between the amount of blood vitiated and purified was tolerably well maintained. The patient then did not die, as is usual in such cases, from imperfect oxygenation of the blood, but from the gradual obstruction to the general circulation.

The plugging of the coronary arteries, by which a due supply of blood to the heart itself was prevented, probably contributed in the greatest degree to the fatal result.

The above case is given as an extreme instance of the result of the introduction of morbid matters into the circulation through the lymphatics. That minor degrees of blood-poisoning often take place, when the lymphatic glands have more or less lost their natural functions, is very probable. Thus, after sloughing or suppurating buboes, a patient will not unfrequently have a series of ill-developed boils, or an eruption of an anomalous character; but these must carefully be distinguished from the effects of the syphilitic poison, which, as has already been shown, does not affect a patient's constitution through the lymphatic glands.

Original Communications.

HYDROCEPHALUS OF FIFTEEN YEARS DURATION;

TUBERCLES AT THE BASE OF THE LUNGS ONLY: GANGRENE OF ONE LUNG.

By S. W. J. MERRIMAN, M.D., Physician-Accoucheur to the Western General Dispensary.

ALFRED LOADER was born in October 1845, the child of parents who appear to be healthy, are still living, and have had several other children before and after Alfred. All of them, however, present symptoms of scrofula; the eldest having a more or less imperfect sight, and forgetfulness of what he has to do, partially relieved on several occasions by good food and tonic medicines, combined with bichloride of mercury. Alfred is reported to have been healthy until the age of three months, when he fell out of bed, and was seized with a species of convulsion and with sickness. At about the age of eight months, a chronic form of hydrocephalus was distinctly visible.

My first knowledge of him was on January 22, 1849, when he was three years and three months old. He was brought to my house in a child's four-wheel chaise; certain it is that for a long time he was carried about in this way, until he became too long-legged to be contained in the chaise. He was troubled with convulsions, described as stretching himself on awaking; there was no foaming at the mouth. He had been suckled for two years. The head had become quite recently perfectly closed; and his mother was doubtful if it had increased in size lately. Its measurements were then 2½ inches round, 14 inches from ear to ear over the top of the head, and 17 inches from the bridge of the nose to the neck under the occiput. He was intelligent, liking toys, but having very little powers of mind. His legs were perfectly useless; so that he could only sit or lie, resting his head upon a pillow from which he was unable to move it, though he had some power of rolling it from side to side. The urine and fæces passed from him without his knowledge; and this defect lasted all his life, for, although he became aware of having passed his evacuations, he never had power over the sphincter

muscles. He had all his teeth; but they were decayed in the upper jaw. He preferred bread and milk, but would eat everything. If laid on his face, he would cry all the day after, as if he was hurt in his head. I ordered, with other things, friction of the back and hips with flour mixed with powdered nutmeg.

On February 13th I saw him again, and have recorded that he tried to sit up more, but in other respects was the same. I then ordered him one grain of bichloride of mercury in a four-ounce mixture, of which he was to take one teaspoonful twice a day, making thus one thirty-second of a grain for a dose. This medicine apparently purged him, and was omitted on the 16th; but on the 19th, as he complained of his head, I increased the mixture to six ounces, and ordered half a teaspoonful, thus giving one ninety-sixth of a grain twice a day, but was again obliged to discontinue it.

March 19. About this time he over balanced himself in a little chair in which he used to sit, resting his head upon a pillow, with his legs dangling, and perfectly useless. On this day he also ate pork, and had a convulsive fit at 6 P.M., for which he had calomel every two hours, and aperients; this treatment was succeeded, in April, by bark.

In May, he was as well again as ever; but in July, he had another attack of convulsions, requiring calomel, etc.

Dec. 17. On this day I find the following memorandum:—"Child grows stronger; can raise his head," for a single instant at a time. He never lost this increase of strength; but afterwards always held his head upright, not requiring a pillow.

Sept. 2, 1850. Age nearly five years. I was asked to visit him this morning, as his mother on getting up found him in a fit, with his arms and legs thrown about, his eyes fixed, the right side of his face working, and foam at the mouth. The fit lasted ten minutes after the mother rose. He was described as waking up at night screaming, as if frightened by a dream. He is described in my note-book as about 3½ inches high; as knowing pictures of a dog, a cat, and a bird, but not of a horse or a cow; but he had seldom or never seen any such animals, as he could not look out of the window. He noticed all that passed in the house.

On Sept. 4 he was pretty well.

Feb. 16, 1852. He was reported to have had a fit; which, however, passed off again.

I heard of him occasionally during the next six years, but was seldom asked to prescribe for him, his health continuing good, and his mind gradually developing itself, though never to any great extent.

March 2, 1858. Age twelve years and a half. This day I found him suffering from slight paralysis of one side of the face. I ordered him repeated doses of hydrargyrum cum cretâ, with compound chalk powder and soda, and visited him several times this month. He improved much; but there was still some flatness of the face on March 29th.

On July 27, he had another fit; and in August I have a remark that his mouth was still drawn. My notes at this period are very meagre. I was attending the child from the Dispensary, and did not, therefore, enter the case in my private note-book. There did not seem much the matter with him, but this flatness of one side of the face; and this lasted, for, on July 20, 1860, I find that I ordered him some bichloride of mercury. The distance of the parents from the Dispensary, and from my house, with the uniform condition of the child, prevented the treatment from being carried out quite as I desired.

I have now reached the year 1861, when his last illness was upon him.

