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PART I.
ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS.

I.

Remarkable Recovery from a very extensive Wound in the Abdomen.
By B. HAGUE, Surgeon, Ripon.

AUGUST 30th, 1808, ten o'clock A. M.—I went to Norton Mills, about four miles from hence, to see John Brown, æt. twelve years, who had received a wound in the abdomen by a pair of wool shears. On my arrival, which was little more than an hour after the accident had happened, I found the poor lad in a very distressing situation; the *great arch of the stomach*, and the whole of the *intestinal canal* (duodenum excepted) contained within the abdomen, having protruded through the wound. The incision was on the left side of the body, commencing at about two inches below the *scrobiculus cordis*, and extending in a straight line near four inches in length, distant from the navel two inches, so that I suppose it must have been pretty nearly in the course of the *linea alba* of that side. He was quite sensible, and had vomited so as to empty the stomach; very little blood was lost. I immediately proceeded very carefully to examine the protruded viscera, none of which were wounded, and reduced them as quickly as possible, beginning with the stomach, and following the regular course of the intestines, in the latter portion of which I distinctly felt feces, of rather firm consistence. He complained of

some pain during the reduction, though not much, and expressed great relief when the parts were completely returned. I now desired an assistant to lay the palm of his hand over the wound, and make some pressure upon it; for I found that, without this, the parts would soon have protruded again by the action of respiration, which was oppressed and laborious. I brought the sides of the wound together by five sutures, beginning from above downwards, and passed the needle on each side quite through the integuments with the peritonæum, observing great caution not to wound the obtruding intestines, by keeping my finger betwixt them and the point of the needle, in passing it through. I next applied straps of adhesive plaster, so as to produce compression, and over them a compress of linen, securing the whole with a bandage, broad enough to reach from sternum to pubes. Before I had done, he complained of feeling very faint, and I gave him to drink a little weak wine and water, which staid upon his stomach. I did not, either before the reduction of the protruded parts, or after, observe any material alteration in the state of the pulse; it was quick, and rather small. I had him laid in bed upon his back, and particularly desired he might be kept in that posture. I took twelve ounces of blood from his right arm, and dissolved an ounce and half of *magnes. vitr.* in half a pint of broth, of which I directed four table-spoonfuls to be given every two hours, and left him tolerably easy.

7 o'clock P.M.—Respiration much oppressed, accompanied with a rattling, which occasioned great uneasiness. Abdomen not very painful. He had retained what he had swallowed, but had not had a stool. I administered an enema prepared with *magnes. vitr.* ζ ij. dissolved in twelve ounces of gruel, with an ounce of oil. It staid with him near five minutes, when it returned, and brought away some feces, which I judged were from the rectum only. As the injection passed up, he expressed great satisfaction, and observed, “it felt very nice.” As soon as the bed-pan was removed from under him, he vomited the whole of what he had taken, which had been very little, and that only fluid, in addition to the opening medicine. A lumbricus worm, which was dead, was also thrown up. Immediately after the vomiting, his breathing became more free and easy, and he was evidently much relieved by it. As he expressed so much comfort from the glyster, I waited two hours in order to repeat it: I then injected some broth only, which he observed as before was “very nice.” It came away almost immediately, without bringing any thing else with it. He fell asleep soon after. I left *tinct. opii. gtt. xxx.* which I desired might be given when he awoke, if at all restless or uneasy. Pulse quick, skin hot, and he complained of

of thirst. Deeming it absolutely necessary to keep the stomach as empty, and in as quiet a state as possible, I desired that very little fluid should be given him, and totally forbid solids of every kind.

31st, 8 o'clock A. M.—Had slept pretty well, from the time of my taking my leave last night, till two o'clock this morning; after that he became restless and uneasy; his attendant omitted giving the opiate as directed; pulse quicker than last night, and hard; skin very hot, tongue white, and thirst increased; respiration more oppressed, accompanied with rattling and a frequent short cough: he made no complaint of pain in the body, except a soreness of the wounded part; had made water two or three times during the night, but had no stool. I administered a glyster of a solution of magnes. vitr. &c. which very soon came away, without bringing any fecal matter with it. He had not vomited since last night, although he had been allowed more to drink than I wished. I took away twelve ounces of blood, which produced faintness, but he did not vomit. I left him betwixt nine and ten o'clock, and ordered the following mixture to be sent for immediately ℞ magnes. vitr. ℥j. solve in aq. fervent. ℥vj. cola et adde tinct. sennæ ℥vj. M. detur coch. iij. 2ndâ quaq. horâ donec alvus bis terve responderit. I had been at home above an hour before the messenger came for the medicine, who informed me, that very soon after I had left the house he had a stool, and before he came off, he had had another: I therefore altered the directions for taking the mixture, and ordered two table-spoonfuls to be given every three hours.

