

WONDERS

DISPLAYED BY THE

HUMAN BODY.

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DISPLAYED BY THE

HUMAN BODY

IN ITS ENDURANCE OF

INJURY.

FROM THE PORTFOLIO OF

DELTA.

WITH ETCHINGS BY THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:
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WONDERS,

&c.



THUS saith Prince Hamlet of Denmark :

“There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy !”

Now, when the royal Dane asserted this proposition, he referred essentially to those spiritual visitations, to which they who believe, have applied the term *preternatural*.

In the material and palpable world, however, eccentricities are sometimes presented to us which well-nigh deserve a similar epithet, some of them being such rare exceptions to the common rule of nature, that although demonstrable, and therefore true, they will often, in the minds of those who see them not, exceed the limits of belief.

These derangements may commence in the structure of the infant in its *antenatal* state ; and when the abortive creature is expelled, we term it congenital monstrosity. Such are the defect or superfluity of members, the acephali or headless, the anencephali or brainless, and the amyelous or spinal-marrowless beings, the cat's heads, the united twins, the involution of one fœtus, or of mutilated portions or members.

within the body of another ; and the hermaphrodite. Such also is the *malposition* or displacement of organs : for instance, the existence of the *abdominal viscera* within the chest ; the mutual transposition of the contents of the *thoracic* cavities, to which we could refer even in our own dissections ; tending almost to establish the evidence of *Le Medicin malgré lui*, in exposition of the heart being on the right side, “ nous avons changé tout cela.”

After birth, there may be eccentric or unnatural growth, the sprouting of horns, the elephant leg, enormous *hypertrophy*, such as the immense tumor of the Chinese Hooloo, who died on the table during the operation for its removal ; and the multiform enlargements, so especially prevalent in the Chinese, Hindoo, and Tartar dominions. One fatty tumor, at the removal of which we ourselves assisted, weighed forty-nine pounds ten ounces ; and we were asked some short time afterwards, how the man was, who was the other day taken off from the tumor by Sir Astley Cooper.

In the same category we may place other eccentric secretions, as the curious carbonaceous discoloration of the tissues of the skin, and the excessive deposits of sand, &c. &c.

It is recorded by Dr. Tickner, of New York, that Miss Lucy P——, of Egremont, Massachusetts, suffered a lumbar contusion : twenty years after, succeeding to a severe disorder, ejection of sand from the stomach, &c. commenced, and then water was vomited for several days ; then an abscess burst on the abdomen, from which sand was discharged. At this time, the tongue was black and red, and spasms and convulsions supervened. After a time, forty-four lumps of sand were voided ; subsequently, she was passing sand at the same time from the mouth, nose, ear, side, &c. The sand, analyzed by Terry and Lee, was composed of silex, lime, and hair.

Among the most rare, strange, and impressive of these eccentricities, are luminous emanations or phosphorescence from the surface of the body, the evolution of animal electricity, and spontaneous combustion. A brilliant light, resembling that of the aurora, was seen playing about the face of Miss L. A——, ten days before she died of phthisis. It resembled often the reflection of moonlight dancing on the bosom of the water. Sir Henry Marsh watched it for an hour, when it disappeared. The face itself seemed as if painted white, and glazed; the breath was tainted with a very peculiar odour, resembling that of decomposition.— From the head of another young lady, in the last stage of consumption, about one hour and a half before her death, a luminous exhalation, pale as the moon, was seen to scintillate in a diagonal direction.

Now, this phosphorescence is the essential property of animal matter among the lower orders of the creation; the electric property is evinced also in the hair of the genus *felis* especially. But cases, rare indeed, have been presented even in the human being. We allude, in brief, to many of these eccentricities, and attach the names of the reporters.

The physician Fabri writes of a woman, whose hair sparkled with light when it was combed. Scaliger, of a like instance. Cardanus, of a Carmelite friar, from whose head scintillations were emitted whenever he removed his cowl. Eusebius Nierembergius, of the limbs of Frère Theodoric. Bartolin, of those of Gonzaga, duke of Mantua, which were often surrounded by these “*ignes lambentes*.” The physician Ezekiel a Castro, of the Contessa Cassandra Buri of Verona, whose arms were luminous when she rubbed them with her canbric kerchief. Eusebius, the same of Maximus Aquilanus. Licetus, of Francis Guido, and Antonio Cianfio, of Pisa. Padre Kircher, the Jesuit, affirms

that he saw in a grotto at Rome, brilliant light sparkling from the heads of his compeers, grown warm by walking: and Alphonso d'Ovale, "of men and hearts shining with the brightest light from top to toe" on the summit of the Andes.

Even the expression of belief in that marvel of animal chemistry—spontaneous combustion—will constantly excite the smile of the sceptic, because the phenomenon is very rare. The circumstantial evidence, however, is complete, and of its degrees we may glean from the records of curious pathologists fragments for our illustrations.

John de Viana (*de peste Malagensi*). From the body of Madame Treilas, wife of the physician of the Archbishop of Toledo, Cardinal de Rayas, issued with perspiration a peculiar matter or quality which seemed so to imbue her linen, that her chemise emitted scintillations like those from grains of gunpowder.

Peter Borelli, (*Obs. Cent.*) tells of a rustic whose linen, whether hung up and dried, or placed wet in his trunk, often ignited and consumed. Peter also assures us, that he saw ejected bile, boil like nitric acid.

Peter Bovisteau tells of a youth whose hair emitted electric sparks, and became completely singed, and reduced to ashes.

Marcellus Donatus (*Mirab. Hist. Med.*) records, that during the era of the first crusade, invisible fire burned in the intestines of many, and some amputated a hand which had ignited, to check the progress of the burning.

Then, my Lord Bacon, (*Nat. Hist. Univers.*) informs us, that he witnessed fiery scintillations emanate from a woman's belly.

Kopp and Lair have recorded twenty-five cases of this eccentricity: Le Cat, Battaglia, Cuvier, Marc,

Dumeril, Apjohn, Dupuytren, Devonald, and Joly, have all added to the evidence.

This is the record of Battaglia, a surgeon, of Ponte Bosio:—Don G. Maria Bertholi, a priest, of Mount Valerius, was left at the house of a relative at Fenilo, reading his breviary. Alarmed by strange noises in his chamber, his friends discovered him prostrate on the floor, surrounded by flickering flames: collops of flesh and skin were hanging about him. He stated that he felt, in a moment, as if struck by a club, and instantly perceived his shirt sleeves in a flame. Although many portions of his dress were intact, yet the flesh beneath was completely grilled; his silken cap was burnt, although the hair was unsinged. The priest survived the burning four days. Ere he died, extensive sphacelus had occurred, the putrid effluvium from which was extreme.

