

A Mirror

OF THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY IN THE HOSPITALS OF LONDON.

Nulla est alia pro certo noscendi via, nisi quam plurimas et morborum et dissectionum historias, tam aliorum proprias, collectas habere et inter se comparare.—MORGAGNI. *De Sed. et Caus. Morb.* lib. 14. Proœmium.

IMPLICATION OF THE HIP-JOINT.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S	{	<i>Excision of Hip-joint</i> ...	Mr. COOTE.
		<i>Acute Inflammation of Hip-joint.</i> ...	Mr. STANLEY.
ST. MARY'S	{	<i>Excision of Hip-joint</i> ...	Mr. URE.
ST. GEORGE'S	{	<i>Amputation at</i> ...	Mr. LANE.
		,,	Mr. TATUM.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL.

DISEASE OF THE HIP-JOINT IN A BOY OF SIXTEEN YEARS, WITH SUPPURATION, CARIES OF THE HEAD OF THE FEMUR, AND DISLOCATION; EXCISION OF THE JOINT; RECOVERY.

(Under the care of Mr. COOTE.)

Of all the recent cases in which excision of the hip-joint has been performed, (our series of which is brought to a conclusion to-day,) none seemed to be so especially suitable for that procedure as the subject of the following case. As we had occasion to mention before, the bone had been dislocated for some time; it had formed fibrous adhesions; the suppuration from a single sinus was comparatively trifling; the acetabulum, so far as could be ascertained, was healthy, at any rate it was quiescent—that is to say, all diseased action had entirely ceased within it; and lastly, and assuredly not the least important, the structures around the dislocated bone were pretty healthy. The position of the limb was very faulty, rendering it utterly useless in the event of healthy ankylosis. This alone made the poor lad fretful and miserable, and was well considered by Mr. Coote and Mr. Wormald, when determining the proposed means of relief. As we expected when seeing the operation, everything has turned out well, and although but five weeks have elapsed since it was performed, not an untoward symptom has shown itself, and we have no doubt this will prove one of the best recoveries. The lad's general health has also materially improved, under the use of good diet, wine, and nursing, and he is quite cheerful. The following is a brief account of his case:—

Thomas H.—, aged sixteen years, admitted, in September, with disease of his right hip-joint, of between two and three years' standing, commencing as inflammation from a cold, going on to suppuration, and finally dislocation of the head of the bone into the ischiatic notch. He lay constantly on his left side, with the knee drawn up and thrown across the opposite thigh; the trochanter was felt further backwards than its natural position, and the acetabulum could be distinctly felt, most probably filled up. Has been in bed nearly the whole of two years, and has suffered greatly from severe pain. A consultation was held by Mr. Coote and Mr. Wormald, and they came to the conclusion that the head of the bone was dislocated backwards into the ischiatic notch, the acetabulum most probably filled up with fibrinous material, and, under the circumstances of having an utterly useless limb, which was always in the way, the most advisable measure was to remove the head of the bone. Accordingly, on the 21st of September, chloroform was given, when Mr. Coote made a semi-circular incision over the trochanter with the convexity backwards, and carefully dissected away the muscular tissues over it, so as completely to expose this part of the bone very firmly situated. It was, therefore, partly sawn through, and then detached with cutting forceps, the detached portion being laid hold of by Mr. Wormald with a forceps somewhat resembling those

known as the lion forceps; and on cutting away the muscular attachments, the head, neck, and part of the trochanter major, were got away. Altogether this proceeding was one of some difficulty, as the structures around were in a tolerably healthy condition, excepting immediately around the head of the bone itself, which seemed as if some fibrous adhesions had bound it down. The entire head was denuded of cartilage, roughened, eroded, and altered in shape, a portion of its surface, that corresponding to the attachment of the ligamentum teres being eaten away. It was not soaked in pus, as is sometimes seen, and it was far away from the acetabulum, which was not exposed nor meddled with, and, doubtless, not only free from disease, but filled up, as was believed. There were two or three fistulous openings posterior to the head of the bone, which had for some time been discharging an ichorous matter. In the removal of the diseased head, some care was requisite on the part of Mr. Coote, as the great ischiatic nerve was stretched over it, one of the causes of the constant pain complained of. It was not injured, through the able manner in which Mr. Wormald held the lips of the wound asunder with retractors. Two small vessels were tied, but there was scarcely any bleeding worth mentioning. The boy was then removed to the ward, when the limb was carefully adjusted on cushions for the present, so that it was left free.

Sept. 28.—Suppuration is freely established, and the wound has commenced to heal. He complains of nothing.

Oct. 10th.—Going on as well as could be desired; a good part of the wound has closed, and is healing; it looks quite healthy. The limb, which is not yet put up in a splint, is assuming its natural position; the decubitus being on the sound side. He eats two chops, and has four ounces of wine and two pints of porter daily.

17th.—Going on very favourably; the limb is getting further down in its natural position; his health seems perfect.

ACUTE INFLAMMATION OF THE HIP-JOINT IN A MAN, WITH EXTENSIVE SUPPURATION; INCISION INTO THE JOINT; FATAL RESULT.

(Under the care of Mr. STANLEY.)

We have thought the present case a proper one for our series, as the suppuration was so extensive, the result of an attack of acute inflammation, that the head of the femur was actually imbedded in pus, and would have required removal ultimately had the poor man lived, for the cartilages of the joint were entirely destroyed. The wide-spread suppuration precluded the possibility of cure, although a chance was held out by adopting the plan of an incision into the joint. An earlier resort to this proceeding might have held out a better chance of success. When such extensive mischief is present, excision of the joint is perfectly justifiable, other circumstances being favourable.

Benjamin D.—, aged thirty-seven, was admitted on the 8th of November into Darker ward. He was a stout, able-bodied man, employed on a railway, and, whilst suddenly stepping off a locomotive, he received a violent wrench in his hip. He also sprained his hip about three years before. The more recent injury was followed by an attack of acute inflammation of the joint, with great pain, and the formation of abscesses in front of the thigh. A probe could be passed on his admission along a sinus nearly fourteen inches long from below the trochanter up to the dorsum ilii. He had been treated in Dover for sciatica. After his admission he was put upon cod-liver oil and dilute sulphuric acid, with morphia, wine, and the most nourishing diet.

November 18th.—A free incision was made in front of the thigh, and much matter let out.

25th.—All the parts around were immensely swollen, especially over the joint, and infiltrated with pus; the limb was very painful and oedematous. The condition of the patient seemed to be almost hopeless. On this occasion most of the staff were consulted—Mr. Arnott, Mr. Skey, and others—as to what should be done, when the general impression was in favour of making an opening into the joint. This was effected by means of a long incision through the gluteal region down to the capsule, letting out the matter. The head and neck of the bone were scraped; both were ulcerated, the bone being besides denuded of periosteum, and quite rough. Mr. Stanley's patient had been seen before entering the hospital by Mr. Busk, who stated that the more serious symptoms had commenced as acute synovitis.

Dec. 21st.—The suppuration was most extensive, and the debility induced by its exhausting effects were so great as to produce a fatal result after the lapse of a short time.