7 o'clock P. M.—My partner, Mr A. Robinson, rode with me to see our patient this evening. We found him breathing with great difficulty and rattling; cough short, frequent and teasing; pulse quick and hard, and every febrile symptom aggravated since morning. Abdomen painful and swelled. The stools he had had in the forenoon were unfortunately thrown out, so that we could not see them, as was at this time most desirable; but the nurse informed us they were quite watery, without any fecal matter or smell; our hopes therefore of having obtained a complete passage through the bowels, as we expected to find, were by this account disappointed. He had thrown up the medicine every time he took it. We repeated the bleeding ad deliquium, and administered an injection as before, which immediately returned without any thing else, and he vomited a considerable quantity of a dark-green coloured fluid, very like bile. On examining the bandage round the abdomen, it was found so very tense, in consequence of the distension which had now come on, that we considered it proper to unloose and slacken it, from
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which he experienced some relief. We left him in a great deal of pain, and in a state of considerable anxiety, though he breathed somewhat easier than before he vomited. I gave him the opiate he ought to have had last night; and we took our leave, very doubtful of his living till morning.

Sept. 1st, 8 o'clock A. M.—I had the satisfaction of finding him much better than last evening. Respiration easier, cough less frequent, and rattling not so loud; he had had no more vomiting; abdomen greatly subsided, and much less painful; external heat abated, and he could bear a little pressure upon it without complaining; pulse softer, and every other febrile symptom mitigated; he had had no stool, but had made water plentifully. Our directions had been strictly followed, and he had been allowed very little to drink; the stomach therefore was kept nearly empty, and free from distension. I administered a glyster, which staid near a quarter of an hour, when it came away discoloured, and having a strong fecal smell. Fully convinced of the necessity of keeping the stomach as empty and as quiet as possible, I still more particularly desired that he might have very little to drink; and as he still continued very thirsty, I ordered tamarinds to be taken occasionally, instead of any kind of fluid, and directed a tea-spoonful of the following electuary to be given every two or three hours: ℞ elect. sennæ ꝑj. ol. ricini ꝑss. m. ft. elect. The blood taken away last night exhibited a highly inflammatory appearance; buff very dense, and very much contracted or *cupped*.

7 o'clock P. M.—Continues better; had been tolerably easy during the day. My directions in regard to regimen had been strictly observed, and I found his body in an easy, relaxed, cool state. About two o'clock he had had a stool, which was shown me; it was quite fluid, but in smell and colour highly fecal, in quantity about three quarters of a pint: he had coughed less, and breathed easy, with very little rattling.—Rep. tinct. opii. gtt. xxx. h. s.

2d.—He had slept so well the early part of the night, that his nurse omitted giving the draught. The cough and difficulty of breathing were increased this morning; pulse hard, febrile symptoms increased. He complained of pain in the left side, and thought himself, as he evidently was, in every respect worse; he had had no stool, had made water plentifully. I repeated the bleeding; in endeavouring to pass up the injection, it failed, and but very little was got up. The body was relaxed, and not painful on pressure. I ordered the electuary to be continued as before; and directed two table-spoonfuls of an emulsion, prepared with oil of almonds, with a little spt. of nitre in it, to be given every

every three hours. He complained very much of hunger, and I gave him half a dozen spoonfuls of boiled milk, which he took greedily. I remained with him half an hour after he had taken it, and it staid upon his stomach. I desired a glyster might be given at two or three o'clock in the afternoon, if he should have no stool before that time.

7 o'clock P. M.—The glyster had been given as directed; it staid with him two or three minutes, and then brought away with it a quantity of *feces* figured, with some hard lumps. He had made but little complaint since I left him, until about an hour ago, when his cough became more troublesome, and he complained of more pain in the left side of his body. Pulse harder and quicker than in the morning; external heat all over the abdomen, as great or greater than I had almost ever felt it. On examining the blood taken away this morning, I found it as inflammatory as that of the evening of the 31st ult. I immediately unloosed the ligature on his arm, and took away about ten ounces more, which produced a sensation of sickness, but neither vomiting nor deliquium. I then administered an injection, and, in less than two minutes, he had a copious evacuation of *feces* figured, with one or two hard lumps. This relieved him considerably; his body, he said, felt lighter, respiration became easier, and his side less painful, pulse softer, and external heat lessened. I gave him *tinct. opii. gtt. xxx.* in a dose of the emulsion, and desired that he might have the draught, omitted the night before, towards morning, if he should be very restless and uneasy.—Cont. emuls. et elect.

