

Another case of stricture in a younger man operated on a few weeks later has also resulted favorably, but in his case the operation was greatly facilitated by the use of Syme's staff, an instrument which that eminent surgeon invented as a guide. It consists of a sound, the main portion of which is in size No. 10 English, but the terminal four inches is reduced to size No. 2 English, and is deeply grooved on its convexity. At the junction of the two portions is a distinct shoulder and the groove is continued for over half an inch into the larger portion of the staff.

The staff is passed cautiously with one finger in the rectum as a guide until the shoulder rests upon the face of the stricture. The point of the knife having found the groove is pushed onwards, dividing the stricture with certainty and safety.

As to choice of operation in cases of stricture of the urethra, I prefer when at all possible gradual dilatation, using Lister's graduated bulbous pointed bougies as the simplest and safest operation. For tight strictures in the penile portion of the urethra internal urethrotomy is indicated, using for this operation a Maisonneuve or other form of urethrotome, but if the stricture is in the membranous portion of the urethra external urethrotomy is called for as being the safer operation and giving good results, especially as efficient drainage and irrigation of the bladder is provided for to the great relief of the accompanying cystitis.

As in the case here quoted impassable strictures leave no choice, but must be dealt with by external urethrotomy.

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