

PERISCOPIC DEPARTMENT.

Surgery.

IS TERTIARY SYPHILIS COMMUNICABLE?

A case of Indurated Chancre and Constitutional Syphilis contracted in an unusual manner. Reported by Dr A. M. SIGMUND, Shimmersville, Pennsylvania.

On August 24th, 1867, I was called to see Miss M. H., aged seventeen years, well developed, and to all appearance in good health, with the exception of a large and painful ulcer on her upper lip. Upon examination, I found the ulcer to present the following characters: It was situated on the centre of the lip, extending from its anterior margin to near the frænum, oval in form, and, the lip being much swollen, about five-eighths of an inch in its longest diameter. Its surface was hollow, as if scooped out, and covered with a layer of dirty greyish lymph; the edges were hard, slightly elevated, and sloping a little from within outwards; the base well defined, and very hard, feeling, when pressed between the thumb and finger, like a button or ring of fibro-cartilage.

On inquiry, I learned that about two weeks previous the lip had become indurated at the centre, where she had a slight chap, after which the induration increased until it had involved the whole thickness of the lip, and then—about a week after—it commenced to ulcerate. On my informing her that the ulcer was undoubtedly of a syphilitic character, and asking her when and how she became infected, I received the following statement, which, from what I have since learned, I believe to be true. About three weeks before, she had been at a Pic-nic, and was there in company with a young man, (whom *I knew* to have been labouring under *tertiary syphilis*, and had also at that time some indolent sores on the inside of his lips), and that at one time during the day, when he had been smoking a segar through a very beautiful amber mouth-piece, she playfully took it from him and placed it in her mouth. In the evening he accompanied her home, and in parting impressed several kisses upon her lips, one of which was rather prolonged, in order, as he said, to take a good parting kiss, as he would leave the neighborhood in a few days. She felt nothing unusual about the lip until about a week afterward, when the induration commenced; but thinks she had a slight chap, or abrasion on it at that time, where the induration afterward occurred.

On further examination, I found that no visible secondary or constitutional symptoms had as yet developed, *and also, that there was no local disease, or evidence that there had been any, on any other part of her body.* To all appearance the disorder was as yet only local.