doses gradually increased from a drachm to three drachms a day; this medicine in a few days had a very

marked beneficial effect; the patient was so well as to venture out, but although he walked with all care, the pain returned with augmented intensity. In vain were repeated doses of oil of turpentine swallowed with the view of allaying the patient's sufferings; the effects of the medicine did not answer expectation; and heat and dryness of the throat supervening, with pain of stomach, and violent cholic, compelled its relinquishment. It was then that recourse was had to the method recommended by Cotunius,—a large blister was applied to the outer and lower part of the knee, over the head of the fibula. The patient experienced no very considerable relief, until the eighth day; by the twentieth, however, he was entirely well, and from this time to the present, (about two years,) the complaint has not returned. During the course of the treatment, great care was taken to keep the bowels properly open, either by the use of injections or by the repeated administration of the castor oil.

There are several other cases detailed, in which, by pursuing the same plan, relief was much more speedily obtained than in the one we have given. M. P. prefers keeping up suppuration from the blistered part for some time to repeated blistering; the latter not appearing to him to answer so good an end as the former. He also deems it essentially necessary to success to maintain the belly gently open.

Considerations on certain changes in colour of the cineritious substance of the brain, by M. Billard.

Every day it becomes more rare to fail in discovering traces of organic lesion in the bodies of those who have fallen victims to acute disease. How common used it not to be, in reading the histories of *post-mortem* examinations of individuals who had died insane, to find such phrases as the following:—the brain was healthy—there were no traces of disease in the brain? But the better information of the present day frequently brings to light organic changes, where, but a few years ago, nothing extraordinary would have been detected. In fact, it is not enough to look merely for changes of texture; alterations in colour and in general appearance are also to be carefully noted. Already Rostan and Lallemand had observed various alterations in the colour of the cerebral parts surrounding points which had suffered in their texture; M. Billard has now gone farther, and given us some very interesting cases, in which the entire cineritious substance of the

brain appears to have been the seat of disorder, as is evidenced by a singular variation from its usual ash-grey colour to a dark slate blue, with a slight tinge of green.

CASE 1.—Anne Beaufreton, aged 21, had been long subject to violent pains of the head, which shot along from the forehead and temporal regions, to the insides of the ears. By degrees her sight became weaker and weaker, although no change was apparent in the eyes. A course of blisters behind the ears did no good. On entering the hospital, a seton was inserted into the back of the neck. The pupils were now much dilated, the eyes rolling continually in their sockets. Even during her greatest sufferings, and the pain at times was excruciating, she never lost her consciousness. The function of hearing was next observed to be decaying, when the patient began to lose flesh, and the intellect to be impaired. She was bled several times, but with no good effect. Matters went on from bad to worse, during a period of five months, till the 18th October, 1823. The amaurosis was then nearly complete, the general sensibility very obscure; the patient obstinately taciturn and profoundly comatose, but the limbs were moved freely, and there were no convulsions. Blisters were ordered to the neck and thighs. These appeared to cause no uneasiness; the skin indeed seemed almost quite insensible. The treatment, from first to last, was very inactive, owing to the uncertainty that prevailed in regard to the true nature of the complaint. No remission in the symptoms was observed until the death of the patient, which happened on the 26th of the month.

On opening the head, the vessels of the pia mater were found gorged with blood. The cortical substance of the brain, instead of its usual ash-grey colour, was of a deep slate grey, with a shade of green intermixed. It was of a firm consistence, and drops of blood immediately transuded over all the cut surfaces. The white substance only appeared somewhat more vascular than natural. The ventricles contained very little fluid, and no serum escaped from the skull when the brain was removed. There was no disorganization detected in any part of the encephalon; the optic nerves, thalami optici, and auditory nerves, had suffered no alteration in their tissues. The heart and lungs were healthy; the abdominal viscera in a state of perfect integrity.

CASE 2.—Marie Seigneur, 15 years of age, entered the Hospital d'Angers, on

the 6th of August, 1823, in the following condition: Deeply comatose, sensibility obtuse, face pale and contracted, immobility of the trunk, but jactitation of the arms and legs; the pulse small and very quick, the breathing short and stertorous, the whole body covered with sweat. The patient can only be made to answer in regard to the seat of her suffering, when she replies *in the head*. Those who brought her to the hospital said, that for a month she had been observed to be dejected, and that she had been in her present state for the last eight days. They could assign no cause for the complaint. Sinapisms were ordered to the feet, and a blister to the back of the neck.

7. Same state; same treatment.

8, and 9. Prostration greater, sensibility still more blunted. The patient has vomited at different times some white mucons-looking matter. Her pupil is much contracted; the pulse is small and very frequent; death on the night of the 11th.

