

adult. The dose is best given in an evening, and should always be followed by perfect quiet in the room. This last is an important element in all cases of injection of morphia. The urine should be examined, and the drug withheld or given with caution if albumen be found. I think, however, there need be no great fear of it during albuminuria only secondary to the heart disease, unless there be reason to suppose that excessive renal congestion be present, and head symptoms at hand.

Once or twice I have injected morphia in small doses to mitigate suffering in patients with heart disease associated with granular kidney, and in whom no head symptoms had appeared. I have done it, however, in fear and trembling, and I think the risk is better avoided.

(To be continued.)

Ether as a Stimulant-Sedative in the Neuroses of the Aged.

(From the Practitioner.)

By the kindness of Sir James Alderson, President of the College of Physicians, we have been put in possession of the following facts. They were recently communicated to Sir James by Sir Frederick Pollock, late Chief Baron of the Exchequer, who has been good enough to desire us to publish them.

The long and arduous legal career of Sir Frederick Pollock is too well known to require more than a passing reference; it may be stated here, however, that he always combined with his proper legal studies and duties a large amount of literary, and especially of scientific, reading. A more active and continuous devotion of life to intellectual work has rarely been practised by any one. Favoured with an almost absolutely unbroken health, Sir F. Pollock has reached the great age of 86, yet still retains his mental energy and activity; while as regards physical status, with the exception of the inevitable decline of muscular energy, he at present scarcely betrays his age in any noticeable manner. About six years ago, however, he was led to adopt ether-inhalation by the occurrence of symptoms which, though not dangerous, were annoying, and had a chronic depressing tendency. Besides a certain amount of indefinable nervous malaise, he suffered specifically from gastric flatulence and painful spasm, occurring almost constantly during meals. His attention was drawn to the possibility of getting relief from these inconveniences by taking some stimulant-narcotic, and he remarks, in one of his notes, that many elderly persons, who have lived intellectually laborious lives, have taken to the use

of tobacco, or of opium, with a view to assuaging sleeplessness, and other nervous troubles which are very common at that period of life. Both tobacco and opium, however, disagree with Sir F. Pollock, or at least fail to produce the required effect. He therefore made experiments with the best rectified ether, which he inhaled from an ordinary bottle applied to one nostril; and it soon became apparent that a few whiffs, taken in this manner, were sufficient at once to quiet spasm and pain, and to induce a general tranquility of the nervous system. It is needless to say that only very small quantities of ether can enter the blood in such inhalations as are now described, since not only does much escape at once into the air, but of that which is actually breathed a large proportion is simply expired again without being absorbed; and the smallness of the dose physiologically appropriated is sufficiently proved by the fact that true anæsthetic phenomena are never produced. At most, when several strong whiffs have been taken continuously, especially if the temperature of the ether has been raised by holding the bottle a long time in the hand, a dizziness has been produced—just enough to amount to slight vertigo when the standing posture has been attempted; but on careful enquiry it does not appear that this degree of etherisation is necessary for the relief of the uncomfortable sensations on account of which the practice was originally adopted. So far from consciousness being disturbed or clouded by the use of the ordinary small doses of the vapor, it would seem that the intellect is both tranquilized and fortified by them. They fail to produce the least numbness of peripheral sensory nerves. Nor do they at all compel sleep; although, by removing nervous irritability, they evidently favor its occurrence when it would otherwise be difficult to procure.

(To be continued.)

Compound Fracture of the Patella—Recovery.

By J. P. ALDRIDGE, M. D., F. R. C. S.

We clip the following case from the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* as an instance of what modern conservative surgery can accomplish. For our own part we would hesitate to undertake such a case without the assistance of a careful nurse and a tractable patient. An impetuous Irishwoman, once under our care for dislocation of the patella, nearly lost the use of her knee joint for life through persisting in getting up the same evening the dislocation was reduced, a proceeding she repeated day after day, only going to bed when