

the feces and favor their escape, or force must be employed which would endanger the rupture of the colon, distended already to the utmost. One resource remains, scarcely preferable to death perhaps, but which it is our duty to suggest—the opening of the colon, after the plan proposed by Callisen and practised by Amusat and others. This may succeed, and an artificial anus being established in the left loin, life may be prolonged.

The feasibility of this operation is placed beyond doubt by no fewer than three successful cases, lately published in the 33rd volume of the *Medico-Chirurgical Transactions*; the operations having been performed respectively by Mr. Field, Mr. Clarkson, and Mr. Pennell. The region, the left lumbar, selected for this operation is most favorable, there being a space on the outer margin of the quadratus lumborum muscle, where the wall of the abdomen is thin, and admits of the colon being opened without wounding the peritoneum. By Mr. Field and Mr. Clarkson, the operation by transverse incision was preferred; by Mr. Pennell, that by the vertical incision. By Mr. Field difficulty was experienced in distinguishing the gut, fascia having been mistaken for it, a difficulty to be obviated by recollecting that the tissues to be divided, as stated by Velpeau are—

The very thick skin.

The cellulo-adipose tissue.

The origin of the transversalis muscle or its aponeurosis, and a second layer of cellulo-adipose tissue; of which a mass lying between the colon and transversalis must be dissected through, and much of the fat removed before the bowel can be reached.

The relief consequent upon this operation is complete. But, as time advances, a decided disposition in the outer orifice to contract manifests itself, and leads, eventually, to renewed difficulty and danger. Would tents of sponge densely compressed, as used by Dr. Simpson to dilate the uterus, have power by expansion, to keep the orifice patent?

The inflammation developed in cases of obstruction may call for the abstraction of blood, either from a vein or by leeches; but, inasmuch as the inflammation is the consequence, not the cause of the obstruction, blood should be drawn

cautiously, with a view to its control, for it cannot be extinguished, the cause remaining. Moreover, when the cause of obstruction is not insuperable the signs of tenderness and pain (which would seem to demand the loss of blood) are due to irritation and spasm rather than to inflammation, and are best relieved by opium; and hence the value of this remedy. The alleviation of pain, indeed is a main point in the treatment of obstruction from any cause, for pain may destroy life; and in proportion as pain is urgent so should opium be given. In a case related to me by the late Sir Astley Cooper, of obstruction caused by the lodgment of a concretion in the ileum, the excruciating pain destroyed life in eight hours.

If blood be drawn too freely at the outset it would leave the patient ill prepared to bear up against prolonged suffering with want of nourishment, and might in this way turn the balance against him. In case of intus-susception, not relieved by operation, the only chance of life is the separation of the invaginated portion of the gut, gangrene having first occurred; a process which requires time: so that if the powers of life have been reduced by excessive blood-letting, as well as by the disease, the patient will sink before nature can accomplish her task. Blood, therefore, should be drawn with circumspection.

Fomentations and warm baths are valuable adjuvants; they soothe pain, relax spasm, and, by diminishing suffering, save power.

Of all the remedies at our command, enemas in conjunction with opium, are perhaps the most essential, and where the obstruction is not invincible, contribute more than any others to bring about a happy termination. Enemas composed of bland fluids, should be injected twice in the day, to the fullest extent the bowel will receive, by the aid of O'Beirne's colon tube, a most valuable instrument in these cases.

Among the other remedies employed, as a last resource are tobacco, fluid mercury, the cold douche, and galvanism; the two last said to be successful occasionally. But mercury is of no use as far as I have seen, and is otherwise open to great objection. Tobacco is a valuable, because often a successful remedy; but on account of its poisonous proper-