Le Cat.—A woman of Rheims was found burned up, two feet from her chimney; the skull, the bones of a lower extremity, and the vertebræ, only being distinguished. Nothing else in the room was even singed.

Grace Pett, the wife of a fisherman, at Ipswich, was discovered half-undressed on a deal floor, her body glowing like ignited charcoal, and covered with white ashes; the deal floor and the clothes, which lay close to her side, were not even changed by the fire, but the stain of her melted fat was indelible.

The record of Bianchini, prebendary of Verona.—La Contessa Cornelia Baudi, of Cesena, was left in bed by her femme de chambre. In the morning, the maid discovered, four feet from the bed, the legs, three fingers, and part of the skull of her mistress on a heap of unctuous ashes. Soot was floating in the room, and deposited on the furniture; from the windows trickled down a yellow greasy fluid, impregnated with an offensive odour, which also thickly overlaid the floor of the chamber; and some bread, which had lain on this

floor, was refused by the dogs; the bed was completely uninjured. The Contessa was wont to bathe her body with camphorated spirit.

From Joly and Delacille, (procureur du roi,) Commune de Surville, we learn this curious case.—A man aged seventy-three, and his wife sixty-five, died in a state of excessive intoxication. The room was filled with empyreumatic odour, and soot was deposited: four legs were discovered, on which were large phlyctenæ—the bones incinerated, some black, others white, all being extremely friable; the thighs were a mass of unctuous charcoal, and besides these, there was only a debris of greasy ashes weighing four pounds. The floor was stained by a greasy odorous fluid.

Dr. Apjohn, of Dublin, records the case of an old woman who died drunk.—Her body, in a fireless room, became nearly incinerated, while her daughter lying on the same bed was intact, the bed-clothes being merely stained with soot.

But, enough of these curious and perhaps somewhat exaggerated recitals. And what is the essence of the eccentric changes? Is it analogous to the spontaneous ignition of inorganic substances from fermentation, &c., or the combustion produced by chemical reaction, as that resulting from the mixture of turpentine with sulphuric or nitric acid (Becher and Borrichius); or spirit of nitre and oil of sassafras (Tournefort); or is it from a peculiar impregnation of excess of alcohol? Now it is affirmed by Bonami and Rush, that they ignited by a taper the halitus from the stomach of a dead woman. By another, the same effect is asserted from the blood drawn from a drunkard's arm, in America. From the reports of the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris, we learn that a butcher was severely burned by an explosive flame from a bloated carcase. Or is it from atmospheric electricity? for it seems that

lightning may destroy by slow combustion. The body of John Mitchell, of Southampton, was ignited by lightning, and continued smouldering and smoking three days without flame.

But, we will not here essay to discuss this difficult chemical question ; or we might, especially from Galen, Marcellus, Donatus, Bianchini, Litre, from the Jesuit Casati, the records of the Academy of Paris, the German Ephemerides, and other sources, discourse very learnedly on the matter : we leave it for the further development of true scientific experiment.

From eccentric secretion or electric evolution, the transition is ready to the condition of trance and catalepsy, in which the systemic electricity is in defect ; of somnambulism, in which it is in excess ; and of imitative monomania ; but the intricate physiology and pathology of nerve, the affinity of its action to the electric or magnetic essence, must be fully discussed ere we may presume to enter on the rationale of these phenomena : many of them will even be among the arcana of science, eluding even the researches of microscopical physiology. No, the philosophical Titan has not yet scaled heaven.

The perfect and calm endurance of very severe injury, the recovery from those extreme lesions which on principle might be expected to destroy, are among the marvels of our nature, however we may essay to explain them. We but cut the Gordian knot when we refer them to *idiosyncrasy*, constitution, stamina, system, or temperament. Thus, from apparently identical causes may ensue very different effects : thus, a slight concussion of the spine, the division of a filament of nerve, one drop of blood upon the brain, may in a moment annihilate vitality, while the excision or extrusion from the skull of large masses of its contents,

within a hair's-breadth indeed of destruction, may be borne with apathy and impunity.

The power of volition, too, may be so exalted as to appear to subvert the common laws of physiology, and involve a seeming mystery.

Such was the eccentric power possessed by Colonel Townsend, of rendering an involuntary muscle voluntary, of controlling the action of his heart: and the curious state of Cardan, which he termed, "going out of his body into an ecstasy."

Colonel Townsend, according to the evidence of Baynard and Cheyne, physicians of Bath, would lie composedly on his back for a short time; when his pulse ceased, a pallor spread over his skin, and he appeared really dead. The doctors could discover no signs of life, until, after a while, a slight trembling was observed, the heart began to act, and he gradually recovered. On the evening of one day, when he so exhibited, he died.

The gigantic effort of volition is also displayed in the patient heroism with which surgical operation is endured, especially by women, who might seem too fragile to endure even a tithe of the agony: but, above all, in the almost superhuman endurance of torture and the rack, exemplified in the probationary trials of the North American Indian; in the self-infliction of the Yoghee or Fakir, and the martyrdom of Jugger-naut. Such was the fortitude of Damien, as the wild horses dragged his limbs from his body; and of Mandrin, who laughed aloud while he was stretched on the wheel.

These wondrous efforts regard the *psychical* or mental phenomena of the frame. Here follow some illustrations of the extreme degrees of the *vis conservatrix naturæ*, the enduring energy of the body, gleaned

from our own experience, or scattered among the records of pathology.

Among the slighter conditions, we may refer to those of protracted fasting, premature sepulture, and suspended animation.

The recovery of Francois de Civille is very interesting from its complications. After seven days of catalepsy, during the siege of Rouen, he was flung from a window by the besiegers, and cast on a dunghill, where he lay naked for three or four days; and after all this he recovered.

We have records of more than one young lady re-animated, and married to those who restored them to vitality.

Some have been submerged in the snow or in caverns for many days, and yet have survived. We may point also to the case of the Hindoo, who for gain was often voluntarily walled up in a hole twelve feet by eight for a month, and was then dug out, of course much exhausted, yet in a short time again in health and vigour. Others have been suspended, one even for twenty-four hours, and yet have been recovered by resuscitation.

Among the most rare and marvellous cases of endurance, are those in which extraneous substances have been introduced into the more internal cavities of the body; some of which, especially those introduced into the alimentary canal, the unlearned of former ages imputed to demoniac influence, while to others, even philosophy has often applied the term *miraculous*.

Among ancient writers, Forestus, Nicholas Florentinus, Winsemius, Marcellus Donatus, &c. &c., we meet many very curious cases of these swallowings. Some are destroyed in the attempt to swallow; but when the substance has descended into the stomach, of course the immediate peril is averted.

