

Physical

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FEMORAL ANEURISM.

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If these strong mineral acids have failed to dissolve, or chemically change the material of which vulcanite is composed, I think we may safely conclude that the secretions of the digestive organs will hardly be able to accomplish it, and that the plate in question will, if not passed "per rectum," long continue in the canal without material alteration.

In reply to the second question—What will become of the woman should the foreign body continue in the canal? No certain statement can be given; but bearing in mind the history of recorded cases, somewhat analogous in their general features to that now under consideration, it may be remarked that it is possible, and even probable, that this vulcanite plate and teeth may be retained for years without destroying life, or even producing very alarming symptoms. On the other hand, grave symptoms may unexpectedly present themselves; the patient's life may be placed in jeopardy; or death may suddenly occur from inflammation, from ulceration, and perforation, or from its becoming impacted and obstructing the canal.

Dreading these not improbable contingencies, I objected to her being sent across the Atlantic to her friends in England, shortly after the accident occurred, on the ground that sea sickness, if troublesome and violent, would be likely to produce irritation and perhaps fatal consequences.

The practical lessons to be learned from this case, are:

- 1st. That badly fitting plates holding artificial teeth are unsafe, and should not be worn—especially at night.
- 2nd. That much larger bodies than we would suppose, may find their way (accidentally or otherwise) into the stomach.
- 3rd. That when received there, even large and irregularly shaped bodies, may—and often do—remain for a length of time without producing alarming symptoms.

September 14th, 1871.

I heard from this woman about the first of the present month, at which time she was a resident in the State of Rhode Island. She still wears the plate in the alimentary canal, and says that her health is quite as good as it was prior to the accident.

Femoral Aneurism successfully treated by Digital Compression. Reported by A. P. Reid, M.D., Professor of Practice of Medicine, Dalhousie College and University, Halifax, N.S.

August 22nd, 1871.—Was called in consultation with Dr. Almon, to see Mr. D. F. S., tobacconist, aged 29, who had a pulsating tumour about the size of a hen's egg, situated six inches below

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Poupart's ligament on the right femoral. About a week previous had consulted Dr. R. Craik, of Montreal, who suggested the treatment by digital compression, but circumstances required the patient's immediate leaving for Halifax.

Being a case in every way favourable for treatment by "compression," this was decided on, as it had been successful in a less favourable case in this city a little over a year ago.

August 23rd, 11 A.M.—Treatment commenced. A sufficient relay of assistants being secured, who were easily taught how to apply the compression with the thumb, just below Poupart's ligament. This was kept up unremittingly until the 26th, at 7 A.M., when the pulsation in the tumour stopped suddenly, on the accession of a paroxysm of pain, which caused the patient to jump out of bed with a loud scream.

The duration of the treatment was 63 hours, and there has not been the slightest impulse in the tumour since (4 weeks). As a precautionary means, compression with a 7lb. weight, resting by means of a pad along the course of the vessel, was kept up for 24 hours longer, as it produced little or no inconvenience. On the 29th, the patient went out in a waggon to see the races; has been well and attending to his business since. The tumour is gradually diminishing in size, and the femoral pulsating up to its edge. The strength of the limb is improving all the time, but he complains of a numbness in it, and that it is easily fatigued. The temperature is normal.

REMARKS.—For the first 24 hours of the treatment, he was very restless under the pressure, which was relieved by gr. i of opium every two hours—afterwards it was better borne—he had snatches of sleep every night. Compression was tried by means of various instruments, but it could not be borne but for a few minutes. It required a weight equal to 25lbs. to prevent the impulse from being conveyed to the tumour, and this could only be borne through the thumb of an attendant. The relays had to be changed every 10 or 15 minutes. After the first 24 hours the tumour was painful on pressure and a little hardened, but the impulse continued on removal of the pressure up to the time it so suddenly ceased. The temperature of the limb was not interfered with during the whole time, and it received no treatment.

The patient could assign no cause for the Aneurism; the first intimation he had, being the discovery of a beating tumour a few days before he called for medical aid.

HALIFAX, N.S., September 19th, 1871.