On dissection, the membranes of the head were found injected; the pia mater infiltrated with serum; the convolutions of the brain appeared closely packed together; the cortical substance had a very remarkable slate grey colour; it was firm in its texture, and when cut was immediately covered with bloody points of a very bright colour; the white substance was not, like the cineritious, altered in its colour, but, like it, was much loaded with blood. The ventricles contained a large quantity of serum. The cortical substance of the cerebellum was also of a slate colour, and the cerebral masses generally were much more consistent than usual. The thoracic organs were healthy; the viscera of the abdomen presented no preternatural appearance.

A careful consideration of all the circumstances in these two cases, leads M. Billard to consider them as general inflammatory affections of the substance of the brain. This opinion is greatly strengthened by the following case:

CASE 3.—A child, 22 months old, of a strong and healthy constitution, was accidentally thrown down by a carriage, the wheel of which passed over his leg. The limb was only slightly bruised, but the head was brought to the ground with much violence. Anon fever, ushered in by great restlessness, declared itself, and then succeeded a state of profound coma, from which nothing could arouse the patient. Notwithstanding the best directed antiphlogistic plan of treatment, the child died on the third day from the appearance of symptoms of encephalitis.

The body, examined after death, looked particularly pale; the brain was remarkable for an increase of volume, so that when the dura mater was incised, the encephalon projected as if to escape from its envelope. The brain thus enlarged was observed to fluctuate like a bladder full of fluid; the first impression, therefore, was that the case was one of hydrocephalus. The arachnoid was totally free of pseudo-membranous exudations; the pia mater was rather loaded with blood; on the dura mater, two trifling spots, produced by ecchymosis, were remarked. The cortical substance of the brain was of a very peculiar slaty colour, quite different from the tint which is natural to it. The brain was incised *in situ*. A great many bloody points appeared on the cut surfaces; the cortical substance was very firm, the white or medullary, however, was softer than common. There was not a drop of serum in the ventricles. The cineritious substance of the cerebellum had the same aspect as that of the cerebral hemispheres. The membranes of the spinal marrow were somewhat injected, and its medullary substance was rather soft. The viscera of the chest and belly were perfectly healthy.

There would, therefore, appear to be but little doubt of the alterations observed having been consequences of inflammation. In conformity with this view the treatment ought to be of the most active description. If, under any circumstances, it be justifiable to push depletive measures to extremities, it must be in such cases as the above.

MEETING OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS.

ON Saturday last, a very numerous Meeting of Practitioners of Surgery and Medicine, convened by public advertisement, took place at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand, for the purpose of taking into consideration the present state of Medicine, as it respects that branch of the Profession,—and the propriety of petitioning Parliament on the subject.

Mr. HAYES on being called to the Chair, addressed the Meeting as follows:—

Gentlemen, If I feel reluctance at the proposal that I should take the Chair

this evening, it is not because I am unacquainted with the grievances of which you complain, nor with the objects of this Meeting;—not because I do not heartily concur in the Resolutions about to be proposed to you;—but simply because I see gentlemen in the room more competent than myself to fill the situation. Relying, however, on your indulgence, I shall, to the best of my ability, endeavour to perform the task imposed upon me; confident that the cause in which we have embarked is much too strong to suffer materially from the inadequacy of an individual, in whatever situation he may be placed.

Of the importance of the General Practitioners as a class, and the claims which they have to public attention, it can hardly be necessary for me, before this assemblage to expatiate; yet, for the sake of those, who may hear of our proceedings, it may be proper to observe, that we form a very large majority of those who practise the various branches of the healing art;—that we constitute, at least, two thirds of the Members of the Royal College of Surgeons; and that many of the Physicians of the Royal College, not at all inferior to their learned brethren in all useful and scientific acquirements—have sprung from the ranks of the General Practitioner. It would be invidious, Gentlemen, to give the names of such Physicians, (though I could, thereby, mean only to do them honour,) because I might unwittingly omit the mention of others, not less entitled to public patronage and professional esteem: but, with regard to the *dead*, this delicacy need not be preserved, and I beg to remind you, therefore, that one gentleman, formerly a Surgeon and Apothecary, was, until his death, a favourite Physician with his present Majesty, (I speak of Sir Walter Farquhar,) and that another General Practitioner, recently deceased, was appointed Serjeant Surgeon to the late King, and is said always to have meritoriously preserved the Royal favour and protection: it will be within your recollection too, that Sir David Dundas, the gentleman to whom I allude, was a few years ago President of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Were I to go farther back, I might cite a host of illustrious names, who, at one period of their lives, have practised medicine generally. I shall mention but two,—the justly-celebrated Dr. Cullen, and his still more distinguished contemporary and friend, Dr. Wm. Hunter.

It is with the general practitioner, too, that nearly all the medical officers of the army and navy, and of the East India Com-