In many instances, fatality will supervene after a certain time; but very many cases are on record, in which the extraneous bodies have been voided by one of the alimentary outlets, or have been removed from an abscess, or even by the operation of extraction from the stomach.

In some fatal cases, the morbid signs are averted for a time, until the patience of the tissue, so to write, seems to be worn out, and then by futile efforts to dislodge, or, by protracted irritation or disorganization, the vital property at length yields. Dr. Duncan relates a fatal case, in which two pistol bullets remained for two months in a stomach, the *pylorus* of which was scirrhous, and so contracted that the lead could not pass. Dr. Baillie saw a gastric pouch containing five half-penny pieces; and we might cite a long catalogue of similar cases.

From Langius we learn, that in "a certain husbandman's ventricle" (stomach) were found "a long round piece of wood, four steele knives, partly pointed, and partly with teethe like a sawe, and two iron tooles, more than a span long." He then puts this query; "Who would not affirme that these things were throwne in by the craft and subtely of the devill? Who can say that sorcery was not here?"

A man suffered three years from a hard tumor in the *hypogastric* region. Birmigerus found the *colon* gangrenous and torn, and within the bowels more than three pounds weight of cherry and plum stones, and forty leaden bullets.

In the stomach of a little girl were discovered the fragments of several leaden plates cut into small bits. Walruts found in the stomach of a woman a knife, with a blade four inches long, which had pierced the coats.

Here is the diminished figure of a spoon preserved *in situ* in the Museum of the College of Surgeons. It is seven inches long, its bowl one inch and a half across. It was imbedded in the *ileum* and *cæcum* of a male lunatic, twenty-two years old; who after making two vain efforts to commit suicide forced the spoon down his throat in the absence of his keeper. No immediate effects were noticed. When he recovered partially his reason, he confessed his folly. He soon after became ill, pus and blood passing with the alvine evacuations; still no one believed his story. When, however, Mr. Langstaff tapped him for ascites, a foreign body could be distinctly felt through the abdominal parietes. In a month he died, involuntary discharges both from bladder and rectum preceding his dissolution. His surgeon has published, with the case, a letter of the patient, thus concluding: "I forced the spoon down my throat with my right hand, immediately after dinner, while in my room, at Mr. Terry's, of Sutton Coldfield, about the beginning of October, 1827, and remember the detail of the whole affair." He requests that his body may be examined.



This is an abstract of the statement, by Mr. Hadfield, of the case of Wm. Dempster, a juggler, who in Nov. 1823, swallowed a table knife by accident, while he was exhibiting his feats at Carlisle. Even with this awkward blade in his stomach he survived, with frequent



attacks of indisposition, until the 16th of January, 1824. On opening the abdomen, the knife was seen projecting through a gangrenous orifice in the stomach, two inches and a half from the *duodenum*; the stomach as well as the liver in the vicinity of the *pylorus* was acutely inflamed. The gastric acid had so extensively corroded the knife-blade, that it resembled a rough saw. The iron was much less acted on than the blade, which was made of steel; and the horn handle was scarcely changed. The knife was eight inches and three-quarters in length.

In the Dublin Journal of Medicine and Chemical Science, (Sept. 1835,) Dr. Harrison relates the discovery of metallic bodies in the stomach of an old man named Wall, a lunatic, who had evinced for some time a very strange propensity for stealing and *tasting* iron. Throughout the intestines there was a dark ferruginous tinge, and also on the right lobe of the liver; the stomach itself being very much distended. In the *arch* of the *colon* lay a piece of iron five inches long. In the bag of the stomach there were large rusty nails, long pieces of thin iron, portions of iron hoops, a worn-down blade of a knife, a large iron buckle with a pewter tongue as of a saddle stirrup-leather, an iron hinge, &c. &c. Many of these fragments were corroded as if they had been steeped in a weak acid, but the pewter tongue was

not at all injured. As might be conjectured, the muscular tunic of the stomach had become extremely *thickened*, and the pyloric orifice was so much dilated as to leave no trace of the valve. The *rugæ* were extremely thickened and prominent. In the gastric fluids iron was extensively detected ; it existed in the form of sulphuret muriate or acetate.

Here is the sketch of an egg-cup, and the record of



Mr. Walter Dendy, of a case which it illustrates ; certainly the most eccentric that we have seen, which bears the valued stamp of authenticity. A sexagenarian, in Christ Church workhouse, whose mind was evidently erratic, had laboured under inguinal *hernia* for thirty-five years. It was reducible, but compression had been lately much neglected. He had dysentery ten weeks before admission ; and at the latter period symptoms of obstructed peristaltic action supervened. The hernia was tense, but the *taxis* reduced all but a very small knot of the tumor, which, with the persistence of the

symptoms, left little doubt of internal strangulation. At the moment Mr. Dendy was about to operate, the man firmly resisted, and he died three days after.

In the presence of three medical friends and an overseer the body was examined twelve hours after death. The small intestines were matted together, many portions of their coats being diaphanous. The ileum was of a purple crimson colour, ulcerated in patches. Within its cross fold, lying on the lumbar spine, and two inches above the strangulated knuckle of the intestine, was the egg-cup, its broken foot projecting from an ulcerated hole in the intestine, its orifice pointing in the *downward* course.

Not the slightest intimation of this most eccentric introduction had ever escaped the man's lips: there cannot, however, be a question regarding its mode of ingress. Yet very opposite opinions have been expressed on this point during a protracted discussion on the case, and instances adduced of insane or wanton introduction of extranea, especially the case of Mr. Lawrance, at St. Bartholomew's, to which may since be added that of the tin tumbler recorded in the Boston "Medical and Surgical Journal," by Dr. Channing. But these were not analogies; for the passage of no substance of *any considerable size* has ever, I believe, been traced through the *ileo-caecal* valve from below. In this case the pylorus was extremely distended, as if by continued pressure from above, and a morbid change had taken place throughout the whole course of the *small* intestines, while the tract of the *large* intestines, save at the seat of the hernia and the valve, was apparently healthy. With all this, the size of the cup might almost tempt us to suspect the introduction by swallowing impossible.

It is very easy to believe the sword swallowing of the Indian juggler and that of the knives; for the *œsophagus*

would *fold round* the flat blade without much actual distension: and the swallowing by Gosse, of Geneva, of metallic balls two and a half inches in diameter; for this was by dint of long practice. No evidence, although publicly challenged, was ever adduced of such a habit in this poor fool, or of any witnesses to this insane feat. Probably, however, in all the celebrated swallows, there was some peculiar capacity of *fauces* and *pharynx*, and of the space especially between the internal *pterygoid processes*, insuring the subject against strangulation—an event not very rare.

