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Observations on the Effects of Camphor applied externally, in some cases of Retention of Urine. By Mr John Latham, F. R. S. Surgeon at Dartford. Vide Medical Communications, Vol. II. 8vo, London.

THE paper before us contains different cases, in which surprising good effects were derived from the external application of Camphor. And, if the same benefit shall be derived from it in similar cases, its introduction, in this manner, may justly be considered as a discovery of great importance in the practice of medicine.

In the first case which Mr Latham relates, the patient was a gentleman upwards of 70 years of age, thin, and of a delicate constitution, but tolerably healthy, temperate in his diet, and used moderate exercise. On the 10th of November, he had been caught in the

rain while on horseback; and, on the following day, had some uneasiness in making water, but not much greater than he had often before experienced; as, for some years before, he had not been able to retain his urine, for any considerable length of time, without inconvenience. On the 14th, a total retention of urine took place, attended with violent and painful efforts to void it, a quick pulse, and some degree of thirst. From that time, it was always necessary to draw off his water by means of a catheter; although, in the mean time, several plans of treatment were adopted. Bleeding, evacuating the bowels with *ol. ricini*, and the use of the *femicupium*, were changed for bark, and the application of cloths dipped in cold water to the pubis. It was soon, however, necessary to return to the first mode of treatment, on account of the increased irritation, and marks of inflammation. Musk, in large doses, was next employed, but without advantage.

Mr Latham, having read of the good effects of the external application of Camphor in stranguries, and having observed, that its application produced a more copious flow of urine

rine than usual, and likewise recollecting, that it is sometimes employed to counteract the irritation of cantharides on the urinary organs, thought that it might possibly be of use in this case. Accordingly, on the second application of a liniment, prepared of oil of almonds, with as much camphor as could be dissolved in it, which was to be used every four hours, the patient voided about half an ounce of urine, and continued to void it, in larger quantities, from time to time, till the 22d.

The use of the catheter (which had been introduced sixty-seven times) was now no longer necessary; and, by proper remedies, and a restorative diet, the patient recovered his usual strength; nor had he afterwards any return of this complaint.

Mr Latham relates another case, the subject of which was a poor woman, of a delicate constitution, who had been seized with a retention of urine, in consequence of exposure to cold. In this case, also, the camphorated liniment succeeded, after the failure of several other remedies. He concludes this pa-

per with observing, that, in two instances of retention of urine, after difficult labours, which continued longer than usual, he had applied camphor externally, with the desired success.

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