

of the longitudinal nerve-fibres, involves the absorption of the nervous matter, and the resulting induration is called sclerosis. A very remarkable example of paralysis from this cause is recorded by M. Portal. (*Cours d'Anatomie Médicale*, tome 4, pp. 116-17.)

The above, together with two or three other cases of induration of the spinal marrow, are contained in M. Ollivier's work; and in all there is a great analogy of symptoms; but the most remarkable feature in all is the long duration of the disease, notwithstanding the important portion of the nervous centre affected. In neither case was there any muscular contraction, which is so commonly observed in myelitis ending in softening.

A remarkable case of induration and local softening of the spinal cord is also recorded by M. Laboulbène, which has been quoted as suggestive of the exact channel in the cord through which impressions of sensation are transmitted. (*Mémoires de la Société de Biologie*, 1855. Pp. 233-45.)

The iodide of potassium is a remedy which suggests itself to the mind in cases where there is good evidence to believe in the existence of chronic myelitis with induration of the cord. For upwards of ten years I had under my observation a gentleman who, at the age of about 65, began to show symptoms of what I suspected to be induration of the spinal cord. At an early period of the disease he had paroxysms of distressing formication, each of which was the prelude to loss of muscular power. A course of the iodide of potassium always relieved the itching and tingling surface, but on no occasion did it arrest the progress of the general paralysis.

The absence of pain and of spasmodic muscular contraction of muscles in this affection, enjoins much caution in determining the precise moment when the spinal cord is likely to be favourably affected by the energetic excitement which strychnine has the property of communicating to it; therefore its internal administration may be preceded by its external use, together with other stimulants in the form of embrocations over the spine, in this, as in all other varieties of myelitis, when the stage of excitation has been subdued. The same external applications may be employed for the purpose of stimulating paralysed muscles to action through the influence of the sensitive branches of the spinal nerves; and in so doing, the interesting observation of Schroeder Van der Kolk, that "the spinal nerves give their motor branches to the muscles as instruments of motion, and their sensitive branches to the parts moved," should be borne in mind, in deciding on the part to which the embrocation is to be applied.

[To be continued.]

CASES OF PUERPERAL CONVULSIONS TREATED WITH AND WITHOUT BLEEDING.

By R. PROSSER, Esq., Surgeon, Bromsgrove.

CASE I. A. J., first confinement, June 6th, 1860, 4 P.M. She had been in labour four hours. The pains gradually increased, and in an hour became very strong; and she had a violent convulsive fit. She was bled immediately to about twenty-five ounces; in about ten minutes after she was bled, the convulsion ceased; but she remained insensible for a few minutes longer. Whenever the pains came on strong, the fits recurred with equal violence. The fits and pains continued at irregular intervals, and the labour progressed very slowly for some time. After the head had descended upon the perinæum, it seemed to stand; and whenever the pains came on strongly, the fits came on with greater violence. The forceps was applied, and delivery very easily effected. The placenta came away. The uterus contracted, and no

hæmorrhage occurred. There were no fits after delivery. The patient made a good recovery.

CASE II. F. W., third confinement, August 6th, 1860. When the pains put on an expulsive character, she was taken in a violent convulsive fit, which passed into a comatose state. She was immediately bled to about twenty ounces. The fits continued; and the case progressed very slowly. The forceps was applied while she was in a comatose state; and the case terminated without any further difficulty or complication. No fits occurred after delivery; and she made a good recovery.

CASE III. E. W., about eighteen months previous to my attending her, was taken in fits about nine days previously to her delivery. The fits continued about two days. She was bled twice, and had twenty leeches applied to her head. She had no fits during labour. She made a tedious recovery.

On June 4th, 1861, she was in a violent convulsive fit; the breathing stertorous, and face turgid. She sank into a state of quiet unconsciousness, and remained so for about ten minutes. The fits recurred at irregular intervals for the next twelve hours with more or less violence. The kidneys were inactive. A saline diuretic was given; and perfect rest and quietness maintained. The fits gradually became less violent and less frequent, until they ceased. No more fits occurred; and she was naturally delivered eight days afterwards, and made a speedy recovery.

