

The sources of danger of tracheotomy are :

1. Hæmorrhage ; (which an adynamic disease is intolerant of).
2. Erysipelas, (by no means infrequent).
3. Gangrene.
4. Necrosis of cartilage. (Not always easy to prevent because of the shape of the tube and the possibility of its bearings being changed and rendered unduly heavy by reason of swelling.
5. Sepsis through the wound.
6. Ulceration of trachea and sepsis therefrom.
7. Plugging of desiccated mucus about the lower inner end of the outer cannula, which may

not be removed by the removal of the inner cannula, and sudden asphyxia and death.

Considering the gravity of these dangers, the possibility of their occurrence, and indeed their frequency and uncontrollable character, the impossibility of diagnosing the condition of the lungs in those cases of extreme dyspnoea and the dread which the friends of a patient always have of a cutting operation, and comparing them with the sources of danger in intubation in which the results are not inferior, intubation in diphtheritic croup should be advised as generally preferable to tracheotomy.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### FROM OUR SOUTHERN CORRESPONDENT.

To the Editor of MEDICAL SCIENCE:

AIKEN, Jan. 15th, 1889.

It seems hardly possible that within so short a time, it is possible to separate oneself from the blinding storm and blizzard which, occurring, on January 9th, caused so much destruction throughout the Northern States and Canada, and to find oneself in a climate, where roses and camelias are in bloom in the outer air, where ploughing and planting have been begun, and the catkin blossoms are appearing on the salix in the damp grounds along the streams. Yet so it is, and the warm rains during the past week and the chirrup of frogs, all proclaim, that spring has come at a moment when the newspapers tells us that Montreal rejoices in three feet of snow, and that the glories of a Canadian winter are only just beginning.

To our readers it may not be wholly uninteresting to give in something like a connected manner, the incidents and progress of our trip to the south, our party consisting of three Canadians, whom our negro *femme de chambre* euphemistically calls "quite a gentl'men squahd." The journey to New York took about twenty hours, and there having arrived, we found convenient quarters and spent a glorious twenty-four hours with a bright sunshine, which many were found enjoying, basking in it sitting on the seats in Madison Square. We made calls on several old friends, and found Dr. William Porter, a friend known to many Canadians, in good health and spirits, and Dr. Albert H. Buck engaged

in his cosy quarters up town, alternately between seeing patients and editing proof for what may be called an encyclopædia, "Wood's Reference Handbook of the Medical Sciences." The state of one of the trio's health caused the propriety of taking steamer south, in preference to the tedious railway travel, to be seriously discussed, and after deliberation we decided to take passage on the splendid steamer Talahassee, of the Ocean Steamship Company's Line, for Savannah. Our choice was a fortunate one, and during the fifty-four hours of the passage we enjoyed an ocean voyage which proved in every way to be almost everything that could be desired. Our greatest invalid began the first evening on board to eat meals with a relish to which he had been a stranger for weeks, and his appetite has gone "with a gallop" ever since. Similarly, sleeping, which with all of us had been at a premium for some time past, came to us under the soothing influences of the ocean breezes, and nothing but pleasure was with us until we began to round Cape Hatteras.

The most that could be said of it was that the sea was a choppy one, and the vessel rolled, when no longer steadied by the wind in her sails, to an extent which placed one of us *hors de combat* in a very uncompromising manner. Our third day was perfect. Running southwesterly along the coast of the Carolinas, we met vessels coming from Savannah, Charleston, and the Indies, the major portion going to that wonderful port of New York, the emporium for a whole continent.

By sunset we came in sight of the mouth of the