

tion, the induction of inflammation and its consequences in that part of the cord more immediately under sympathetic connexion with it. We have to remember the anatomical relations of the uterus with reference to the nerves which supply it, and maintain its relations with other parts of the system. The uterus and its ovaries are mainly supplied by the spermatic plexus descending from the renal in which the lesser splanchnic terminates. This nerve arises from the tenth and eleventh thoracic ganglia of the great sympathetic, which communicate directly with the anterior branches of the tenth and eleventh spinal nerves. It was opposite the tenth dorsal vertebra that the ramollissement of the cord had taken place. The circumstances of the case are of too striking a feature to permit us to consider this as a mere coincidence. The uterine irritation, dependant on the prolapsus can be viewed in no other light than a cause, and the myelitis as its effect; the irritation at the peripheral extremities of the uterine nerves, inducing, in the first instance, by reflex action, symptoms of spinal irritation alone, which, from continued application of the exciting cause, degenerated into inflammation with its consequences.

#### CONTRIBUTIONS TO CLINICAL MEDICINE.

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#### CASE OF RHEUMATIC ARACHNITIS.

Catherine Benson, ætat. 24, the wife of a soldier, of highly respectable character and appearance, delicate looking, slender figure, but previously enjoying good health, was admitted into the Montreal General Hospital, under my care, on the 15th September, 1845, having been complaining for about a fortnight of severe rheumatic pains in her shoulders, neck, and back of her head, and scalp, which she attributed to cold, having carelessly exposed herself to cold, while overheated with washing, being at the time very insufficiently clothed. She had not much done for her, except such homely remedies as she thought of herself, for several days, till the head became affected, when it was shaved, and cloths wet in cold water and vinegar were applied, which aggravated her complaint to such a degree, that she applied for admission into hospital. At the time of admission, the pains of her head and back of her neck, were excruciating, and darting like *tic doloureux*, or tooth-aché; and during the paroxysm were so severe, as quite to overpower her. The pupils were generally slightly dilated; her respiration hurried and noisy; tongue, for the most part, dry and reddish, being partially covered by a white fur, in patches. The epigastrium, slightly tender on pressure: there was some perspiration about the forehead;

no indications of cardiac disease were discovered; pulse 120, compressible, and of natural volume.

The case was now viewed as a rheumatic affection of the meninges. She was ordered calomel gr. ij., and opium gr. ʒ, every third hour, and a blister to the back of her neck, and stimulating liniments to her neck and shoulders. For several days her complaint appeared stationary; although its intermittent character gave her intervals of ease and comparative quiet, still the pains of her shoulders and neck became more prominent, as the more excruciating neuralgic pains of her head moderated, being masked (as it were) by their severity, during their persistence.

On the 19th it is reported, that her pupils were more dilated, and apparently insensible to the light; the *alæ nasi* slightly dilated at each inspiration, and although she was quite sensible, and expressed her intelligence by a nod, or other motion of the head, she appeared unable to speak. Her pulse 96, soft, and of a natural volume. Apprehending that the opium might have some deleterious influence, it was discontinued, the calomel ordered alone, as formerly: sinapisms were applied to the legs, and mercurial ointment, ʒij. ordered to be rubbed into the axilla and groins. Next day, the report states, that she derived much benefit from the treatment, could now speak a few words very connectedly and sensibly, but complained that her memory was very deficient, and that she could not find words to express herself. The pupils were more natural; her headache easier; the pains of her shoulders as before.

The following day she was still better; she spoke with more freedom and ease, her memory still, however, very deficient, of which she complained; her mouth, becoming tender, she was ordered to discontinue the mercury, to take hydriodate of potass, gr. iij. three times a day, and to have some chicken broth.

From this period, she appeared to go on pretty well; her complaints assuming a periodic character, an exacerbation taking place each alternate day, the intermediate one being one of ease: she was ordered, in addition, to take *vinî colchici*, ʒss. and *tinct opii*, gtt xx ter. die.

October 1st.—The report states, that she goes on improving; her complaints observing the periodic character; the exacerbations commencing towards evening, and generally continuing about 24 hours, during which time she could speak but little, or move her head, from the severity of the pain: during the period of ease, she could speak freely, and appeared to enjoy herself much; there was no febrile excitement, and the affection was quite of a neuralgic character.