Among ancient records of this result, Wierus relates of one who was choked by the attempt to swallow a hen egg whole. Suetonius writes that Pompey, the son of Claudius Cæsar Drusus, was tossing a pear, when it fell into his mouth and strangled him. The fatality arose, of course, from pressure on the respiratory tube. In the case of Mr. Brunell, the half-sovereign fell through the *rima glottidis* into the *trachæa*; and after the operation of trachæotomy, to avert the immediate peril resulting from spasm of the *glottis*, the coin was at length dislodged through the *larynx*.

Here follow the record of cases, in which extraneous bodies eccentrically introduced, have been sooner or later voided by natural outlet. And of these, the Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences in Paris, and the Ephemerides, are very fertile store-houses. The authors or reporters of these cases comprehend the Fabricii, Galen, Bartolini, Platerus, Cardan, Schenkus, and a host of others. Some of these curious swallowings were intentional, most of them however were accidental. A key and many oblong bits of smooth glass swallowed and voided by a child three years old. A bit of lead, weighing two ounces, and as broad as half-a-crown, and as thick as three crowns, by a young lady fourteen years

of age. Two links of a brass chain, one inch in diameter, by a child three years old. A copper counter, by a boy eight years old, after its retention for twelve months, &c. &c. &c.

In our public practice these cases of swallowing and voiding are not rare ; small bones, halfpennies, farthings, large beads, and rings, are the favourites. We have seldom seen morbid symptoms induced during their progress through the canal.

Mr. Wakefield, of Lansdown Place, has related the case of Seely, a prisoner in the House of Correction, who swallowed seven half-crowns ; at the end of twenty months the coins fell clattering into the pan which he was using. They were changed to a black colour, though perfectly undiminished in size. We might adduce *many other* cases, yet there is an halfpenny which was vomited from the stomach of a child of sixteen months old, after the lapse of six months, preserved in the Museum of the College of Surgeons, from that of Sir A. Cooper, as a *curiosity*.

Many of the ancients were sceptics as to the unaided or uninfluenced power possessed by the swallows. On this point adduce we the records of three pathologists. Of Rulandus:—A girl eighteen years of age was “set uponne by a certaine man all in blacke (to wit, the divell). Eight days after she vomited things never to be forgotten, as needles, pinnes, divers kinds of nailes, lockes of hair, small pieces of money, buttons, whole egge-shells, threades, knives, and many other things.” Of Benevent:—“A certaine woman, being possessed with a wicked spirit, spewed up crooked nailes, and brasse needles, with haire and ware, and a piece of flesh so great, that a giant’s throat coud not have swallowed it.” Of Gemma:—“A certaine wench of Lorraine passed per stomachum a mass of things as a live eele, hairs, wood,

and coales, and bones ;” and he concludes that this farrago and other things as abhorrent “doe sufficiently declare that the divells art there was very stronge.” Doubtless these girls were afflicted with some egregious folly, which may be termed a degree of insanity, and may be placed in the same category with this case, to which Mr. Heaviside was called by Dr. H. Willis. It is that of an insane patient who swallowed the whalebone handle of a punch-ladle, in May, 1798, eleven inches long, this sketch being the half size. It was in his throat sixty-two hours without the slightest pain or inconvenience, as he possessed the perfect power of deglutition, and slept soundly during the whole period in which the handle remained in his throat.

While Marshal Wurmser was shut up in Mantua, an Austrian spy was arrested by Napoleon, who had, he confessed, swallowed his despatches in a ball of sealing-wax. His stomach was excited to render up its contents, and in the ball was discovered a letter written to Wurmser by the Emperor Francis.

Then we read of travellers who, when in peril of falling among thieves, have effected to very good purpose their eccentric gulplings, the bodies being subsequently voided by the stimulus of enemata or by the natural effort ; one swallowed six ducats, another nine louis, a third one hundred louis d’ors.

A vessel, which had on board Monsieur Vaillant, was for some time chased by a privateer of Tunis. Under the fear of being purloined of his treasure, this learned



antiquary swallowed fifteen golden medals. It so chanced that the vessel beat the pirate; and when Monsieur Vaillant arrived at Lyons, he disposed of the fifteen medals to a virtuoso there, which had seriatim passed away by natural efforts.

Don John Antonio de Aranda, a Spanish officer, (on Shrove Tuesday, 1715,) swallowed a fork three ounces in weight. On the 25th of June following it was voided *naturally*, having lost in weight six drachms.

In Sir Everard Home's collection we have seen ten steel fragments of three clasp-knives, swallowed by a soldier, and voided per anum, at St. George's Hospital. This man perfectly recovered.

Here are delineations of two fragments.



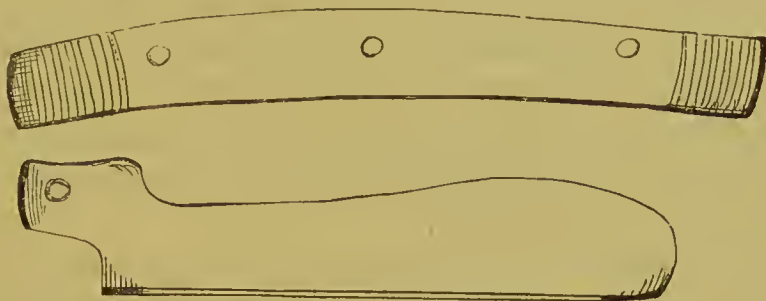
In 1799, Cummings, a sailor, (having been present when a juggler, at Havre de Grace, *pretended* to swallow clasp-knives,) in a drunken frolic swallowed his own clasp-knife and three others. One passed on the next day without difficulty, two more passed on the second day, the fourth remained. In March, 1805, he swallowed fourteen other knives, all of which passed

before the 28th of April. In December he swallowed thirty-five knives, becoming subsequently much indisposed, when he was admitted under the care of Dr. Babington and Dr. Currie of Guy's Hospital, where he

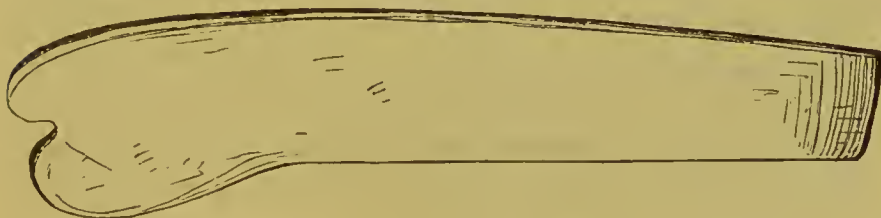
remained until March 1809, when he died very much emaciated.

