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THE EPIGLOTTIS : ITS ATTACHMENTS AND
RELATIONS TO SURROUNDING
STRUCTURES.

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As a teacher of anatomy now, for several years, when endeavouring to explain and simplify the description of the larynx and adjoining parts, I have always experienced some difficulty when following the description in the books. I have endeavoured to reconcile the actual state of things with that description. My difficulties at once beset me when the region of the epiglottis was approached, and whilst following almost word for word the description as found in the books, I was conscious that the arrangements so described were not found in nature.

The epiglottis may be looked upon as a fence or partition, moored by various bands between the oral and pharyngo-oral cavities.

The epiglottis is attached by its lower pointed extremity to the angle between the two alæ of the thyroid cartilage. It stands on this pointed extremity as a cone resting on its apex.

The epiglottis is formed of a piece of fibro-elastic cartilage, with thick, sharply-cut edges ; these edges curve backwards slightly, and are embraced by the mucous membrane on the inner and outer aspects of the aryteno-epiglottidean folds.

The mucous membrane on the inner aspect of the aryteno-epiglottidean fold passes directly on to the posterior surface of the epiglottis over its free border, which is quite evident from behind ; on the outer side of the aryteno-epiglottidean fold, the mucous membrane does not come in contact with the anterior edge of the free border, but passes upwards and outwards at some distance on to what will presently be described as the hyo-epiglottic membrane. The whole anterior surface of the epiglottis rests upon, and is, as it were, glued to, a membrane almost entirely composed of elastic tissue, thin comparatively, but very strong.

This membrane is attached below to the whole length of the hyoid bone from tip of great cornu to great cornu.

Above, it is co-extensive with the epiglottis in the middle, and passes off on each side to a little above the great cornu of the hyoid bone, forming two prominent folds at present most incorrectly described as the lateral glosso-epiglottic ligaments.

I say most incorrectly described, because the folds have absolutely no connection, except from the continuity of the mucous membrane, with any portion of the tongue. The unattached portion of this membrane, *i.e.*, that portion above the great cornu of the hyoid bone, passes upward and forward, and spreading out, lines the fossa for the tonsil. The anterior aspect of this fold is covered by mucous membrane, continuous with that on the tongue.

The posterior aspect is covered with mucous membrane, continuous with that on the outer aspect of the aryteno-epiglottidean fold.

Below, the posterior aspect of the hyo-epiglottic membrane forms the anterior boundary of a pyramidal space, through which the superior laryngeal artery and nerve pass to their destination. The base of this space is formed by the usually-described thyro-hyoid membrane, which, as I trust I shall presently show, does not exist. I have never been able to find any fibro-elastic membrane, as described by the books, between the hyoid bone and the thyroid cartilage. A thin fascia lining the under aspect of the thyro-hyoid muscle, and covering over a quantity of cellular tissue and fat in the hyo-epiglottic space, is all that is apparent. This fascia is co-extensive with and intimately attached to the hyoid origin of the thyro-hyoid muscle; a well-marked interval existing between the two portions on opposite sides.

A ligament, described as the lateral thyro-hyoid ligament, resting upon, and external to, the middle constrictor of the pharynx, is a well-marked and important structure, rounded cord-like, $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch in length, and extends from the tip of the great cornu of the hyoid bone to the tip of the upper cornu of the thyroid cartilage.

NEW INSTRUMENTS AND THERAPEUTICS.

CARPENTER, G. A. (London).—**Lamp for Laryngoscopic and Ophthalmoscopic Examination.** *Lancet*, January 14, 1888.

DESCRIPTION of a lamp for the double purpose, and which can also be converted into an ordinary reading lamp. It is made by Messrs. Down Brothers, St. Thomas's Street, London.

Hunter Mackenzie.