

believe such deplorable apathy or ignorance to prevail ; but on such an authority as the above, it must be true. Contrasted with such distressing circumstances, it is gratifying to read, that in Lockton parish, Pickering (situated in the North Riding of Yorkshire, and having a population of 500 persons), only one death occurred during six months. After perusing these, as well as other interesting and instructive statements, the Registrar-General's Reports, although universally admitted to be most useful, cannot be too highly estimated, when smallpox, typhus, cholera, scarlatina, or any other malady, is the subject of investigation. To Mr. Farr, the public and the medical profession are deeply indebted, for the instructive manner in which he periodically digests and promulgates the information mainly furnished by the latter. England now stands pre-eminent amongst all civilized nations, in respect of medico-statistical documents ; and should Scotland, Ireland, and the chief British Colonies, follow so excellent an example, the facts collected would soon suggest social changes of the highest importance to all classes of the community.—*London Journal of Medicine*.

GUN-SHOT WOUND.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

NUMEROUS instances are given by authors of the escape of the intestines and other viscera from injury, in penetrating wounds of the abdomen. The following case occurring in this city a short time since, appears to me worthy to be enumerated among the remarkable ones of the kind.

On the evening of the 9th of this month I was called to see an Irish lad, 14 years old, by the name of ——— Kelley, who had received a shot during the disturbance among the Irish on that evening. I found the patient lying on his back, with a pale countenance, quick, difficult respiration, and complaining of intense pain in his abdomen and back. On examination, I found, immediately in the centre of the *epigastrium*, a circular wound of the size of an ordinary bullet, and apparently produced by that missile. Posteriorly, about four inches from the spinal column, and directly over the tenth rib, was another wound, corresponding very nearly in size and shape to the first. The rib at this point was also found to be severely injured—probably fractured. The hemorrhage from the wounds was very slight. After an examination, as minute as the nature of the injury would justify, I was convinced that the ball had not taken a circuitous and superficial course, but had penetrated and traversed this portion of the abdominal cavity. An opiate was administered, cold lotions applied to the abdomen, and strict abstinence and quiet enjoined on the patient.

On the following morning, his abdomen was found much swollen, and tender to the touch ; pulse frequent and small. Complained, as on the evening previous, of severe pain in the abdomen and back. He had vomited once during the night, but the discharge was entirely free from blood. Bled him freely from the arm, and continued the other treatment.

On the fourth day after the injury the inflammatory symptoms had in

a great degree subsided, and a mild cathartic was administered, without effect. The medicine was repeated, and an evacuation procured, in which no trace of blood was perceptible.

On the twelfth day, an abscess formed at the posterior wound, which, being opened, discharged a large quantity of pus, together with a round mass half the size of a robin's egg, composed of bits of coarse woollen and cotton cloth, which the lad identified as being fragments respectively of his coat, vest, and shirt, worn at the time the injury was received. A large callous formation over the injured rib yet remains; also some soreness in that region. In other respects, he is as well as before the injury.

One cannot easily conceive of a musket ball going through this portion of the body, without doing serious internal injury in some part of its career; and it will at once be objected, that the ball did not *penetrate* the abdominal cavity, but rather went *round*. In regard to this point, numerous and minute examinations have been made, by several medical gentlemen of the city, besides myself, and all are satisfied that the ball went through the body in a direct line.

E. K. SANBORN, M.D.

Lowell, Sept. 30, 1849.

PHYSIOLOGICAL INSTRUCTION TO WOMEN.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—I have frequently noticed that the members of the medical profession complain that their onerous labors, and their untiring zeal, in the cause of suffering humanity, are not duly appreciated; that they do not receive that respect due to their ennobling profession; "that there is a widening gulf between them and the people." Will you permit me to suggest one of the existing causes, which seems to me to be of sufficient importance to claim their attention and consideration for a few moments.

I would ask physicians, if, while wives and mothers have been asking for instruction in the physical laws of their being (that they might be the more capable of preserving their own health, and that of their offspring), they have responded to the call? Have they done what they could for the advancement of true scientific knowledge among females? I am not speaking in reference to the little band who are struggling, through so much opposition and so many difficulties, to obtain obstetrical knowledge; but I refer to the Ladies' Physiological Institute, which has been organized in the city of Boston for upwards of a year and a half, and numbers some five or six hundred members, mostly wives and mothers. *They* are seeking but the *general* rules of physiology, which physicians *can* give without *injury* to themselves, and with *incalculable benefit* to the Society. Perhaps a brief outline of the origin of the Society may not be out of place here, as some may not have been aware of its existence.

In the early spring of 1848, during the excitement which had been produced by itinerant lecturers upon physiology, a somewhat celebrated professor of elocution chanced to visit Boston, and being in possession of a manikin and some small models, the philanthropic wish to aid the ladies, and to dispose of his apparatus to the best advantage, induced him to