The abdominal cavity was extensively pervaded by a deep ferruginous tinge.

In the stomach were discovered forty-three fragments of blades and handles and a small coin. Two blades had passed the pylorus, had perforated the coats of the intestines, and had become fixed in the pelvic muscles, being so closely adapted as to prevent even a drop of fluid from oozing into the peritonæal cavity. This was the patient's respite for so protracted a term of life. In the Museum of Guy's Hospital these fragments are preserved. Here are the figures of two of these fragments.



Here is the largest of nine bits of knives passed per anum before his admission into Guy's Hospital. They were presented by Dr. Lara and Mr. Kelly, surgeon to the Isis.



The records of this rare case are preserved in the red inspection book; and in a quarto scrap-book, kept in the Museum, may be seen printed extracts and very curious original letters.

Here follow illustrations of those most interesting

processes, by which nature establishes a temporary outlet for extraneous substances either swallowed or imbedded by accident in the tissues of the body.

A youth, (so records Josiah Cole, Accoucheur, London,) after two years of hectic fever, &c. &c., had an abscess formed to the right of his navel. At first the discharge was pus only ; but after a while he began to pass gooseberry and raisin seeds, and then twenty cherry and damson stones. The boy declared he had eaten neither one nor the other fruit for two years past.

John Gessen, of Gessen : his history of a Bohemian rusticke who swallowed a knife in 1602.

A rusticke of Prague swallowed a knife in a wine tavern. The knife was felt through the parietes : “no operation was done, but suppurations applied over it.” So it suppurated and “did at last breake forth. The knife, the emperiall majesty hath commanded to bee laid up amongst his jewells, and to testifie the miracle, to bee preserved.” Written at Prague, on St. John Baptist’s day, 1607.

In the same category we may place the case of the Danish Jewess, recorded by Professor Herholdt, of Copenhagen.

In 1807, this Hebrew lady became indisposed with faintings, and convulsions, with occasional severe cough. She was often delirious, the illusion assuming a ludicrous character. Sometimes she lay in a state of catalepsy for many hours, the only mode of awaking her being by the stopping of the respiratory passages ; and when she did awake, she continued for some time pallid and death-like. For several days there were intestinal evacuations of blood.

In Feb. 1809, a tumor appeared below the *umbilicus*, which, on yielding, discharged blood and also a sewing needle. Between this period and August, 273 needles were extracted from different parts of the body ; seventeen at one time being removed. When the needles

approached the surface, she was usually attacked by hiccup and vomited blood. In May, 1821, a tumor rose in the right axilla ; and between this period and July, 1822, more than 100 needles were extracted from the vicinity of the shoulder. Her abdomen resembled a mass of scars. It was believed that she feigned much of this indisposition, but she ultimately recovered completely. In the College Museum 100 of these needles are preserved, presented by Mr. Chevalier. Regarding the mode by which these needles were introduced, there is no account offered, but there is the fullest reason to believe that it was one of a most extraordinary kind.

The most wondrous of all these eccentricities is that of a Prussian, recorded in a very quaint old octavo, in search of which we were induced, by the following allusion in the Memoirs of John Evelyn.

At the *Anatomy School*, at Haerlem. “Amongst a great variety of other things, I was showed the knife newly taken out of a drunken Dutchman’s guts, by an incision in his side, after it had slipped from his fingers into his stomach. The pictures of the chyrurgeon and his patient, both living, were there.”

Again: “I had much discourse with the Duke of York concerning strange cures he affirmed of a woman, who swallowed a whole ear of barley which worked out at her side. I told him of the knife swallowed and the pins.”

We know not if the strange record of circumstances, a very minute fragment of which we are about to transcribe, are identical with that of John Evelyn ; if not, they are strictly analogous, and may illustrate each other.

The book which we discovered is printed in black letter, and is dedicated to the Right Honourable Sir Peter VVITCH, Knight, &c. &c.

There is also added, among many other quaint allu-

sions, a charter of Vladislaus, given at Mount Kouge (Koenigsburg) ; exempting the operator Dan Schwaben, a chyrurgion physitian, from all civill burthens and taxations for his skill.

Here followeth the very explanatory title-page :—

A MIRACULOUS CURE

OF A PRUSSIAN

SWALLOW-KNIFE ;

being dissected out of his stomach, by the Physitians of Regimonto, the chief city in Prussia.

Together with the testimony of the King of Poland (Vladislaus Rex) of the truth of this wonderful cure.

Likewise the certificate of the Lords of the States.

Translated out of the Lattin.

whereunto is added, a Treatise of the possibility of this cure, with a History of our owne, of a consolidation of a wound in the ventricle.

As also a Survey of the former translation, and censure of their positions.

BY DAN LAKIN, P. C.

Printed at London, by I. Okes, and are to be sold in Paul's Churchyard, at the White Lyon, 1642.

In 1st Section.—In the yeare of our salvation, 1635, the 29 of May, stilo novo, and the third holy day in Pentecost, a rustieke young man, Andrew Grunheide, with the haft of his knife provoked his gorge, (it) escaped the extremities of his fingers—the knife went to the bottom of the ventricle.

3rd Section.—The body being well and rightly fitted with balsamick oyles, &c. (the elite of the college met),

with the most experienced chyrurgion and cutter of the stone, Master Dan. Schwabius, my gossip and venerable friend, now in heaven; the Divine assistance and benediction being first invoked, the rusticke was bound to a wooden table, and the place being marked out with a coal, the incision was made toward the left side of the hypochondrium, some two fingers' breadth under the short ribs—first the skin and that fleshie pannicle—there was no fat seene—peritoneum was cut and opened; the ventricle at length attracted and contracted with a small needle crooked—it showed that the knife was there; which being laid hold of and the point brought upwards, the ventricle was a little incised, and the knife successfully extracted.

This is a facsimile of the wood-cut of the knife, half its size.



4th Section.—The wound was fitting cleansed, closed up with five sutures, balsame applied warme, cataplasme of bole, the white of an egg and allum. He took betony, tormentilla, and other herbs in decoction. On the second day bloody urine was voided, he took decoction of veronica and agrimony, and a suppository was introduced to relax the bowels.

In about fourteen days—“And so by the grace and clemency of the Omnipotent Jehovah, &c., our rusticke swallow-knife was restored to very good health, who now complains not any thing of any dolore of the ventricle.

“To him (God), therefore, bee the glory, praise, and honour, for ever and ever. Amen.”

Not of less interest are those lesions which the cavities of the body have endured from external injury.

Those which have effected a permanent opening into the bag of the stomach equally, at least, evince its power of endurance.

