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III.

History of a Case, in which remarkable Adhesions of the Intestinal Canal, terminated fatally. By Dr Andrew Willifon, Physician in Dundee.

BARBARA SHARPE, aged seventeen years, of a florid healthy complexion, and robust constitution, was seized suddenly, on Sunday 23d May last, with acute pains all over her abdomen, but more particularly in the left hypochondrium, and small of her back. These continued to increase in severity till Monday 31st, when I was desired to visit her.

She had always enjoyed exceeding good health, never having had any complaint, except that, about two months previous to this attack, she had got a fright, that had occasioned a suppression of the menstrual discharge, which had not again returned.

I found her in very great agony, from the sharp pains in her bowels, which she could compare to nothing else but the piercing of swords. She could not ly long in one posture; but was continually tossing and rolling about in the bed. Her belly was somewhat swelled. It felt hard and tense, though no fluctuation was perceptible to the touch. The swelling extended upwards to the cartilago ensiformis. A hard tumour was distinctly felt in the left hypochondrium, which she could not suffer to be pressed. She complained constantly of nausea, and inclination to vomit; so that nothing she swallowed had been retained on her stomach for any length of time. She had been obstinately costive for some days, and had taken a few aloetic pills, but with no effect. Her urine was scanty, of a deep red colour, with a lateritious sediment. Her thirst was great, and she had entirely lost her appetite. Pulse small, hard, and rather quick.

I first took twelve ounces of blood from her arm, which appeared to indicate an inflammatory diathesis. I then directed the following nitrous purging powder to be taken, and to be repeated four hours after, if necessary.

R Pulv.

R Pulv. Jalap. drach. fs.

— — Crem. Tart.

— — Sal. Nitri *aa.* gr. xv. M. p. d.

Water-gruel, acidulated according to her taste with lemon juice, was ordered for common drink; and a large blister was applied on the left side of her belly.

June 1st. She had one large stool after the second dose of the powder, and complained of much nausea afterwards. The blister had risen well, but had produced no mitigation of the pains, which continued as intense as ever. She had frequent vomiting, especially on taking down ever so little food. Her belly was always bound. Two table-spoonfuls of a saline julep, with twenty drops of laudanum in each dose of the julep, was ordered to be taken every two hours, and an ounce of castor-oil at bed-time.

2d. She felt no alleviation of symptoms; and the constant retching continued. What she vomited was exceedingly bitter, and had a yellow appearance. The julep had caused no abatement of the pains in her bowels; and it was repeatedly thrown up, along with much bilious matter. The castor-oil was likewise rejected. Fomentations and the warm bath,

in various forms, were then tried; but were used without affording the smallest relief. The swelling of the abdomen rather increases.

Rep^r. Julap. cum additione Sp^t. Nitri dulc. drach. ii. A laxative injection to be given in the evening.

3d. She slept very ill. Two purging injections were exhibited last night, without effect. She complains of gripes, nausea, and intolerable bitter taste in her mouth. Omit^r. Julap. anod. Cap. Decoct. Tamarind. cum triplice Senna unc. iii. omn. hor. ad 4^m. vicem, donec alvus dejecerit.

4th. No effect was obtained, but vomiting, from every dose of the purgative. Pulse, nausea, and costiveness, as formerly. She complains much of the pains in her bowels. Rep^r. enema purgans vesp. et cap^t. cras mane Bolus ex P. Jalapp. dr. i. Calomel. gr. v. cum Conf. Rosar.

6th. The injection had no effect, though tried in different forms: some obstruction in the gut prevented its being thrown up, as it always returned immediately. Some small effect from the bolus. Abdomen still hard and
tense—

tenſe—Fricetur probe cum ol. camphorat. mane et vesp.

8th. Symptoms continue with unabated violence. Vomiting of bilious matter inceſſant.

℞ Laud. liquid.

Æth. Vitriol.

