

question of the life or death of the patient; it is a subject too, if ever there was one, that involves matters of pure surgery, and nothing but pure surgery. The matter in hand is, therefore, eminently practical; it is useful rather than ornamental. I am not choosing something for you out of the common, such as tying a ligature on the aorta, an operation I hope you will never be called on to attempt, nor I either: nor is it resection of the acetabulum or knee with pathological antopsies and all the rest of it; no, it is the simple subject of tapping the bladder in retention of urine.

Now, you all know perfectly well what retention of urine means, so I need not go, as is customary, into any learned definitions. Perhaps, we will say it is "a condition of things in which there exists an inability of the bladder, to get rid of its contents;" that will serve for a definition as well as anything else. No one with his senses about him now confuses retention of urine and suppression,* so we need not dwell on the good old diagnostic marks of the books that you read on that point; then incontinence of urine, of course, we have nothing to do with.

Well, so much for that. I think if I read you the case, which forms the text, as it were, of the present lecture, you will be able to follow me better.

A man, aged fifty-two (in No. 8 bed), described as one of the better sort of cabinen, in rather good circumstances, was brought to the hospital in Christmas week. We are told by himself that, for a period extending over something like eighteen years, he had had slight symptoms of stricture, but prior to his admission to the hospital he never had had severe retention of urine, or anything at all like his present suffering from inability of the bladder to expel its contents. Well! the house-surgeon tried in vain to pass several instruments; warm baths and warm fomentations to the hypogastric region were tried; catheters of various kinds; small doses of opium; hyoseyamus, &c.

30th.—Attempts made with various catheters; he was ordered hot bath again, and to have tinct. opii 40 drops; the swelling of the hypogastric region is very considerable.

31st.—Twelve o'clock.—I ordered opiate enema of starch in a very small quantity, so as to be retained in the rectum, and about a drachm of tinct. opii. Two o'clock.—I saw him again and eight ounces of urine has come away under the relaxing effect of the opium, which was directed to be continued as well as the fomentations, &c. Eight o'clock.

* Suppression of urine means an interruption of the secretion of that fluid none being formed or discharged; examples of this affection were very common in the cholera of late years.