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THE TREATMENT OF HIP DISEASE

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THE term "hip disease" has assumed a very definite meaning—something more specific than simply disease at the hip joint. Disease at the hip joint may mean that the pathological factor is gonorrhoea, syphilis, rheumatoid arthritis, malignant disease, rheumatism, or tuberculosis. The term "hip disease" is employed to signify the last, and is now almost universally taken to imply a focus of tubercular disease in some of the structures which together constitute the hip joint.

Mr. Bowlby, of London, has recently published an article which presents certainly very striking results. During twenty-one years just passed, nine hundred cases of tuberculous disease of the hip have been treated at the Alexandra Hospital, with a mortality of less than 4 per cent. In the year 1879, the Clinical Society of London instituted an enquiry to ascertain the relative merits of treatment by rest and other associated measures, on the one hand, and by operation, notably by excision, on the other. The report of the committee may be found in the fourteenth volume of the "Transactions of the Clinical Society" (1881). Of three hundred and eighty-four cases treated in the Alexandra Hospital, referred to in the above enquiry (1881), one hundred died, a mortality of 26 per cent. The causes of death assigned are as follows: Tuberculous meningitis, 23; extension of local disease and visceral complications, such as amyloid disease, tuberculous disease of the lung, etc., 66; intercurrent diseases, that is to say; other diseases which were not directly connected with the hip disease, 11; making