

From the morbid appearance in and about the rectum it is probable there was originally scirrhus, and that the canal was subsequently opened by the ulcerative process, which made such ravages in the contiguous parts; but the fatal termination of the case is not immediately attributable to the disease of this gut, but clearly to the irritable stricture of the ileum; though, had there been no other disease, the cancerous state of the rectum and adjacent parts would have certainly caused death in a short time.

It appears that by this operation nearly five years were added to this man's life, four of which were passed in comparative comfort; and I am inclined to think, that, in many recorded cases of obstructed intestines which have terminated fatally, the lives of some individuals might have been prolonged had recourse been had to it.

This operation has been successfully performed for imperforate anus by M. Duret of Brest on a child fifty-eight hours after birth. It was twenty-five months old when the case was communicated to Sebatier, who mentions it in his *Medecine Operatoire*, T. iii. p. 336. It has also been successfully performed in consequence of a scirrho-contracted rectum by Mr Pring of Bath. The patient was a female sixty-four years of age. She survived the operation a year and nearly four months, and then fell a victim to a cancerous state of the gut. See *London Med. and Phys. Journal* for January 1821 and February 1822.

In two cases recorded in Mr Pring's communication, as operated on by Mr Freer of Birmingham, the operation has not been attended with success. The first was on a child without an anus. It survived three weeks, and then died apparently from marasmus. The other was on a farmer, forty-seven years of age, who survived the operation only nine days.

In an article in the *Dictionnaire de Medecine and de Chirurgie Pratiques*, Mr Baron's case is particularly alluded to by that eminent surgeon, Baron Dupuytren, who concludes his account of it in the following words, "Cet exemple pourrait être imité dans les cas semblables."

ART. XII.—*On the Administration of Wine in Low Fever.*

By W. LAW. Esq. F. R. C. S. E.

THOUGH this subject belongs more to the department of the physician than to surgery, there occurred here during a late prevalence of typhoid fevers among certain classes, and those the better, so many cases of unfavourable termination, that I

would willingly see the attention of the profession more fully called to this object.

Analogy, while it is ever a guide of the first importance, leaving us in no want of a rule on more trying occasions, as well as those of more usual occurrence, where the circumstances are of a nature to admit of comparison sufficiently complete, still must frequently fail in affording those results on which our confidence ought to be implicit. Food, as well as stimuli acting more immediately on the nervous system, will, in certain circumstances of health, and even in those not strictly so, confer a degree of strength, which is not necessarily transient, if the intended means have not been augmented beyond bounds; but this common, and not to be disputed, opinion, is not to be acted upon without attentive observation of many accompanying circumstances.

It is not my intention to enter here into what may be the difference between the immediate and remoter effects of very generous solid nourishment on the animal economy, or the greater or less amenability to common inflammatory diathesis, from the habitual use of strong drinks, but I wish to direct inquiry to the benefit we may expect from these last, in that state of the frame which constitutes fever of a typhoid character. It will hardly be doubted, that, even in health, food and stimuli too often or unseasonably employed, and without a certain reference to the hours of sleep, will not add to the vigour of the body; and in fever it becomes a question of considerable nicety, to determine to what extent the diseased change in the functions modifies the effects of strong stimuli introduced into the alimentary canal.

Much food, and that containing animal matter even in very minute quantity, being now so generally understood as requiring to be withheld in fever, and the patient's inclinations also generally coinciding with the denial, we need not for an instant dwell on that; but the probable and real benefit of stimuli deserves to be farther examined. While, as I have said, they have certain known effects in health, and while these are also seen to be capable of being produced to a certain extent in disease, it ought not to be assumed that there is not a bound to this, which must be very cautiously approached. We may discover, that when we fail in reaching it by the employment of the means in a certain quantity, apportioned to the individual, increase of dose, too frequent interruptions to sleep, and too short intervals between each administration, shall sometimes more than disappoint us, causing nausea, and that sinking of the vital powers which may in that manner be produced.

It will hardly be doubted, that, when we do reach the point

we desire, as indicated by the pulse at the time, slight inadvertent excess in the administration may be much to be regretted,—that there is a reaction not exactly uniform in its period of accession,—that it is sometimes sudden, and becomes difficult to calculate on. The absence of other stimuli used in infusion, to which many are now habituated, twice daily, and which are sometimes lost sight of on occasions of dangerous fever, may have depressing effects, of no slight consequence, if we are to judge in any degree from the effect on the system, when these are withheld from it in its ordinary state.

Valuable as wine, cautiously administered, and *when* indicated, is, in low fever, and fatal as typhus too often is, when treated perhaps in the best manner, yet probable injury accruing from the causes described, where there has been every attention on the part of the practitioner for the recovery of his patient, deserves careful inquiry, more particularly when we reflect that the disease is of no unfrequent occurrence, both idiopathically in the province of the physician, and as a symptom, though more free of infectious character in that of the surgeon.

So far as my own observation extends, I am of opinion, that, if strong stimuli used in a certain quantity do not produce the effect we desire, a much larger really depresses. Many, doubtless, entertain a similar opinion; but, if correct, it is sometimes not acted upon. Knowing, as we do, that cases have recovered where much wine had been employed, it is not easy to assign the exact quantity which may be safely used; but in general it appears that an English pint of Portuguese or Spanish wine, or an equivalent in strength of ardent spirits among water, during the twenty-four hours, ought fully to serve the purpose of sustaining the strength of adult patients in typhus; and a much smaller quantity will on many occasions be sufficient.

The employment of mercury to the extent of free ptyalism, in very aggravated forms of typhus, is not without its advocates.

ART. XIII.—*On the Efficacy of Water-Dressing, or the Utility of Water as an application in the treatment of Wounds, Ulcers, Diseases of the Skin, &c.* By JOHN M'FADZEN, M.D. Surgeon, Buttevant.

HAVING heard about two years ago of the extraordinary sanative effects of water-dressing in the cure of incised, lacerated, contused, and gun-shot wounds, as also in punctures received in dissection, in the cure of ulcers, and some diseases of