On March 20th last, nine days after confinement, she had a most violent convulsive fit which lasted some hours, or rather a succession of fits. She bit her tongue; her breathing was stertorous, and face turgid. The bowels had not acted for three days; and the kidneys very little. She had large doses of solution of sulphate of magnesia repeated about every three or four hours, until the bowels acted freely. After the bowels had acted, she was without a fit for six hours when a fit came on; and she was no sooner free from one than she was seized with another. The kidneys continuing inactive she had a saline diuretic, and was kept perfectly quiet, and free from all disturbance and restraint. She sank into a deeply comatose state, and continued so for eight hours. When she awoke, she expressed herself much better; but complained of feeling exhausted. No more fits occurred; and in a week she was convalescent.

CASE IV. P. D., about two years previously to my attending her, was taken in labour. She had fits; was bled and delivered; and made a good recovery.

On January 8th, 1862, labour had made considerable progress. The pains became very strong; and she was seized with a violent fit. The limbs were rigid; the breathing stertorous; and the face livid. The fit lasted about ten minutes, but recurred again and again, when the pains came on strongly. The forceps was applied without any difficulty. The placenta immediately followed the birth. The uterus contracted, and no hæmorrhage occurred. There were no fits after delivery; and the patient made a good recovery.

CASE V. E. P., first confinement, March 18th, 1861. She had a "good time"; but next day she had a convulsive fit. As I was not at home, a friend saw her and bled her. No fit occurred until the following day, when she was taken much the same. She had a castor-oil aperient; and made a good recovery.

CASE VI. G. O., in February last, had a natural labour; but a few minutes after the birth, she had a convulsive fit which only lasted about five minutes. Neither bleeding nor any other treatment was adopted. She was kept perfectly free from all disturbance; did not have another fit; and made a good recovery.

REMARKS. The first two cases show that bleeding was tried with no benefit; for the fits continued, and only ceased upon delivery. Cases III and IV were subjected at two different confinements to the two different systems of treatment, and recovered equally well. Case V was

bled immediately, when a slight fit occurred—and yet a similar fit occurred next day. Case vi was similar to case v, but got well without any treatment at all.

Transactions of Branches.

NORTH WALES BRANCH.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

By LLEWELYN LODGE, M.R.C.S.Eng., St. Asaph.

[Delivered at Rhyl, July 7th, 1863.]

GENTLEMEN,—By no special merits of my own, certainly not by any preconceived desire, but through your kind and too favourable consideration of my humble services, I have been elected to preside over the North Wales Branch of the British Medical Association for the current year. The remembrance that so many talented and eloquent members of our profession have successively and so well filled this position, might induce me to hesitate ere I accepted the post. When I reflect with how much welfare and success the operations of all classes of society depends upon obedience, I cheerfully comply with your wishes, and will endeavour to discharge the duties pertaining to the presidentship with all the zeal and industry I can bring to my aid. Gentlemen, for the honour you have conferred upon me I beg to convey to you, with the earnest expression of sincere feeling, my warmest acknowledgments and best thanks.

Our annual gatherings present many features of interest to the widely scattered members constituting the Branch. We enjoy, often long before the time, a pleasurable feeling at the prospect of an intellectual treat, arising from the experience and matured opinions of older members of our profession; and when we are fortunate enough to snatch a day in realisation of these wishes, we return home rich in each other's friendship and social regard, and with our minds also enriched with some new discoveries in medicine and the collateral sciences. To those of our brethren who may not have been able, from pressure of professional engagements, to attend our reunions, the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL opens its well-stored pages of information, giving an account of all passing events, and noting particular occurrences at these Branch meetings.

