

Her intelligence seemed perfect when she was sharply addressed, and her attention engaged on the speaker, but she quickly relapsed into a kind of muttering delirium, to which eventually was superadded subsultus tendinum. She calmly expired on the morning of the 28th.

A known objection on the part of her relatives to post mortem examinations, precluded an examination of any other part than the spine. Forty-eight hours after death, the vertebral canal was opened, and the spinal column exposed. The theca was found throughout its whole length much congested, but without any evidences of inflammation. On running the finger along the cord, at the tenth vertebral space it suddenly sank into its substance. The theca was slit up, and here, and here only, was any disorganization of the cord perceptible; for the space of about an inch it had undergone a complete ramollissement. The softened tissue was white, (not brown or lees colour, as usually seen), and the disorganization appeared to have extended through the cord, involving the grey as well as the medullary portion. The cervical portion of the cord was firm, and of the usual consistency.

The close attention which has been bestowed upon pathology, has of late years elicited much useful information relative to the influence which appears to be exerted upon the brain and spinal column by deviations from a healthy state in the various viscera of the body. The sympathetic phenomena which thus develop themselves, have been chiefly studied with reference to gastritis and inflammatory affections generally of the mucous and serous coats of the intestinal canal, and more lately still of the kidneys and urinary apparatus. The principal laid down by Dr. Stokes, "that in all diseases, as a general rule, there is an affection of the nervous system, either local or general, or, in other words, that there is no disease which we could name, which does not present signs of an affection of the nervous system, either *quoad* the suffering organ itself, or of an affection more general and diffuse," is a perfectly just one, consonant with the experience of all who watch narrowly the progress of diseases, and is a necessary consequence of that very intimate nervous communication which is found to exist, either directly or indirectly, between all parts of the animal organization. Most usually, the reflex phenomena which are thus induced, are the consequences of simple irritation of the nervous centres, not the slightest abnormal appearances having been discerned in the brain or spinal cord after death in cases in which such phenomena were even markedly developed. Instances of this nature might be multiplied, but they are unnecessary, as brevity is my object; but

while thus in the generality of cases, irritation at the peripheral extremities of the nerves, may excite no appreciable morbid alteration in the organization of the brain or cord, there yet can be no doubt, that when long continued and of an exalted character, it may be productive of such effects. The following case, quoted in Stokes's Lectures on the Theory and Practice of Physic, will illustrate this point:—"A soldier was wounded in the right shoulder with a lance, in consequence of which he got an aneurism of the axillary artery, for which an operation was performed. At the moment the ligature was tightened, he experienced exquisite pain in the situation of the ligature, which extended to the brachial plexus; this continued to the next day, and then ceased. On the fourth and fifth days the pain returned with increased violence, and continued until the seventh day, when it became intolerable. He was bled, but without any good effect. He then became comatose. His head was drawn backwards; he had alternations of stupor and excitement, and soon after expired. On dissection, the ligature was found to embrace some of the principal branches of the brachial plexus, and there was an abscess of the posterior lobe of the brain, extending to the optic thalamus."

In the Transactions of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of London for 1841, there will be found an interesting and highly important paper by Mr. Stanley, demonstrating unequivocally that paraplegia may be induced by severe spinal disease, as a secondary affection, without any necessary alteration of structure in the cord or its membranes; affording this valuable practical result, that paraplegia is not always necessarily dependent upon specific disease of the cord, and disclosing a means of resort to a more rational line of treatment in some of such cases. In two only out of the seven cases narrated by Mr. Stanley, were any morbid changes in the cord perceived, and these changes consisted chiefly in vascular turgescence and slight effusion; but these are sufficient to demonstrate the effect on the cord of a persistent irritation at the peripheral extremities of the nerves which supply the kidneys.

To these cases illustrative of the principle laid down, might be cited others, in which post mortem examinations have revealed the existence of inflammation of the meninges of the brain, as a result of inflammatory affections of the intestinal tube. That uterine affections are equally competent to induce similar consequences, cannot be doubted. We recognize such effects in the mania, delirium; occasionally convulsions, and other symptoms, dependent on the irritation, to say the least, of the great nervous centres, propagated from the suffering organ. The case which I have given affords another proof of the effect of such long continued irrita-