

These varieties of fracture of the neck of the thigh-bone, proceeding from direct force applied from without inwards, may happen at all periods of life, but are more liable to occur during youth and adult age; they form a marked contrast with that kind of fracture of the neck of the thigh-bone that proceeds from the application of force that has its influence from above downwards, which most commonly happens only during old age.

The application of a force to the neck of the thighbone, proceeding from above downwards may cause its fracture transversely within the capsular ligament. A person descending a stair makes a false step and comes to the ground at a greater distance than he had expected; he is thrown off his balance, so that the whole weight of the body falls upon the neck of the thigh-bone; perhaps the person is advanced in years, the neck of the thigh-bone has lost its obliquity, consequently the weight comes in a most unfavorable direction, while at this period of life the bone is abnormally brittle, it is snapped across by the sudden application of the weight, and the amount of the injury will be proportioned to the influence of these several causes. The impulse may cause a solution of continuity in the bony structure without lacerating the prolonged extension of the capsular ligament upon the neck of the femur, the *retinacula* of Weitbrecht; should such a lesion result, the action of the muscles might draw the shaft of the bone upwards to a trifling extent, and the consequence is, that the weight of the body suspended upon the fractured bone produces an angle in the line of the neck; causing, however, but little shortening, and seldom any crepitus, as the result of the injury. Should the injury be rather more extensive, should the bone and the fibrous covering be separated by the violence of the force, without tearing the free portion of the capsular ligament that surrounds the joint, we shall have a fracture of the neck of the thigh-bone within the capsular ligament. On our examination of the limb in this variety of accident, its length may be found somewhat shortened; the retraction of the bone upwards, however, may have been arrested, by the still perfect condition of the capsular ligament, and the weight of the body, if in the erect position, may still hang upon the tough and firm membrane. In consequence of the very partial removal of the femur from its proper position, the muscles acting upon the bone are but slightly disarranged in their actions, the limb for the most part retains its true direction—and as there is, in many cases, an absence of that swelling, pain and contusion of the soft parts, which was