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A SERIES OF CASES OF CALCULOUS OBSTRUCTION OF  
THE COMMON BILE DUCT, TREATED BY INCISION  
AND REMOVAL OF THE CALCULI.<sup>1</sup>

BY

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It is safe to say that in no department of surgery has greater progress been made in recent years than in the treatment of gall-stone disease by operation upon the gall-bladder and ducts. Lives are now saved and health restored by operations which are followed by a very low death rate, and which have this advantage over many other valuable surgical procedures, that they restore the health completely and leave the patient free from deformity or loss of function. The first successful cholecystotomy was done by Mr. Lawson Tait, in August, 1879, and the first attempt to remove stones from the common duct was made, (also by Mr. Tait), by crushing in July, 1884.<sup>2</sup> Later Mr. Knowsley Thornton operated by breaking up the stones with a needle passed through the walls of the duct ("needling"), and forcing the fragments out into the duodenum. The first successful choledochotomy was performed by Curvoisier in January, 1891.<sup>3</sup> Today cholecystostomy is a common operation, frequently performed and generally with the most satisfactory results, and in ordinary cases the procedure is almost devoid of danger. Incision of the common duct for the removal of calculi, which has now almost entirely superseded the cruder operation of "crushing" and "needling," is, of course, a much more difficult and serious operation, and is generally called for

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<sup>1</sup> Read at the meeting of the Canadian Medical Association, Quebec, August, 1898.

<sup>2</sup> *Lancet*, Vol. II., 1885.

<sup>3</sup> A. W. Mayo Robson Hunterian Lectures, 1897.