

mind an idea of something extraneous, something foreign to, the body altogether; something heteramorphous; whereas a foreign body may exist within the body, and may even again be taken up, be absorbed and disappear having been eliminated from the system, in a changed form, through the ordinary emunctories. A foreign body may indeed be absorbed and disappear. We see that process in a specific bubo, when morbid matter, the virus of chancre, is carried by the lymphatics from the point of infection to the gland of the groin or elsewhere. Symptoms of inflammation in the glandular structure manifest themselves, and evidences of suppuration subsequently occur; but every surgeon knows that, one or two days later, all evidence of pus may have disappeared. So frequently is this the case that it is not the part of a prudent surgeon to promise to open a bubo on the morrow, when the morrow may have obliterated all trace of pus, and that, too, without being attended with any signs of pus absorption or of pus poisoning.

What is meant by foreign bodies in surgical wounds? Not alone what enter from without, but what depend from within the body itself, and chiefly blood and its constituents. At the very moment of division of a part exosmotic action, excited by the stimulus of the knife, goes on with more than usual vigor. The exuded product may not always be visible, for hidden away in pockets here and there the blood or liquor sanguinis may remain in quantity too great to be absorbed, and in a short time, acting as a foreign body, though of the body, requires to be expelled from the wound where it was creating mischief.

To provide against this pent up liq. sanguinis tents and drainage tubes are used now-a-days somewhat extensively. The introduction of a tent or drainage tube in a recent and clean wound is, in my opinion, objectionable, and should never be practiced unless foreign bodies are known to exist, and cannot be got rid of save by an extensive or a hazardous dissection. The use of tents and drainage tubes is painful. They cause irritation, inflammation, suppuration. They do, they can do no good in a recent and properly constructed surgical wound. They may be necessary at a later period in an ill-constructed or an improperly cleansed wound. It is strange the unanimity of ancient surgeons, even to the

time of Galen, on this question; and our modern Chassaignac, who has laid the science of surgery under such deep obligations, when he furnished his tube de drainage, now so generally used, never dreamed it would be inserted between the lips of a fresh wound to prevent that union between them so much desired.

Galen, in his 4th meth., says that every single wound, however deep, demands that there shall be nought between the lips which could prevent their agglutination, and it was reserved to modern surgery to depart from so wise a counsel. According to Galen, there are five principal objects to be held in view: 1st. To remove foreign bodies; 2nd. To approach the lips of wounds; 3rd. To maintain them in apposition; 4th. To preserve the temperature; 5th. To correct any accidents that may arise on the road to union. This, viewed with all the acumen of modern surgery, is the whole law. How is it observed? Within the past few months a gentleman reached this city (Montreal) minus a limb. He had splintered it with a fowling piece; and amputation followed at once. The operation was nicely done, and the flaps were perfect in form and adaptation. But to make assurance doubly sure; to provide for suppuration, which might not occur, horse hair tents were laid along the bottom of the wound. I need hardly say the horse hair tents had done their duty well, and suppuration was well established. Once established, and established in all probability by the horse hairs, the latter served to convey without the body what they had alone, perhaps, created within it. This is a retrograde movement, but it is a general one, either with the horse hair, or hemp, or twine, or silk, or Chassaignac's tube de drainage, or fluid or gaseous bodies.

But if we fail in obtaining union by first intention within a few days; if blood; or liquor sanguinis; or water; or the debris of a sponge; or the saw dust from the bone; or the deep mourning beds from beneath the operator's finger nails or those of his assistants; or the too often neglected pent-up air, has been left within the wound, and the skin closed over all, local reaction is soon manifested; swelling, redness and afterwards, fever, follow; and within the stump an abscess is formed bound, on the one side by the skin, and on the other by the divided muscles, nerves, lymphatics, blood