which a sudden report was heard (proceeding manifestly from the pubic region of the mother), which almost started me from my seat. Some of the ladies present said it was as "loud as a pistol," though it had not a similar sound. The labour however progressed and was terminated in about an hour after this accident, but not without great suffering to the patient in the pubic and sacro-iliac regions, aside from the pains of expulsion, and which distress did not subside when the delivery was completed, and it was found that she was utterly unable to stand or to use the inferior extremities. Upon examination (a painful one, to be sure) the ossa pubes were found to move readily upon each other, and there was a general mobility of the bones of the pelvis, as well at the sacro-iliac junctions as at the symphysis pubis. I had her placed carefully in bed upon her *back*, in which position she generally lay for a number of weeks, for she could not turn upon her side without assistance. I had a roller about four inches wide and six or eight yards in length, passed round the pelvis, well secured and re-applied as often as it became loose or displaced. Pursued an antiphlogistic course to prevent inflammation, which however did supervene to such an extent as to render catheterisms necessary. With such a course of treatment she was able to walk a little in the course of six or seven weeks, (the pelvis being *well* bandaged,) but generally kept her bed for nearly three months (doing such light work as knitting, &c.), and found the pelvis strengthened by wearing the bandage, (which she learned very well to apply herself,) for a much longer time. Eventually the pelvic junctions obtained nearly their former strength; at any rate I attended her in her next confinement, about two years afterwards, viz., on the 17th July, 1838, at which time she had comparatively an easy parturient season, being delivered of a child of about seven and a half or eight pounds, and from which accouchement she had a very rapid convalescence.

ART. VIII.—*Cases illustrating the use of Sanicula Marilandica in Chorea.* By J. B. ZABRISKII, M. D., Physician to the King's Co. Almshouse.

THE publication of the following cases of chorea, which were treated successfully by the use of the Sanicula Marilandica, may lead to the trial of the virtues of this plant on a more extensive scale by other practitioners. The Sanicula Marilandica is an umbelliferous plant growing in marshes, or low and shaded ground, from two to three feet in height, and has its gashed, oblong and digitate leaves growing around the stalk: the fertile flowers are sessile, subternate, the others are barren, pedicelled and most numerous. The root is fibrous, aromatic, and possesses the active matter of the plant. Diluted alcohol extracts the active principle in some degree, but the best

form of administering it is in the powder of the dried root. It is highly tonic, and is used in popular practice as a favourite remedy in intermittent fever.

Case I. C. V. S., a girl of eight years of age, of fair skin, light hair and eyes, lively disposition, was attacked in May, 1837, with involuntary movements of different parts of her body. Her hands were constantly in motion; she had twitchings of the face, spasmodic winking of the eyes, and agitation of the whole of her body. All these symptoms gradually increased; her walk became very awkward; the spasmodic twitchings of the muscles of the face increased in violence and frequency; the motions of her hands were irregular and appeared to be involuntary, and her whole frame was greatly agitated. The spasmodic action was greatest in the arm and leg of the left side, although it extended to the right. As she was pale, lifeless, with tumid abdomen and constipated bowels, I suspected the irritation of worms, and administered some brisk cathartics, followed by anthelmintics, but without effect. These were followed by tonics and antispasmodics, but she still grew worse. The root of the cimicifuga racemosa was then given as recommended by Dr. Young in the ninth volume of this journal, but this was also inert. I then determined to try the effect of the sanicula, which is extensively used in popular practice under the name of black snake-root. Having procured a quantity of this, it was administered in doses of half a drachm of the powdered root three times a day mixed with water. The effect was well marked; the progress of the disease was at once arrested, although she had been getting worse until this day. In three days a very sensible improvement was perceived and in two weeks the disease was entirely removed.

Case II. E. B., aged ten, of delicate frame and sanguineo-nervous temperament, was afflicted with the symptoms of this distressing disease in the autumn of 1837. After using cathartics, opiates and tonics without success, she was put upon the use of the sanicula. Not having any of the root dried, some of the fresh root was made into a syrup by boiling in water. Under the use of this, the increase of the disease was checked, but she did not improve. After using this preparation for a week without any satisfactory benefit, the powdered root was given with immediate effect. She improved from that time, and in a short period was entirely cured. This shows that boiling water does not extract the greater part of the active principle of this plant though it may dissolve a small portion, as the syrup checked the onward progress of the disease and made it stationary, but did not relieve, while the effect from the powdered root was immediate. The active principle appears to reside in an essential oil, which was probably dissipated by the heat of the boiling water.

Case III. M. B., aged sixteen, of dark complexion, hair and eyes, very lively in disposition and constantly cheerful, who had previously enjoyed good health, felt in March, 1840, some of the symptoms of chorea, which she found to be gradually increasing. She had spasmodic motions of the face and eyes, a great disposition to involuntary motions of the hands, although she could control them by making a strong effort of the will; her mind was easily excited, irritable, and nervous; she was very restless and in constant agitation. The menses were not disturbed. After a brisk cathartic

she was put at once upon pulv. rad. saniculæ, which immediately prevented all further progress, and in a short time effected a cure. This was evidently a case of chorea in its incipient stages, and was arrested by a timely application of the sanicula.

Case IV.—M. S., aged eleven, had for nearly a year been subject to a severe attack of chorea. The spasmodic actions were very severe and constant, jerking of the hands very great, frequently so much so as to prevent her from putting a cup to her mouth; at times the convulsive actions of her limbs were so great that she could not walk, at other times she would be better, the symptoms remitting in violence. She had been subjected to a great variety of treatment by her family physician and several other distinguished medical gentlemen; all the most powerful means which are commonly used in this disease had been tried in vain. Being consulted in this case I gave her a quantity of the pulv. saniculæ to be administered in doses of a teaspoonful three times a day. This produced almost immediate relief, and in a short time caused all the most severe symptoms to disappear.

Some remains of this disease continued, however, for a time, although the severity was subdued, which were however gradually dissipated under a tonic plan of treatment.

Flatbush, *July 25th*, 1846.

Art. IX.—*Intestinal Obstruction from novel causes.*—By J. F. Peebles, M. D., Petersburg, Va.

Case I. Mrs. Hanbury, the wife of a small shopkeeper, having died under circumstances originating a suspicion of poison, I was requested by the coroner to make a post-mortem examination of her case. The history of her illness, so far as I could learn, was as follows. Soon after an altercation with her husband, during which a struggle ensued, and she was known to have used the most violent exertion, she complained of pain in the pelvic region, which increased and continued during the whole of her sickness. Her disease was most accurately diagnosed by the attending physician, Dr. Cox of this town,—who saw her perhaps the day succeeding her attack—as acute enteritis.

The most judicious and active treatment was employed. as local and general depletion, &c., without relief, and she sunk on the fourth or fifth day with many of the symptoms of strangulated hernia. The deceased was a finely-formed athletic woman, apparently about thirty years old. She had borne several children, and at the time of her death was but two months out of a confinement. On exposing the abdominal cavity, a quantity of pus mixed with flaky serum, was observed, floating among the intestines. Everywhere were seen traces of the highest degree of inflammatory action. The attempt, in carrying on the examination, to raise the small intestine, disclosed that it was firmly adherent, low down in the pelvis; and a further exposition of this cavity at once fully brought to light the true cause of all the mischief. The uterus, somewhat larger than natural, and firmly attached in its location, was seen protruding across the superior strait, to within an inch of the promontory of the sacrum; and between its fundus and that process two portions of the small intestine, the one entering into, and the