

— *The Popular Science Monthly* states that Dr. T. L. Phillips writes to the *Chemical News* concerning intestinal calculi, from the presence of which in the large intestine or the cæcum large numbers of horses die annually. These calculi are formed of highly crystalline concentric layers, and attain to eighteen or twenty inches in diameter. When so large as this they press on the walls of the intestine, producing violent pain and inflammation, which sooner or later cause the death of the animal. The calculi consist mostly of the phosphate of magnesia and ammonia, and the writer refers its production to the grain on which the animals are fed. He thinks if salt be added to their food there will be much less liability to the formation of the calculi. The ventilation and drainage of the stables are also matters of importance.

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## BOSTON CITY HOSPITAL.

### SURGICAL CASES OF DR. THORNDIKE.

[REPORTED BY GEORGE W. GAY, M. D.]

*Dislocation of Semilunar Cartilage; Reduction, with Partial Relief.* — Michael W., forty-five years of age, fell on the sidewalk December 9, 1876, striking upon the patella. He entered the hospital six days afterwards, unable to walk or to straighten the limb, but flexion was very good. There was a tender spot on the inner side of the knee-joint, just below the patella. The temperature of the joint was normal and the effusion moderate; patella movable. A small but distinct prominence was felt in the joint just below the internal condyle. By manipulation this body was pressed back into its place, and the motions of the joint were immediately improved. The after-treatment consisted of a ham splint and cooling lotions at first, followed by blisters in the later stages of the affection.

The patient's recovery was slow. He began to walk a little in two weeks, but as the lameness diminished the motions of the joint became more impaired, and at the end of two and a half months there was still some lameness and pain after walking, and also partial ankylosis of the joint.

It seems that this man had received an injury to the same knee twenty years ago, which compelled him to lay up for six months, and, as is so often the case in injuries of this joint, it had never been quite as strong since, and probably never will be again.

In marked contrast with this case was that of a man admitted under the care of Dr. Fifield, in September, with a recent dislocation of a cartilage in the knee-joint. Under ether the projecting substance was reduced by manipulation and pressure, with an audible snap. The motions of the joint, which were limited before the reduction, immediately became normal. He was discharged in four days, with good motion and very little lameness. This man's knee had received no previous injury, and hence he rallied quickly from this one, which was recent and not very severe.

The text-books say very little of this accident being a cause of chronic synovitis, but Dr. Thorndike has seen several cases in which the joint affection was plainly due to this cause. Permanent lameness and even ankylosis may

follow this injury, hence it should receive careful attention in diagnosis and treatment.

*Abscess in the Sheath of the Rectus Abdominis; Seton; Recovery.* — E. M., aged twenty-three years, first noticed a hard, painful swelling at the umbilicus in the middle of November last, which was soon followed by a slight discharge. He was admitted to the hospital December 20th. The probe entered a small sinus at the umbilicus and passed deeply beneath a hard, semi-fluctuating swelling nearly to the pubes, apparently underneath the rectus muscle. The patient had a gonorrhœa five months previous, but had recovered. Had received no injury, and seemed to be in a fair state of health.

January 3, 1877. Patient was etherized and a counter-opening made a short distance above the pubes, and a seton of silk passed through. The cavity of the abscess was found to extend beneath the abdominal muscles, and contained very fetid pus, due to its close proximity to the intestines.

The seton was removed in three weeks, and the abscess was entirely healed in four months, although the patient was instructed to wear an abdominal bandage for some time, to prevent the occurrence of a ventral hernia.

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#### LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

MESSRS. EDITORS, — How to prevent charitable institutions from being imposed upon has always been a hard question to solve in cities of any size, and it is not a matter of surprise that New York forms no exception to the rule.

As long as men have to struggle for subsistence there will always be a class, and that not a small one, who seem to make it their business in life to live as much as possible on others. The larger the population of any city, the more voluntary pauperism there will be, and this class is constantly being increased by ill-advised assistance. We no sooner start a new charity than we ask to be protected against this much-encouraged class, the willing pauper. I may shock some of your readers when I express the opinion that we in New York begin to educate the children of the poor for a life of dependence as soon as they are able to go about. As soon as a child is old enough, some kind-hearted but short-sighted lady makes it an "object" for the parents to send the little one to a Sunday-school in the morning; another kind-hearted lady makes it an "object" for the parents to send the same child to another school in the afternoon, so that between the two schools the children of that family get clothed, and perhaps fed; and can you wonder that in time some of these come to consider that they are to be looked after and cared for in this way all their lives?

Then there are dispensaries, where the whole family can go and receive medical attention and medicine, without any questions being asked or any fee demanded. Or if they are more aristocratic and wish the advice of older men, they are welcomed with open arms at the college clinics, and are even thanked for coming. Almost any specialist will treat free and encourage to apply to him a patient who is perfectly able to pay a fair fee.

There have been homes, "guilds," and "dispensaries" started more in the interest of the organized than for the benefit of the needy and suffering.