

## PRACTICAL MEDICINE.

### INFANTILE ENTERALGIA.

Dr. John Boyd, in an interesting paper in the *Edinburgh Medical Journal* on an affection which he terms "infantile enteralgia," remarks: "In male children especially, from two weeks to four or six months, of a lively mobile temperament, we very frequently observe them subject to attacks of abdominal pain, which come on suddenly, generally at night, commencing at a little after twelve, and continuing with slight intermissions to four or five in the morning. The little sufferer draws up its knees and tosses about in the nurse's arms; the cry varying from an agonised scream to a plaintive wail, with intervals of sobs and long-drawn breaths; but neither the pulse nor the respiration is accelerated, nor is there usually any abnormal elevation of temperature. The natural language of the malady denotes unmistakably that the bowels are the seat of the pain, though the tenderness on pressure does not seem excessive. After a time the local uneasiness appears to have produced a quasi-hysterical action on the nervous system. If the infant be old enough to be attracted by any glittering object, or a series of moderately loud noises, he may forget his woes for a time, and all at once recollect them and resume his ululation as vehemently as before; bearing on his countenance that expression of conscious ill-usage which is so generally seen in those afflicted beings of maturer age and opposite sex, of whom it has been quaintly remarked that they are so very ill because there is so very little really the matter with them. After disturbing the whole household for the best part of the night and exhausting all the curative efforts of the establishment, the young gentleman falls quietly asleep, and seems so well and fresh next day that the history of the dreadful nocturnal events sounds like a baseless romance when related even to sympathetic auditors. Yet such experiences constitute one of the most painful trials which the youthful primipara is called upon to undergo, although *Materfamilias* of fifteen or twenty years' standing sustains them in general with philosophic equanimity.

"The enteralgia referred to does not commonly depend on mere fecal accumulation. In thriving children who are not as yet subjected to the pangs of teething, the alvine evacuations are comparatively scanty so long as the maternal lacteal secretion is the sole or preponderating source of nutrition. In such cases I have invariably noticed, that so long as the abdominal suffering lasts, the urination is suspended, that a true ischuria renalis exists for the time being; and that whenever micturition occurs the crying and distress cease, presenting exactly the same termination as that of the *passio hysterica*—the copious flow of a large quantity of clear limpid fluid. Acting on this indication, I have for many years

past been in the habit, whenever such attacks were brought under my care, of prescribing from eight to ten minims of spiritus etheris nitrosi in a drachm of water, to children of the age above mentioned. Generally after the administration of this draught there occurs a discharge of flatus from the superior or inferior orifice of the alimentary canal—the ether acting as a diffusible stimulant and carminative; but without exception the passage of urine in large quantity takes place within a few minutes after its imbibition, the cries cease, and the small patient sinks into a refreshing slumber. Whatever view may be taken as to the causation of the malady in question—whether it may depend on a non-secretion depending on a temporary congestion of the glomeruli of the kidney or a partial paralysis of the more elaborated and complex urinary passages of the male, or merely from the presence of flatus in the colon mechanically suspending the renal function,—the fact is well ascertained that the phenomena above depicted are extremely frequent in male infants of all classes, and every variety of social and hygienic surrounding; also, that in some instances very serious mischiefs have been the consequence of such nocturnal pervigil.

## PATHOLOGY.

### BLOOD-POISONING BY SEPTIC MATTERS.

At a recent meeting (*K. K. Gesellsch der Aerzte*) held on the 16th of last May, in Vienna, Prof. Stricker communicated the results of some experiments which had been made in his laboratory by Drs. Clementi and Thin, to determine the character of septicemic poisoning. The interest of the report arose from the discussion which Davaine's researches have provoked. This latter experimentalist claimed to have made the following discoveries: After injecting beneath the skin of an animal's neck a single drop of putrid blood the surrounding tissue became extensively infiltrated, and death soon followed with symptoms of septicæmia. The blood of this animal was then employed to inject other animals in a similar way, and was found to be more poisonous than the original putrid blood. A third and fourth were then injected, each with the blood of the preceding one, and in this way 24 in all were experimented on. The results seemed to show that the toxic power of the septic material increases by dilution. Stricker undertook to test these statements. He inoculated 25 animals with healthy, 23 with putrid, and 73 with blood diluted by transmission. Of the first series 4 died. Of the second series 11 died. In experiments with diluted blood, where it had passed through 15 different animals, 53 of the 73 died. From this it appeared that even the very small amount of one twelve hundred and fiftieth part of a cubic centimetre of poisonous material could

cause death when injected hypodermically. Davaine's statements that organisms form in the blood and increase by every transmission was not sustained by investigations. Stricker found numerous colourless bodies in the blood of these animals, but he did not regard them as organisms, but rather as protoplasmic bodies.

The following facts he regards as ascertained:

1. That transmission greatly increases the injurious and fatal action of putrid matter.
2. That the original disease was infectious, but that through inoculation it became contagious.
3. That, though it be not proven, yet it is probable that the special poison is a living contagion (*contagium animalium*), for such rapid proliferation is only possible in organized material.
4. That the poison is diffusible, and is not destroyed by boiling.—*Allg. Wien. Med. Zeitung*, 20, 1873.

## HOSPITAL NOTES.

### THE CHARITY HOSPITAL, NEW YORK.

We call the following from the *New York Medical Record*—

*Burns*.—A lotion recommended for burns consists of—R Sulphate of zinc, grs. xv.; compound spirits of lavender, ℥j.; water, one pint.

*Erysipelas*.—The only successful method of treatment which has been employed for arresting the spread of the disease, is the formation of a boundary-line by means of a blister. For this purpose, the vesicating collodion is ordinarily used. If erysipelas attack a limb, encircle it with a blister about one-half or three quarters of an inch wide, at a free point above the part affected. A very common, and most excellent, application for the erysipelas, is an ointment composed of—R Sulphate of iron, ℥j.; soap or common ointment, ℥j. M. In this way the iron can be used, and the stains avoided which are so annoying when it is employed in solution.

*Simple Cerate*.—A modification of this dressing is used which renders it much more agreeable, and much easier of manipulation in cold weather. It consists of oil of almonds, in the proportion of ℥j. to ℥j. This makes one of those little variations in surgical dressings which may add to the comfort of the patient and the convenience of the surgeon.

*Persistent Vomiting*.—There was a case of persistent vomiting in connexion with Bright's disease. The patient was a female, and this was the second attack she had suffered. A number of months previously, in her first attack, the vomiting was sufficiently persistent to reject all remedial agents employed for its relief, and it was supposed that the patient must then and there die. She was placed, however, upon treatment by the use of raw beef, or so nearly raw that it could hardly be said to be an infringement upon the proper use of terms to call it, raw, and