The influence of the British Medical Association is felt not alone in the profession, but also out of it. Principally through its means we have had the Medical Act; and we hope that this measure will ere long be improved by the correction of some anomalies in it which earlier and hasty legislation, from fear of provoking opposition or other cause, failed to achieve.

The general and professional education of the rising generation of medical men will, it is fair to expect, place them, in point of rank and status, not below the members of other learned professions. I can conceive that they will, at no distant period, be placed on an equality with the upper legal profession, as represented by judges and barristers. I am speaking of the general body of medical men—the bulk of the profession: for there are already very many brilliant examples of men who are peculiarly gifted, and who may be said to be fitted to adorn some of the highest stations in the realm. You will readily understand that I allude to men like the late Sir B. Brodie, to our own worthy associate Sir Charles Hastings, to Christison, Syme, Simpson, and many others whose names will at once recur to your minds. Then, by being true to ourselves and honouring and regarding each other as brethren indeed, we might enter the courts of justice, and compel gentlemen of the long robe to show us greater respect and courtesy than we can at present boast of receiving from them. We would also, by our moral and general character, remove

the bad impression upon our motives and actions now unjustly attached to us in the public estimation. You have all long since heard and read of the proceedings which had been taken against some highly respectable medical men in England and elsewhere. I refer to the cases of Mr. Adams of London, Dr. Waters of Chester, and others. You need not be told by me how unjustly and undeservedly they were dragged into courts of law. I rejoice that they defeated their enemies so triumphantly; but I deplore the position of those medical men who stood up against them, and delivered their opinions with the view of influencing the minds of the jury against at least one of the gentlemen (Dr. Waters). Sad it is to witness scenes like these; but the united voice of the profession will soon, I hope, put a stop to such unseemly practices.

I fear I have detained you unnecessarily long. If I have erred in this respect, let me assure you that I am deeply mindful of, and obliged for, the kind and patient hearing you have so good-naturedly accorded me.

SOUTH MIDLAND AND CAMBRIDGE AND HUNTINGDON BRANCHES.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

By WILLIAM PALEY, M.D., Peterborough.

[Delivered at Peterborough, July 9th, 1863.]

GENTLEMEN,—I assure you I feel most deeply sensible of the high honour you have done me in permitting me to preside over such a large united meeting of our Branches. The compliment is doubly gratifying as coming from members of my own profession. However much we may wish to obtain the good opinion of the public, as essential to our success in life; still we must admit that they are by no means the best and fairest judges either of our skill or reputation. All of us at times have been blamed where we really deserved credit; or, as once happened to myself, after a long, anxious, and at length successful treatment of an important case, have been deprived of our justly and well-earned meed of praise by some charlatan being called in at the eleventh hour, and falsely and shamelessly assuming the whole credit of the case. Harder still, if the slightest error or mistake in judgment is made, or is supposed to have been made, a medical man is now at once threatened with an action. If he succeed, he is half ruined by the costs; and if he lose, his reputation is gone for ever.

Under these and similar trials, we all naturally turn to our own profession for sympathy and assistance. They alone, who know the very delicate and responsible situations in which we are daily placed—more especially in consultation practice—can fairly judge us. They are, and ought to be, to every man his inner world, his home circle, within which praise or blame is deeply felt. To obtain the goodwill and esteem of the members of our own profession should ever be considered our highest and most legitimate reward. I have always thought that one of the great uses of our Association is that it forms, as it were, a high court of appeal, before which all important questions of medical conduct, either towards our patients or each other, may be fairly tried. They have the power, through their JOURNAL, of making the voice of the profession loudly and distinctly heard when any one of us acts in an unfair or unfriendly manner towards a brother practitioner; or when any one, however high in the profession, dares to tamper with any of the popular quackeries of the day. When I reflect what a high tone of professional conduct and courtesy towards each other has been insisted upon by our Association, I feel deeply the high compliment you have paid me in placing me in this chair.

Gentlemen, at so large a meeting as the present, attended by so many experienced men in large practice, I