

a very unusual case, as the patient was quite a lad, in whom no suspicion of this accident was likely to be entertained.

Facts like these show the importance of a most rigid scrutiny in all cases of injury, and ought to render us charitable in regarding the mistakes of others. It shows, too, that nothing is too trivial among these "common things" for us to study.

There is another subject I think it right to allude to here, in reference to accidents. Accidents, like diseases, are sometimes feigned by patients for the sake of admission into hospitals. I have known many instances of this, and you will meet with many. You may sometimes arrogate to yourselves much credit in the ready detection of imposture; let me advise you to be cautious in this respect, as you may be deceived, and subsequent conviction of your error may lead to very unpleasant reflections. I would advise you, therefore, in a doubtful case, rather to err on the side of humanity, and treat the case as one of accident than to run the risk of the unpleasant conviction of error, and by dismissing the patient inflict an injury on him as well as to your own feelings. Ulcers on legs will thus be feigned; and there is a curious set of cases rather allied to these—hysteric feign of stone in the bladder, and other diseases, by females. Swallowing needles is an almost incredible amount is another curious offshoot of hysteria. A woman was operated on not long since, but not in this hospital, for stone in the bladder, when a hair pin revealed itself as the nucleus of the stone and was thrust through the bladder, and plainly felt in the rectum. The woman would give no account of it (she was rather silly) but that it slipped in! Amongst other anomalies, a large egg-cup was lately shown at one of the medical societies as having been swallowed, and was found after death in the intestines. These may all be mentioned as bearing on the curious subject of feigned disease, or anomalous affections, that may be met any day in practice. Hysteric patients think very often they have knee-joint disease, &c.

Now as to bruises, sprains, strains, &c. You must not expect novelty on this subject, but I shall not pass it over as being very common. Such accidents are very important, especially in evidence at inquests or on trials, &c. The nature of a contusion or bruise is intelligible enough; but bruises are important, of course, according to the part injured, and the depth or extent of the injury. Thus, a simple shock or contusion of the eye may lead to permanent amaurosis, whilst the bruising of a limb is attended with but temporary inconvenience. The blood extravasated under the influence of a bruise, it is well to remember, in a medico-legal point of view, generally after a time separates into its natural chemical constituents of serum and red globules, &c., and the prevalence of one or other of these constituents in the meshes of the subcutaneous cellular membrane gives rise to the altered colour of the part, which generally tells the date of an injury, as on the fourth or fifth day after the accident it becomes of a yellowish-green appearance, the shade varying from a purple to a light green. This is an evidence, as in a child found dead, that absorption was taking place; for in cases where this process is not going on, this variegated appearance does not