

ly some resemblance; and probably at the commencement the quantity of fluid in the cysts was smaller than on the patient's admission, giving an elastic feeling to the cyst when half full, or an appearance of solidity if tense, instead of a sense of fluctuation. I remember a patient of Mr. Babington's, in whom there was similar obscurity, and on dissecting out the tumor, a small encysted tumor, of the size of a large nut, was found entirely surrounded by a thin layer of the structure of nevus.

The appearance of fluid, however, was quite distinct on her admission; but from the inflammatory attacks, which she was said to have had for some months, I was not quite certain that it might not be purulent; for a chronic abscess in a new growth, such as a nevus, might easily be without redness or other sign of matter. I believed it was a cyst, however, and on the 18th, when I had learned her previous history, I punctured the upper tumor with a grooved needle internally where the sense of fluctuation was greatest, and about half an ounce of straw-colored transparent fluid came away; and on the 15th it is stated that two small tumors had begun more apparent above the elbow by the lessened size of the chief cyst, and seemed also to be cysts. On the 17th I punctured the same cyst again, and let out six drachms of the same fluid, and I now rubbed the cyst a good deal in order to inflame it. On the 20th I again punctured it, as it was refilling, and rubbed it still more, as well as the small one above, which contained the same fluid as the other. The effect of this was, as the notes say, to make the tumor hot and red, and sore and painful; and the warts increased in size, and many spots of the vessels of the nevus were now seen on the surface of the skin like those of the lower part of the arm, and even these latter vessels became larger; but notwithstanding this, the fluid reformed in each of the cysts. I now therefore altered the plan in some measure, and on the 4th of May I again punctured the cysts with a needle, and rubbed them a good deal, and then I applied a compress over the tumor to bring the sides of the cysts in contact, and kept them so by a splint along the front of the arm, secured by stripes of plaster and a bandage.

This treatment has apparently succeeded in perfectly obliterating or curing the cysts; no inflammation now remains in them; the various vessels of the cutis and the warts have returned to their former size; there is no pain or inconvenience in using the arm, or handling the tumor, which is quite soft and elastic like the lower part of the arm, except at one spot, which may possibly be a minute cyst at the lower end of it, deeply situated; but as I punctured it without seeing any liquid, it may only be a little condensation of the cellular tissue in that part of the nevus, such as is often felt in such structures. I have directed her to come again in a fortnight to show herself, after she has returned to her employment, which she has not been able to follow for above nine months.

The cysts appear to be obliterated, as I have said, but it may be, perhaps, that there is only a new action excited in the sac, by which the tendency to secrete fluid is destroyed; just as it is with regard to hydrocele, in which it does not appear necessary to produce adhesion of the sides by means of organized lymph, though the membrane is not refilled after injection; at any rate, bring the sides of a serous cyst in contact, and even without inflammation the disease is sometimes cured, as I have seen in a cyst of the liver containing not less than three pints of liquid: still more may you expect a cure if inflammation be previously excited, as in our patient was done by friction.

Had not this plan succeeded, it was my intention to have made a larger opening into the cysts, and dressed them in with lint, which is another method of curing these serous encysted tumors, for sometimes it is necessary to obliterate them by suppurative inflammation, instead of the adhesive; indeed, an incision or a seton is not unfrequently required; as, for example, with encysted hydrocele of the cord, and what is called hydrocele of the neck, which can very seldom be cured by a less degree of inflammation. I was unwilling, however, in the forearm (indeed, you will seldom be justified in doing so in any part of the body) to resort to an incision till I had first proved that milder remedies would fail, because the inflammation of an abscess of any kind, in connexion with the numerous muscles and tendons of the forearm, is liable to cause much impediment to their freedom of motion; it seemed, moreover, particularly undesirable in this case on account of the connexion of the cysts with the blood-vessel tumor, as unhealthy supuration and sloughing to some extent would very probably have followed it.

MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE.

MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH.

CASE OF AN INFANT POISONED BY LAUDANUM—APPLICATION OF ELECTRO-GALVANIC SHOCKS—RECOVERY.

By DR. MARTIN BARRY.

The case was that of an infant nine months old, whose mother had given it laudanum, "to put it to sleep" while she went out. The laudanum was part of a pennyworth bought for this purpose at a neighbouring shop.

The case was first under the care of Mr. Colahan, a pupil at the Edinburgh Maternity Hospital, who, however, was not called in until seven hours after the laudanum had been swallowed; and even then he was kept in ignorance of the fact that the poison had been given two hours later. The infant presented the usual symptoms of poisoning with opium, and emetics of tartarized antimony and ipecacuanha were given. Vomiting was produced and kept up by warm water; but of course, after so long an interval, not with the expectation of bringing back any of the laudanum. The infant at length sank into a state from which it seemed impossible to rouse it, and was then brought to the Maternity. The breathing of the child was very noisy, and the pupils were contracted to almost obliteration. Dr. Barry applied electro-galvanism, using for this purpose the apparatus made by Abraham and Danser, of Manchester. At first the mixture in the trough contained one-thirty-second part of strong sulphuric acid, the quantity of which was afterwards increased to one-sixteenth, and the pointer in the index was gradually brought round to the very strongest power. The wires were applied in turn to every part of the body, and the child was roused by their application, and kept awake, or at least kept moving an arm or a leg, so long as they continued in contact with it. When the wires were removed, even for a few seconds only, it sank sound asleep, the respiration continuing unchanged. At the end of about three hours, a little more susceptible, and perhaps somewhat more energetic in the movement of its limbs, but with this exception, the infant exhibited nothing like a satisfactory revival, until the tremendous current had been made to pass through its body for four hours and three quarters. Then, however, it really did revive, the respiration becoming more quiet, and the pupils undergoing some dilatation. From this time it recovered, required no further treatment, and in a few days was quite well.

In order to arrive at something like an estimate of the quantity of laudanum swallowed, Dr. Barry caused a pennyworth to be bought at the same shop. This was measured, and the quantity, one drachm and a half, compared with what was found remaining of the other pennyworth above referred to, allowance being made for about the same quantity of water said to have been added. Say, therefore, laudanum dr. iss. + water, dr. iss. = dr. iij., of which a teaspoonful is said to have been swallowed. There was found remaining less than two teaspoonfuls, the same spoon being used as that with which the child had been dosed. Thus, a drachm of the mixture had disappeared, half of which was laudanum, or say a few minims less than half a drachm, say twenty-five minims.

Dr. Christison remarked, that if the infant had really taken twenty-five minims, it was very surprising that it had recovered. He recommended Dr. Barry to ascertain whether the laudanum was of the average strength, as from numerous experiments he had made, he had found the quantity of opium to vary greatly in various specimens of the tincture.

The Secretary has since obtained the following additional particulars from Dr. Barry:—The laudanum given to the infant was procured at Anderson's, druggist, No. 147, Canon-gate. That about half a drachm was the quantity swallowed,