

along the arches of the palate, coats the posterior surface of the *velum palati*, sometimes surrounds and incloses the uvula; and at last descending, covers the internal surface of the pharynx and œsophagus, the larynx and trachea. That this is the frequent progress of the fibrinous exudation, I am convinced, from the careful and repeated observation of the phenomena during life, and upon dissection.

What is of much more importance, however, than the observation of a pathological fact, is the ascertained efficacy of a means of cure for this disease. Not merely have I repeatedly found the application of a solution of nitrate of silver completely successful in removing the fibrinous crust, covering the tonsils, velum and uvula, but I have been led to attribute the rapid alleviation and ultimate removal of all the other symptoms to this remedy, even in cases in which, from the severity and peculiar signs of the complaint, I had no doubt that fibrin had already exuded from the lining membrane of the larynx and trachea.

The solution which I employ is a scruple of nitrate of silver in an ounce of distilled water. By means of a large camel hair pencil, this solution is to be freely applied, once or twice a day, according to the severity of the symptoms, to the whole lining membranes of the fauces. The surface of the tonsils, or wherever else the fibrinous crust is actually in view, will of course be particularly attended to; but I do not hesitate to push the pencil to the lower part of the pharynx. This remedy, so far from being productive of any irritation, beyond the mere mechanical and temporary one attending its employment, uniformly alleviates the symptoms of croup, such as the difficult respiration, the barking cough, and the peculiar anxiety of the little patient. It has evidently such an affect upon the diseased surfaces, both those which it actually touches, and those which are continuous, as to induce them to throw off the false membrane by which they are covered, and it appears also to prevent the farther progress of the exudation.

46, Wilson Street, Glasgow.

## XI.

*On Tic Douloureux.* By Dr BORTHWICK, F. R. S. E., Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh.

HAVING had several opportunities of treating neuralgic affections since the case which I communicated, in a late

Number of the Edinburgh Journal, I am disposed to offer a few short notices of cases, which I consider not altogether unworthy of attention.

While in attendance upon a labouring man, Thomas M'Gill, a patient of the Royal Dispensary, his wife requested of me to give her something for bad headaches, to which she was subject, and which, as she stated, rendered her existence miserable. She was at the moment in pain, and seemed in a very pitiable state. Her headach was periodical, and she could tell within five minutes the time of its approach. She had used a variety of remedies, and was much debilitated by successive blisters, laxatives, and blood-letting. On examining into her case, it evidently appeared to be a neuralgic affection, her greatest agony being seated above the eyebrows, in and about each supra-orbital foramen.

As she had undergone every other plan of treatment, I prescribed the carbonate of iron, in small doses, for a day or two, and desired her to call on me in three or four days, which she did, and assured me that the headaches were already greatly lessened. I then ordered her to take a drachm of the iron three times daily, for a week; and at the expiration of this time, she came to me with a countenance beaming with joy, and declared, that her pain had totally ceased for two days past. I desired her to persevere in the use of the medicine for ten days or a fortnight, which she faithfully did, and has not had a return of headach for ten months.

I was consulted by a woman, *æt.* 67, who had come to town on a visit to her son, a shopkeeper in Edinburgh. She could scarcely move in consequence of a violent attack of lumbago, to which, for years, she had been a martyr. In a few days the pain across her loins was relieved, but it settled with great severity in the left hip, constituting sciatica. Having in vain tried the routine of baths, blisters, cupping, and diaphoretic medicines, it occurred to me that the nerves in this part might partake of *tic douloureux*, as well as those in the face; and I resolved upon giving a trial to the carbonate of iron, which produced a very great amendment, so much so, that after a month's use of it, in drachm doses three times daily, she generally laid aside her stick and crutch, and has continued well for a longer period (seven months) than she has experienced for several years.

JAMES LAW, sail-cloth weaver, *æt.* 40, complained of most violent headaches, which attacked him periodically, and which incapacitated him from his business. The paroxysms were dreadfully severe, and of two days duration. He had, as may

be supposed, tried many remedies, but hitherto without effect. This case seemed a fair one for giving a trial of the iron, and he was ordered scruple doses three or four times daily, and subsequently drachm doses, several of which he took with him to the country; and, on his return after some weeks, he called to inform me, that his headachs had gradually lessened in severity, that the intervals free from pain were much longer, and that he had been for some time quite well. The change in this man's general aspect was most striking.

I still feel disinclined to enter into any speculative reasoning on the pathology of neuralgic affections, or the *modus operandi* of medicine in relieving them. I have, as yet, only to do with facts; but I have no doubt, that the united exertions of practitioners in treating this class of diseases, will throw light on so very interesting a subject, and enable us to understand upon what principle such very speedy effects are produced in the animal economy. For it is now almost a settled point in practice, that iron will relieve, if not cure, tic douloureux (neuralgic affections generally speaking), as certainly and as speedily as quicksilver, in particular forms, will relieve and cure the *lues venerea*. The extent to which the *rubigo ferri* may be carried varies in several instances, and of course depends upon peculiar states of the stomach, and I have given it in a dose of a drachm and a half four times daily in severe cases; and at this moment a very tedious and aggravated case is getting well under this amount. I shall probably have permission to publish this case, which is the worst I have witnessed. I must again offer my tribute of acknowledgment to Mr Hutchinson for having encouraged the profession to the extended use of the remedy in question.

83, George Street, Nov. 1824.

## XII.

*Case of Death from Inflammation of the Gall-Bladder, occasioned by the Irritation of a Stone.* By DAVID SCOTT, M.D., Cupar-Fife.

OCT. 23, 1824. JOHN SINCLAIR, ætat. 43, of fair complexion, corpulent, married, by trade a tinsmith, was seized, on Saturday evening, with severe pain of the belly, accompanied with fever, great restlessness, and thirst. His wife, conceiving that it was an attack of colic, to which, she says, he was some-