

SIMPLE DISLOCATION OF THE CARPUS, BACKWARDS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I beg to forward for your valuable Journal the subjoined case. From the circumstance of the patient having been presented to me a few minutes after the occurrence of the accident, hence swelling, &c. being absent, I had a most favourable opportunity of ascertaining, without doubt, the nature of an injury the existence of which has been so much disputed. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

CHAS. EDWARDS, A.B., M.R.C.S.L.
Grosvenor-street, Cheltenham,
June, 1843.

— Stephens, aged fourteen, residing in Duke-street, in this town, applied to me, Oct. 14, 1842, stating that he had fallen on the palm of the right hand from a height of about ten feet from a ladder in a paper manufactory.

Upon examination I found a complete luxation of the wrist, the radius and ulna being thrown on the front of the carpus beneath the flexor tendons, the carpal bones being prominent on the dorsal surface; the hand turned backwards; the fingers slightly flexed, and incapable of further flexion or extension by the patient. I now applied as much extending force as would be necessary to reduce a displacement by fracture, the part was unmoved, and upon slight rotation there was no crepitus.

I next employed the test proposed by Boyer, and feeling for the situation of the styloid processes, I simply moved the hand as he directs. They did not change their situation, whereas, if a fracture had existed, they would have followed the motion of the hand. Counter-extension being now made by grasping the arm in the prone position with my left hand, my thumb being placed across the dorsal tumour (the carpus) and the middle and ring fingers over the palmar prominence (the extremities of the radius and ulna), by a pretty strong, but simple extension with my right hand, the displaced bones were immediately reduced with an audible snap, the return of the several parts to their respective natural situations being, at the same time, plainly felt, by the way in which my left hand was placed.

The tumours had now vanished, not returning, as they might, in case of fracture, by muscular contraction, and the powers of flexion and extension were restored to the fingers.

Upon again cautiously employing gentle rotation there was no crepitus, which would have existed in case of the coaptation of such an oblique fracture as could possibly simulate a dislocation.

The wrist was done up with a bandage

and splint, and kept wetted with an evaporating lotion, and in about a month the patient was allowed to make cautious use of his hand.

Thus, from the favourable period at which the above injury was examined, and the method of examination both before and after the reduction, the real existence of so rare an accident is placed beyond dispute.

I have both examined and stated the above case more minutely than I otherwise might have deemed expedient, in consequence of the declaration of so very high an authority as Dupuytren, that for various anatomical reasons the radius should always rather break than be dislocated from the carpus, and that there is not in all the records of surgery an unequivocal specimen of a true dislocation of the wrist-joint, the reputed cases being fractures of the radius close to the joint.

SMALL-POX ACCOMPANYING VACCINATION.

To the Editor.—Sir: Seeing in THE LANCET of last week (page 378) a case of this kind reported by Mr. Taylor, I beg to transmit you one which came under my observation some time ago. I was requested to visit a little girl, staying at the house of a medical friend, who had an eruption breaking out, which I gave it as my opinion was small-pox. My attention was then directed to two or three pustules on the arm, apparently about the fifth or sixth day of maturity, which I was told were the effects of ichor taken from a child whom my medical friend had previously vaccinated. Suffice it to say, the eruption proved to be small-pox, acquiring a moderate size, dying off at about the seventh or eighth day. The pustules on the arm progressed and assumed the usual characters, and the child was but a little indisposed. I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM SELF.
Lucas-place West, Commercial-road,
June 13, 1843.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

PROPOSED CHANGES IN BETHLEM HOSPITAL.

HITHERTO the physicians of Bethlem Hospital have only attended the institution twice a-week, and we believe scarcely ever met with the view of consulting on bad cases. On Tuesday last the general committee of the hospital adopted a resolution unanimously come to by a sub-committee of the governors, recommending that a physician be in attendance every day, and that the physicians meet once in every week for the purposes of consultation on cases that may require it. We are fully acquainted with all the proceedings which have taken place