From the old book to which we have but now alluded, we briefly adduce the following cases:—

From Diomedes Cornarius, Physitian to Maximilian, Archduke of Austria. Of a countryman wounded in the ventricle by a hunting staff, and recovered under the penalty of a permanent fistula. He was wont “with linnen clouts to make cleane his stomache and sende forth the meate and drinke hee had ingurged.”

From “Julius Alexandrinus, chiefe Physitian of the Emperor Rudolph the Second. Of a Bohemian of Pugge-brot, who used to reject his food through a large wound in his ventricle.”

Had Hippocrates witnessed these cases, he would not have asserted, *κοιλίην διακοπέντι θανατώδης*, or his commentator, “*usque ad ventriculum si pervaserit læsio, ilico moriuntur.*”

Fragments of a letter from Mr. Pew, of Wellingborough, to Dr. Duncan.—*Med. Comm.* v. 89.

A lieutenant of the East India Company’s Marines was shot at the siege of Janna, by a slug-ball from a gingal piece in a flanking bastion, as he was stooping to heave a sand-bag into a ditch. The ball entered on the left side of the back, and lodged among the bones under the right arm-pit, penetrating the stomach, the lungs, and the liver. When the wound was injected, the fluid passed through the lungs into the mouth; and food unchanged often passed through the wound in the bag of the stomach and out at the back. From this most severe injury, and after very great inconvenience, the officer at length completely recovered.

The recovery from self-mutilation will often excite

our wonder, and also the self-performance of severe operations, which so often prove fatal after the most scientific surgery. In the Museum of Leyden is preserved a large calculus, which was safely extracted by an ignorant man from his bladder with a common pocket-knife (also exhibited),—one of the most delicate and perilous operations in the catalogue of surgery.

Here follow two cases of recovery from severe transfixion: they are of deep interest and extreme eccentricity, especially if we regard the texture and the degree of vital importance of the tissues in the immediate vicinity of the wounds.

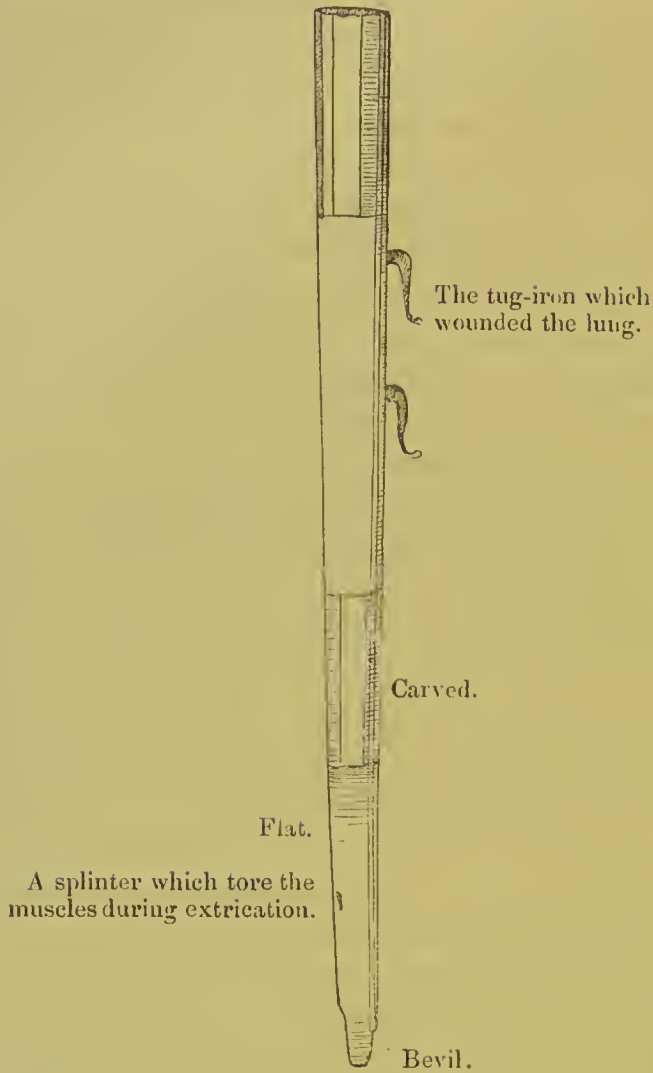
Taylor, a Prussian sailor, in the brig *Jane*, of Scarborough, (Captain Good,) was guiding the pivot of the try-sail mast into the main boom, when the pivot slipped and passed through his body obliquely, and then penetrated the deck. It entered close to the *sternum* near the left nipple, and came out just below the posterior inferior angle of the left *scapula*. The man ultimately recovered under the care of Mr. Andrews, of the London Hospital.

This is a sketch of the point of the pivot, exactly of the quarter length. It is preserved in the Museum of the College of Surgeons.

The case of Mr. Tipple, recorded at length with letters and testimony, in a 4to volume, by Mr. Maiden, of Stratford, dedicated to Sir Wm. Blizard.

Tipple was thirty-four years old, when, on the 13th of June, 1812, he drove home the horse of his friend, Overton, living at Forest Gate, West Ham, in Essex. He took the horse's bridle off prematurely, when the animal plunged violently, and thrust Tipple against the chaise-





Sketch from the shaft, preserved in the Museum of the College of Surgeons ; the scale, one-eighth.

house, the off shaft passing beneath the left arm. The horse continued plunging, and not only did the shaft penetrate the side, but the front tug-iron also. At this crisis two veterinarians, of the name of Lawrance, passing by, heard his piercing cries, and endeavoured to put back the horse. When they succeeded, it appeared that the end of the shaft, having penetrated the body of

the man, was forced through the boarding of the chaise-house. After a while Tipple was drawn or lifted off from his impalement with great care, in which he himself assisted. On the tug-hook and the shaft were small portions of *fleshy substance*. He subsequently walked up stairs to his bed, then breathed very comfortably, and there appeared no agitation of the body. As he was being undressed, however, he felt, as he expressed it, the blood trickling on his lungs, and he suffered from extreme dyspnœa and became very faint. Mr. Maiden soon arrived and bled him copiously, from which he was extremely relieved. Thus much was verified, on oath, before five justices, and by the affirmation of Edward and Henry Lawrance. Then comes Mr. Maiden's account of the treatment. On his arrival, ten minutes after the extrication, he took four pounds of blood. He (Tipple) fainted: cold water was copiously swallowed. There was some emphysema in the side; and when Blizard saw him, his conviction was that Tipple would not live till morning; as hæmorrhage would probably become profuse when the heart's action was re-established.

