

in that form calling for the operative assistance of the surgeon, we should undoubtedly infer that it was rather a rare disease (if disease it may be called) in this country,—for during a residence here of two years, I have not seen in print any account of the operation for strangulated hernia having been performed,—whence I do not imagine that during this period no cases of such lesion have occurred; on the contrary, within the past eighteen months, I have met with three cases of strangulation, and doubtless my confreres have had a proportionate amount, but they have all yielded to the taxis except in one instance; and this non-occurrence of the operation would lead me to infer (perhaps erroneously) that hernia reducible, irreducible, and strangulated, must be of rarer occurrence here than amongst an equality of population in the old country, although I am unaware of what is the per centage of ruptured persons in Great Britain, but I believe it to be very large—whence it follows that the necessity for the performance of the operation is somewhat frequent. In referring to my memory, for I am not supplied with notes, I think that in public and private practice I have witnessed and assisted at the operation, in England, about twenty times; and, in giving an opinion as to the results, I should say that fully one half were unsuccessful—that is to say, although the intestine was safely and carefully returned into the cavity of the abdomen without any injury from the knife and without any accident from hæmorrhage, yet death supervened on the second or third day from the continuance of peritoneal mischief already in existence prior to the operation. In opposition to what is usually observed in surgery as well as in disease, this operation is perhaps more frequently attended with success amongst the aged and infirm than amongst the young and plethoric. A very striking instance of this fact recurs to me, happening in very high life at Brighton, in England, under the care of my relative Mr. Lawrence, Surgeon to the Super County Hospital,

and one of the Surgeons Extraordinary to his late Majesty William IV. The subject of it was the Countess of Guildford. She was 60 years of age; of a weak and attenuated frame, labouring at the very time under apoplexy; the coma was complete and had existed for about forty-eight hours, when the nurse accidentally discovered the presence of a tumour in the femoral region, which, upon examination, proved to be a femoral hernia; and from the irreducibility of it, coupled with obstinate constipation, which was the only symptom, it was decided, in consultation with the other medical men, to operate. In those days chloroform was not invented, nor was it needed, for the anæsthesia was perfect during the apoplectic stupor; the sac was opened, and there sure enough was found a small knuckle of intestine, which was easily returned into the abdomen. After a few hours, catharsis was established, and not a single bad symptom supervened; on the contrary, about 30 hours afterwards, the coma began to give way to the remedies in use, and finally her recovery, both cranially and abdominally, became complete.

Another case of some obscurity, I witnessed whilst a dresser at the London Hospital. The subject of it was a female. She was brought in labouring under the usual category of hernial symptoms, including a small tumour in the femoral situation; she was taken to the operating theatre; the steps of the operation were most carefully gone through; layer after layer of fascia or condensed cellular tissue was dissected on the director, and at last the contents of the tumour were arrived at without however the satisfactory exuding of serum. On entering the hernial sac, it turned out to be nothing but a melanotic inguinal gland in its capsule; this was excised, and the patient was once more put to bed, with the idea that the intus-susception was the cause of the hernial symptoms. The patient died; and on the autopsy taking place, the original diagnosis proved to be too correct. A very small knuckle of intestine was still dis-