On Jan. 3, 1861, his age being fifteen years and three months, he presented the appearance of being "baned" by the cold, being thin, miserable, and never warm. In

two days, however, he was again sitting up. On the 20th, he was seized with fits, for which I ordered calomel and compound antimonial powder, and a blister, which was not applied. The fits ceased within half an hour of my visit; and he recovered his senses, and was become much better, when on the 30th he overbalanced himself and fell out of his chair. He was very much frightened by his fall, and complained of his head for a few days. I may, with propriety, observe that he had very little power of describing the situation of pain; it was in his head, or in his stomach, but he would seldom point out with his hand where the pain was seated; and as he always lay in one posture, it was very difficult to examine the various parts of his body; he had also lost a great deal of strength.

On March 1, I found him again sitting in his chair; but his cough, which he had had for some time, was very violent. His position rendered it very difficult to auscultate the chest; and when I did put the stethoscope to the apices of the lungs, I did not find much the matter, as will be shewn presently. During the month of March I saw him frequently. His suffering was great from disturbance of the *primæ viæ*, requiring frequent purgative doses, and his cough was extremely violent, not yielding at all to sedatives.

With a slight improvement during April, he gradually sank, and died on May 5th.

EXAMINATION OF THE BODY, twenty-one hours after death; Mr. Banner of Delamere Street assisting. The body presented a curved appearance; partly in consequence of not having been laid out straight directly after death, partly in consequence of the legs having been drawn up always as he lay in bed, and partly from a projection of the head, which all but compelled him to lie invariably on the right side of the head and right half of the nates. On measuring the head, the various lengths found at three and a half years of age were again found, with a slight variation attributable to the amount of hair, and to a possible difference in the way of making the measurement. It was perfectly clear that the size of the head had not varied during twelve years. The scalp adhered more firmly than usual to the bone; and the skull was completely ossified all round with the exception of three or four spots, principally on the left parietal bone, where there was membrane only. None of these spots was larger than three-quarters of an inch across. The projection of the skull backwards was found to have been caused by the constant pressure on a pillow in infancy, when the expanded skull was still membranous, so that the fluid poured out into the ventricles had bulged out the membranous skull by its own resistance to pressure; and when I mention that the ventricles contained not less than three pints of a serous fluid, it will be readily understood how constant pressure on one side of the head should have produced a bulging out in that part where there was pressure only from the inside of the brain. The substance of the brain was firm, and perfectly healthy; nothing was found which could have given rise, directly, to the fits which the child had at intervals during his life, except the expansion of the substance of the brain. The veins running over the brain were large; but not a trace of tubercle could be found in the membranes.

On opening the chest, the right lung was found to be firmly adherent to the side of the chest, and the left slightly so. The presenting part of the lungs appeared healthy, but inclined to be emphysematous. On removal of the lungs, the adhesions on the right side were so firm that the lung itself was torn through, disclosing a gangrenous portion; and the bases of both lungs were full of tubercles, and in a state of inflammation, being filled with blood, partly, of course, from gravitation after death. The upper lobes of the lungs did not contain a single tubercle, and it was clear that the aëration of

the blood must have been recently performed solely by them.

The gangrenous portion of the lung was precisely that part upon which the child lay, and from which he could not have been moved without great resistance on his part, for he invariably lay in one position; but I conceive that his complaining of pain in the stomach must have been caused by this inflammation at the base of the lungs; for no disease, except enlargement of the mesenteric glands, was found in the abdominal cavity. I may mention that the pubes was covered with hair, but there were no other symptoms of puberty.

I believe that the effusion of serum into the ventricles of the brain, at the age of from three months to a year, was completely stopped at that time, and that a state of health supervened; such health as could exist with three pints of fluid in the centre of the brain; that the fits which he experienced from time to time were brought on by some irritation of the stomach from indigestion acting upon the overloaded and expanded brain, and that intelligence was slowly developed as the extended masses of brain matter received strength from age. To speak of intelligence seems hardly correct; it was the intelligence of a mere child coupled with some powers of observation on what was said or done in his presence, as he often told his mother what had occurred during the day; but I believe that he could not always recall to memory my name, though he knew me perfectly when I called to see him or some of his brothers and sisters, yet, I was told, he often spoke of me.

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CUTANEOUS ERUPTION PRODUCED BY BUTTERCUPS.

By EDWARD GARRAWAY, Esq., Faversham.

A LITTLE girl, aged 5, was brought to me a few days since, whose legs, from the hips downwards, were covered with a mixture of vesications, bullæ, and pustules, of the most anomalous character. Here and there would appear a perfect specimen of the *pompholyx solitaria* of Willan and Bateman; then blisters of indefinite shape, some being two or three inches in length, and perhaps the eighth of an inch in breadth, looking as if the part had been scored by a hot iron; near these would be large prominent globular pustules, resembling *scabies purulenta*. There was more or less erysipelatous redness accompanying the eruption, together with a certain amount of febrile action. My diagnosis was at a nonplus. However, a few questions solved the mystery. It appeared that the little girl, three days before, had gathered a large handful of buttercups, and, delighted with her acquisition, had taken them to bed with her; in the morning they were discovered, scattered, crushed, and faded, between the sheets.

On going to the roadside where the flowers were gathered, I discovered them to be the common *ranunculus bulbosus*.

The question suggests itself, how far the juice of this tribe of plants might be rendered available as a counter-irritant. I think I have heard of professional beggars producing artificial sores by buttercup-juice, but am not sure of this.

AMERICAN NAVY. The following naval general orders on rank and precedence have been issued:—Surgeons of the fleet, and surgeons of more than twelve years, rank with commanders. Surgeons of less than twelve years, rank with lieutenants. Passed assistant-surgeons rank next after lieutenants. Assistant-surgeons rank next after masters. Commanders and executive officers, of whatever grade, while on duty, take precedence of surgeons.