On the 15th, thirty ounces of blood were drawn; and infusion of roses, and calomel were given, and an enema administered. On the 16th, eighteen ounces of blood were taken, and saline draughts were ordered: the pain very trifling. On the 18th, twenty-two ounces of blood drawn, and a large blister applied. On the 20th, nineteen ounces; and on the 22nd, fourteen ounces of blood were abstracted. From this very eccentric and most perilous accident, Tipple eventually completely recovered.

It seems the shaft was forced between the left ribs, through the cavity of the thorax, immediately under the sternum, and came out through the right ribs: a permanent depression of two or three cartilages to the

left of the sternum still remaining. He died on the 2nd of March, 1823.

The cicatrices, and marks of the holes on each side, were distinctly seen covered by membrane, between the second and third ribs. One of the ribs and several cartilages had been fractured. Extensive adhesions were seen about the seat of the injury. The entire pericardium was firmly attached to the heart, and the lungs were of a peculiar dull blue colour.

Of the various cases in which shot have passed with impunity through the body, we allude only to the following, by Richter, of Göttingen, in the *Chirurgische Bibliothek*, 25. It occurred under Dr. Koeler, of Werstett.

On June 17, 1796, Captain Witman, of the fourth French Hussars, was wounded by a ball from the gun of a Hussar (a carabinier), about one ounce in weight. The bleeding was profuse. The ball entered an inch from the spinal process of the vertebra, between the third and fourth false ribs on the right side, and made its exit two inches below the nipple on the same side. The chest was enveloped in clothes incessantly soaked in vinegar and water, and the officer was repeatedly bled. On the 6th of August the patient was well.

Monsieur Honde records the case of a woman who fell from a stool while a spindle was in her mouth. This was broken by the fall, and one of its ends passed through the throat, and deeply penetrated the muscles of the neck. It was discovered under the fourth *cervical vertebra*, and easily extracted, although it was three inches in length.

But fatality may be the result of hæmorrhage only.

A tobacco-pipe was broken into the mouth of a man as he was smoking. Five days after, although he suffered little, he applied at the London Hospital, and the pipe was extracted. The man instantly died of profuse hæmorrhage. The pipe had penetrated both the jugular

vein and the carotid artery, but had acted as a plug and thus protracted the fatality. *Had the vessels escaped*, probably the second case would have been as propitious as the first.

The rationale of these marvellous recoveries, and also of those cases in which the foreign body forcibly intruded remains for certain periods in the external tissues or cavities of the body, will, of course, depend chiefly on the escape of the organs immediately associated with life; the second cause to which Galen ascribes fatality.

In 1779, Bourdy, a sailor in the Tartar privateer, was wounded in the back by a canister shot; the wound healed in a month. In August, 1810, in consequence of protracted pain in the loins, examination was made, and a hard body felt beneath a cicatrix, which, on extraction, proved to be the rusty blade of a seaman's clasp-knife, the base being about an inch from the third vertebra, the point passing obliquely upward and inward. Yet as we see lesions of less extent prove fatal, we must not disregard the proneness of the system to morbid action, its constitutional irritability, or its vitiation by cachectic or debilitated blood, the first and fourth causes of Galen.

It will often happen that *suppuration* will be sooner or later set up, as if the system had become impatient of its parasite.

A small tumor appeared beneath the scapula of a sailor, of the Belvidera, producing pain, especially on the motion of the arm. In three or four days it became an abscess, and was opened. Four days after this, something black and shining was observed in the wound,—a piece of steel, so firmly fixed, that it was impossible to remove it. The man was as much surprised as his surgeon with this circumstance, and could not elucidate its mode of introduction, although a very small cicatrix was observed two inches below the wound. After the



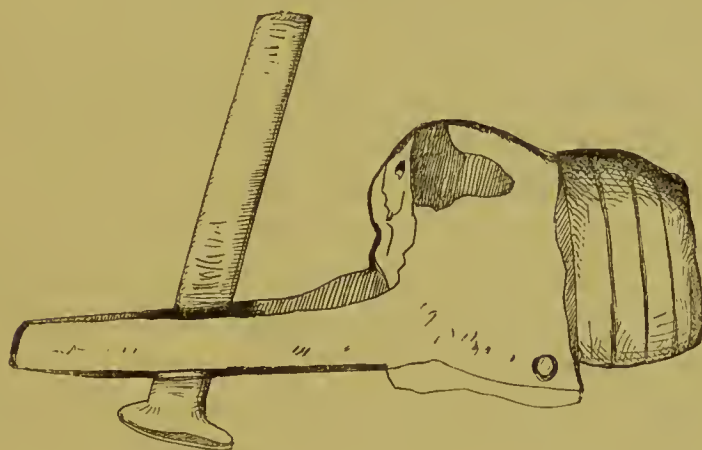
lapse of a fortnight the body became more mobile; and the surgeon, by a deep incision, removed a common kitchen fork, broken off from the handle, and having one of its prongs also broken, of which this is a sketch.

Of solid substances lodged in the bony structures of the body we might cite a host of instances. The surgeons of the army and navy might have filled a museum of balls lodged in a bone. But bodies of much larger dimensions have been endured for years, when *à priori*, i. e. on principle, as the pathologist would say, the consequent irritation ought to have induced, at least acute disorder, if not fatality.

In the orbit of a blacksmith, the breech and tail-piece of a gun were lodged in consequence of explosion. Although the fragments weighed 1011 grains, they were endured with impunity nearly a twelvemonth.

As Lieut. Fritz was with a party shooting in one of the jungles of Hindostan, his fowling-piece exploded, when its iron breech and screw were driven forcibly into the officer's head, being lodged in the æthmoid cells and nasal fossæ, the texture of which were of course broken up and destroyed. A great portion of the breech and its rivet protruded through the forepart of the palate into the mouth; and although, of course, interfering with almost every action of the tissues about the fauces, the officer lived and enjoyed himself, joining as usual in sport and festivities, until he died, eight

years after the accident. The sense of smell was lost, and there was constant discharge of pus from the nose; yet such was his state of health and quietude, that the condition of Jerry Fritz, as he was familiarly called, became rather a subject of sportive comment than of serious sympathy. The case is reported by Sir G. Ballingal (in the Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal, v. 57) from memoranda of Deputy Inspector-General Marshall: and a leaden cast of the breech and screw, presented by Mr. Joseph Henry Green, is preserved in the Museum of the College of Surgeons, of which this is a faithful sketch.



To the quietude with which the brain, i. e. *certain portions* of the brain, will endure lesion, we have elsewhere alluded. Here we will merely illustrate the truth by very brief allusions to penetrating wounds. It is recorded that a man walked 130 miles with a gunstock firmly fixed in the brain; that a sword-point remained fourteen years imbedded in that organ; the point of an arrow nine years; forty large shots ten years; two screws twenty-one years; and a spear-point during a long life.

