

MEDICAL SOCIETY FOR MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

ST. CATHARINES, May 2nd, 1871.

The Chairman, Dr. Comfort, opened the proceedings by a few remarks upon the so-called hæmorrhagic diathesis. He believed it to be dependent upon more than one pathological condition of the system, the first and probably the most common being a deficiency of fibrin in the blood, and, secondly, some imperfection in the capillary circulation, such as rupture of these vessels or exosmosis, from tenuity of their coats. Again, might not the deterioration in the fibrin result from want of vitality in the blood, dependent upon lack of nervous force. The blood remains fluid after ligature of the pneumogastric nerve in animals, in death from certain poisons, from zymotic disease, from Electricity, and from the bite of venomous reptiles.

A lady from the United States, aged 35, who had been a patient of Dr. C.'s, some years ago presented the symptoms of this condition of the blood in a very marked manner. At each period the conjunctiva would become congested, the nails red, and a passive uterine hæmorrhage would supervene, extremely persistent and exhausting. This lady, Dr. Comfort has been informed, has since died, shortly after her return to one of the Southern States, and her friends informed him that the cause of death was supposed to be cancer of the womb.

The want of tonicity in the capillaries might be remedied by stimulating the nervi vasorum, by the application of heat to the origin of the spinal nerves and by Faradisation, while the Ferric Alums and vegetable tonics and astringents should be of benefit in improving the constitution of the blood.

The most distressing hæmorrhage had occurred in such persons from the gums and alveoli after lancing the gums, of which we had a fatal instance some years ago in this town, and also after the extraction of teeth. The Dr. stated that the removal of teeth in chlorotic anæmic persons was seldom followed by even the ordinary amount of bleeding.

The hæmorrhagic diathesis appeared to be a vicious condition of the circulation *per se*, frequently hereditary and as far as he had been able to remark impossible to permanently remove or cure.