Spt. Nitr. Dulc. aa. drach. iii. M. Cap^t. cochleare parvulum omn. bihor. ex aq. font. unc. ii.

10th. She had taken an emetic of powder of ipecacuanha yeſterday, and had drunk largely of an infuſion of chamomile. The nauſea and retchings, however, continue to day, as formerly. Obſtinate coſtivenes remains. No ſenſible effect from the antiſpaſmodic drops. Omitt^r. Guttæ. Some obſcure fluctuation is perceived in the abdomen for the firſt time. Hab^t. Bol. Mercur. ut antea. Cont^r. ol. Camph.

11th. Some ſlight operation from the Bolus, which was retained. Urine grows more turbid and ſcanty. Thirſt increaſes.

℞ Pulv. Scillæ ſiccæ. gr. ii.

—— Diaromat. gr. iv.

—— Sal Nitri gr. x. M. p. d. f. vi. huj. cup^t. i. omn. 6^{ta}. hor. ex Julap.

Z 4 falin.

salin. unc. ii. Hab^t. haust. anod.
h. f. ex aq. Cinnam. ten. unc. i.
cum Laud. liquid. g^{tt}. L.

13th. Retained several of her powders, which operated twice yesterday. She threw up her anodyne draught both the nights. Om^r. haust. anod. Hab^t. haust. salin. inter effervescentiam. Con^r. ol. camphorat.

15th. No obvious effect, in stopping the vomiting, was produced from the effervescing draughts. No remission of symptoms has taken place. Om^r. haust. salin. Rep^r. Pulv. diuret. et Julap. salin.

17th. The powders were all taken; but without their former good effect. Repeated retchings followed every dose of them. She has considerable bilious vomiting to-day. Rep^r. Bolus Mercur. mane sumendus. Con^r. ol. camphorat.

19th. Retained her bolus; which, however, has not operated. She complains of gripes. R Sal. Glaub. unc. i. ss. Cry stall. Tartar. unc. ss. f^t. solutio in aq. bullient. unc. xii. Cap^t. unc. iv. om. hor. donec alvus responderit.

20th. She took three doses of the solution yesterday, but rejected them all. The pains in her bowels increase in severity. No operation

tion from the purgative. Rep^r. Bolus Mercurialis.

21^f. She threw up her bolus immediately after it was swallowed. She obstinately refuses to take any more medicines. All the symptoms increase in virulence. Her flesh and strength are much wasted. Pulse regular, but sinks daily.

22^d. This day, the matter she vomited, put on a different appearance: From a yellow colour, it assumed a dark brownish hue, as if mixed with grumous blood, and had a fetid smell. She threw up near six pounds of this coloured matter in the course of twenty-four hours. This appearance of the rejected fluid continued till June 30th, when she calmly expired. Some hours previous to her dissolution, a purging of a black, pitch-like, fetid matter, supervened, which occasioned the swelling of her abdomen to subside very considerably; and the tumour in the left hypochondrium entirely vanished.

Upon examination of the body after death, (along with my brother Doctor Willison, who had seen her several times during her illness), we found that a very uncommon degree

gree of emaciation had been produced. The cavity of the abdomen contained about six pounds of a dark-coloured ferous fluid. The omentum had been completely wasted; no vestige of it could be perceived. We were very much surpris'd to find, that a *complete adhesion* of all the intestines, small and great, had taken place. They had a livid appearance; and they adhered so completely, that it would have been impossible to have separated them by the nicest dissection. Their convolutions even could scarcely be traced; and they seem'd almost as if included in a round bag. The liver was not enlarged nor indurated; but a considerable number of red and purplish spots were detected upon its surface. The texture of the parenchyma itself was found; and there were no marks of suppuration having occurred in any part of it. The stomach was very small and contracted; but the *vasa brevia* had a natural appearance. The spleen, the gall-bladder, and its vessels, were of a natural size, and in a healthy state.