We have ourselves taken a small basin-full of brain

from the fractured cranium of a man, whom we had previously restored from *suspended animation*.

Galen, who was somewhat of a sceptic regarding the curative energy of nature, refers to the healing of a wounded brain as a wonder: "*dicit se vidisse curatum cerebrum vulneratum.*"

In 1826, W. Hunt died, under the care of Mr. D. G. Arnott, in the hospital-ship *Grampus*, of pneumonia. The seaman had been wounded in 1812, as he thought by a ball; on examining his chest, however, imbedded in the lung, was discovered a piece of iron hoop, one inch long, shaped like a crescent. This he had borne without much inconvenience for fourteen years.

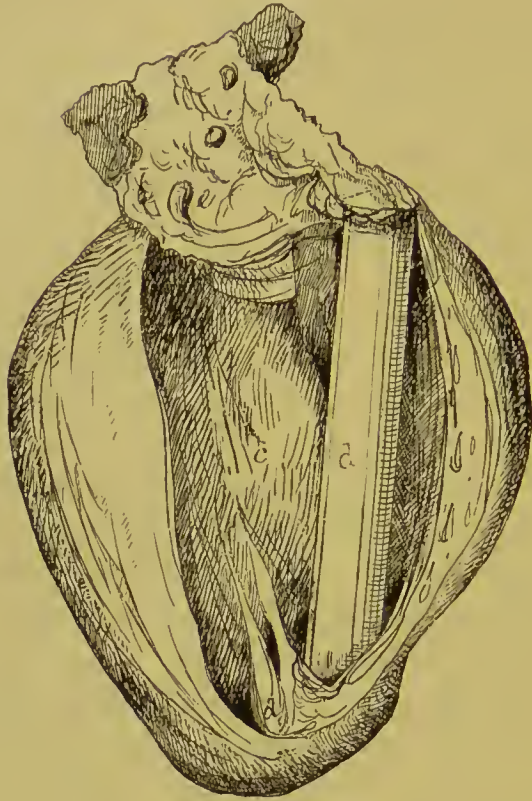
Even the heart itself, the action of which is, as it were, the very essence of vitality, may be transfixed, and yet fatality may for a long time be averted. Such was the case with Hollidge, of the Northampton regiment, who, on March 29, 1810, slipped down, while on sentinel duty, with an unfixed bayonet in his hand; the blade divided the left ventricle, cutting through a fleshy column, the pleura and pericardium containing at least two quarts of effused blood; yet the soldier did not suffer very acute pain, and on the 31st of March, the third day, walked lightly across his ward, and conversed jocularly with his fellow-patients. He expired suddenly forty-nine hours after the wound. But the endurance may be more protracted.

From the record of Messrs. Davis and Sheward, of Upton-on-Severn, we cite the following case, one of very curious interest, disproving the assertion of Huernius, the commentator of Hippocrates, that such wounds are fatal on the first or second day:—William Mills, a youth of Boughton, on January 19, made a gun of the handle of a telescope toasting-fork, with three inches of wood for the butt; he charged the tube with powder, then made

a touch-hole, and fired it. The breech was instantly blown off, and entered the thorax between the third and fourth ribs on the right side. He immediately walked home, a distance of forty yards. There was very considerable hæmorrhage, and he became faint; a stream of dark blood continuing to ooze from the wound on the slightest motion, yet he was free from pain. For the space of ten days, the lad appeared to be progressively recovering from his formidable accident, and once even walked eighty yards, and amused himself in his flower garden, digging for a short period with his spade. At this time, he appeared well and in a merry and cheerful mood, his eyes being unusually bright. In a few days, however, the boy began to emaciate; frequent rigors and syncope supervened, his pulse being much accelerated. During these paroxysms, however, he complained of no pain, nor was he troubled with cough or abnormal expectoration. He died on the 25th of February.

On the right side, about half an inch from the sternum, between the cartilages of the third and fourth ribs, there was a small cicatrix. Beneath this, *i. e.* within the thorax on the pleura, there was a small blue spot; there was no serous or sanguineous effusion in the bag of the pleura, but a small tubercle in the right lung, near the pulmonary artery: in the pericardium there was a quantity of serum. The heart itself appeared healthy. Firmly fixed in the right ventricle (*c*), was discovered the stick (*d*) that formed the butt of the gun. One end was forced between the lining membrane of the *columnæ* (*a*), the other had ruptured the auriculo-ventricular valve of the right auricle (*e*); but no wound was discovered in the heart! The conjecture was, that the stick had traversed the mediastinum, and then penetrated the posterior lobe of the right lung, and had then entered the *vena cava*, and was

eventually carried by the current of blood into the heart.



To all who have not studied pathology, the ragged and lacerated wound will appear more formidable than the clean cut; for many reasons, it may be quite the reverse; and we cannot more emphatically illustrate the truth than by briefly recording cases in which the limb has been severed from the body, and yet the patient has recovered almost without the aid of surgery.

In 1737, the arm and scapula of a miller were torn from his body by the coiling around it of a rope attached to the cogs of a wheel; the integuments and muscles hung in large strips, both from the dissevered arm and the trunk. The hæmorrhage was very trifling, in consequence of the flaps of muscle folding over the

mouths of the arteries, as well as of the torsion or stretching of the coats of those vessels. No artery was tied, and the wound was superficially dressed. From this formidable condition, the man, under the care of Mr. Ferne, of St. Thomas's Hospital, very speedily recovered.

Sir Charles Bell records the case of a youth who was drawn by a rope up to the ceiling of a room in a manufactory. A trap-door detained the boy himself in this room, but the arm was forcibly wrenched out of its socket, and carried into another apartment. With all this, the hæmorrhage was so slight as to be disregarded, and recovery was very soon complete.

A girl three years and a half old was entangled "by the spindle of a barley miln, going at its full career;" the left arm was instantly torn away half an inch above the elbow, the muscles being stripped up, and thus denuding the shoulder-joint. No hæmorrhage ensued, but the shock of the injury was nearly fatal to the girl, especially as it was complicated with a severe contusion of the right leg, and fracture of its tibia and fibula. It was deemed right to amputate the splintered arm at the shoulder-joint, and the little girl progressed gradually to her recovery.

Here endeth our brief catalogue of pathological eccentricities. To analyze the essence of these rare deviations from the common laws of the animal economy, we presume not; they, perchance, may ever elude the researches of the most acute pathologist: thus curbing the flight of his aspiring intellect, and inculcating, in lieu thereof, the salutary lessons of devotional humility.

St. James's Park, 1848.