3d, 8 o'clock A. M.—About an hour after I left him last night, he retched very violently, but did not vomit; after which he became easy, and slept well and sound till three o'clock in the morning. Cough and pain in the side abated, and in every respect much better than last night; respiration free; the blood last taken away quite lax and florid, showing not the least signs of inflammation; had had no stool, but made water plentifully. Cont. emuls. et elect. Rep. enema. I desired he might be allowed a little boiled milk during the day, without bread in it; solids totally forbid.

7 o'clock P. M.—Passed a quiet, easy day, having slept the greatest part of it. He became restless, and rather uneasy, about the same time as last evening; more feverish than in the morning, and abdomen more painful; cough rather troublesome; no stool nor vomiting. His bed having now become very uncomfortable, I had him carefully taken out, to have it made afresh. I administered an enema, which staid with him ten minutes, and then came away, without bringing any fecal matter with it. I

gave him tinct. opii. gtt. xxx. with his emulsion. Soon after taking it, he retched, but did not vomit; after which he thought himself easier.

4th.—Mr A. Robinson visited him this morning, and found him pretty easy; he had passed a good night; no stool nor vomiting. He was ordered for diet to-day, a little hasty-pudding, with treacle, for he now made frequent complaints of hunger. A messenger came in the evening to inform us he had been easy all day, but was not quite so well when he left him. Cont. emuls. et elect. et omittr. haust. anod.

5th.—Had passed a quiet, easy night, and slept well, free from pain and fever; had a stool yesterday, and one this morning, which was more fluid than the two last, but quite fecal; he coughs sometimes, and expectorates with ease a quantity of thick purulent-like excretion. I removed the dressings from the wound, which were loosened round the edges by the discharge; it looked very well; the sides were not quite approximated betwixt the sutures, the spaces being filled up with healthy-looking granulations; none of the ligatures had separated. I dressed with dry lint and straps of adhesive plaster. He yesterday had taken hasty-pudding at three different times, to the quantity of a saucerful in all, which he liked much, and which had agreed with him very well. He had no nausea or vomiting. The same diet to be used to-day; in greater quantity, if he likes it.

6th and 7th.—Going on in every respect very well; had two full evacuations on the 6th. In addition to his hasty-pudding, he had been allowed some mutton broth; he also ate a very small piece of mutton. I dressed the wound again to-day as before, which looked very well: its sides were considerably approximated in every part since the 5th ult.

9th.—Dressed the wound; one or two ligatures had separated; and as the rest produced some little ulceration, I took them quite out. In every respect mending daily.

11th.—Wound healing rapidly. I allowed him to-day to get up, at which he was not a little pleased; he soon dressed himself, and walked down stairs, by my taking hold of his arm. Bowels quite open and regular.

20th.—Rode on horseback to Ripon to have the wound dressed, the whole of which was healed, except a very small portion at top and bottom. In every respect very well, and regaining his usual healthy appearance. Appetite and digestion good; cough has left him.

23d.—Quite well. The stomach, distended at the upper part of the wound, appears much below its natural situation. I recommended him to wear, for some time, a broad belt, made of stout woollen cloth, round the injured part of the abdomen. He carries

carries himself quite erect, which he did even two or three days after leaving his bed.

Remarks.

It may be matter of surprise and doubt to some, that the *stomach*, as well as the intestines, should have protruded through a wound in the abdomen, situated as described in the case just related; and it may not improbably be conjectured, that some portion of gut had really been mistaken for that viscus.

The *great arch*, with its *appending omentum*, were, however, too plain and evident to admit of any error of this sort; and my partner, Mr A. Robinson, on seeing its form externally on the evening of the 31st, distended so low, had no doubt of the fact. Dr Caley and Mr Lucas both saw the lad at Ripon on the 20th, and both saw the stomach distended much below its proper situation: its protrusion, however, is readily accounted for by the manner in which the boy was conveyed home after the accident.

Instead of being laid on a hurdle, and placed upon his back, he was taken before a man on horseback: at this time but a small portion of gut had protruded, and a handkerchief was given him, with which he was desired to press upon the wounded part, which he, quite overcome with fright and sickness, was unable to do. The horse had proceeded but a little way, before he felt more intestine pushing out, till at length such a quantity had protruded, as by its weight was sufficient to drag out the remainder, and in this way the great arch of the stomach was drawn down. He was carried in that manner two or three hundred yards.

Nov. 20th.—Mr Lucas saw the boy with me to-day. The stomach still remains much below its natural situation, so much so, as, with the bulging out of the intestines around the wounded part, to give that side of the abdomen a very irregular, prominent appearance.

He has been very well in every respect ever since his recovery; his appetite and digestion are both as good as formerly; and he is capable of enduring labour as well, and to as great a degree, as before the accident.

Ripon, 3d December 1808.