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CONTRIBUTIONS TO CLINICAL MEDICINE.

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Case of Dropsy.

I was called to see Mr. S., at the Exchange Coffee-House, a few months ago, at a late hour of the night. I found him lying in bed, suffering much from acute rheumatism, his right arm being quite powerless, and his left nearly so; from this cause he was scarcely able to move in bed. He had also ascites, his abdomen being much swelled, as were also his lower limbs, from anasarca. His countenance was excited and bloated, his eyes staring, and the conjunctiva blood-shot; his stomach was very irritable, and he could not retain any ingesta. He had thrown up some bilious matter, but in general the ejections were merely whatever drink he took; he had constant insatiable thirst, and was very restless, and said that he had scarcely any sleep for two nights. His pulse was small, and about 90, tongue foul.

The hurry of his manner, and his general appearance, conveyed the impression that he laboured under delirium tremens.

He stated that he was a merchant, and had lately arrived from New York for the object of superintending the sales of some merchandize, which he found the parties he had entrusted to dispose of were not doing so advantageously. He attributed his present state of excitement to the journey he had performed in his debilitated state, to his annoyance, and "last (though perhaps) not least," to having drunk too freely, since his arrival, of porter. He stated that his usual habits were temperate. His appearance, however, seemed to contradict his statement; although his recent excess in his weak state might sufficiently account for the present degree of excitement. The asomnia might also be attributable to the severity of his rheumatic pains, or it might, perhaps, with equal propriety, be supposed consequent on his irregularity. However, as neither cause counter-indicated the use of an anodyne, this remedy naturally suggested itself. A draught of solution of acetate of morphia, and tinct. hyosciamus, aa ʒss, was ordered, and

directed to be repeated every three hours, till sleep was procured.

I found him the next morning much easier, and more composed; he had passed a good night, and had slept comfortably. Although his rheumatic pains were easier, his arms were still quite powerless, and he was unable to leave his bed from the swelling of his legs. He stated that he had been many years in India, but was obliged to return to Europe in consequence of liver complaint. About six months after his return, he had so far recovered his health as to be able to resume his profession, and left England for the United States. On his passage he had a very severe attack of rheumatism, which quite deprived him of the use of his upper extremities, and had been under treatment ever since his arrival in New York. He had recovered the use of his left arm, but his right was helpless. He had lately perceived his abdomen and legs swell. His complaints, however, had all been much aggravated by his journey into Canada, which necessity had compelled him to take in his weak state; and being now very desirous to return home, he purposed only remaining until he was sufficiently able to bear the journey. The distension of the abdomen prevented a satisfactory examination of the liver. The urine was free from albumen; general debility, derangement, and loss of tone of the stomach being the most prominent symptoms. His bowels were freely moved by a dose of jalap and calomel, and the anodyne was ordered at night, as before; a liniment to be rubbed on the painful parts. Next morning, I found him still better, and more free from pain. He could move the left arm with tolerable freedom, but was obliged to carry it in a sling—the right quite powerless. He sat up for a short time, but the swelling of his legs and feet prevented him from walking. Although his eyeballs were prominent and staring, there was no appearance of delirium tremens; the conjunctiva had rather a bilious tinge; his constitution appeared quite broken down. He now admitted that, for a great many years, he had been a free liver; his illness, however, preventing him from indulging as formerly, until he took his departure from New York, since which he had been constantly toping. I ordered him a grain of sulphate of quinine three times a-day, the anodyne at night, and the liniment to be used as formerly.