

further to increase the power of the two former glutei; it corresponds with them in action, but its fibres being deeper seated, are more confined in their origin, and much shorter—will be much more deficient in power, and its action must be simply that of an extensor of the limb.

Taken as a whole, these muscles present a most powerful means of keeping the body erect upon the thighs; enabling man to assume that position which so strongly characterizes him from the brute creation. We find this series of powerful muscles arising from one of the largest and most extended bones of the body, their fibres proceeding downwards from a very large segment of a circle, are inserted into the upper part of the thigh-bone, doubtless the separate contraction of each set of fibres approximating their origin and insertion, may either abduct, adduct or extend the limb, according to their position; but if they act consecutively they will serve to rotate the thigh-bone in its socket, move it in a circle upon its axis, and turn the toe outwards or inwards according to their individual action.

The great nerves and vessels, which make their exit from the pelvis through the sacro-sciatic foramen, issue beneath the pyriformis muscle, and descend through the space between the trochanter major and tuberosity of the ischium, are here covered and defended by these muscles, and must not be forgotten in our general consideration of the anatomy of this region. We must bear in mind that disease of the great sacro-sciatic nerve is often intensely painful in its character, the pain being greatly increased upon motion of the limb;—so much so, that the spasmodic rigidity of the thigh, has been mistaken for disease of the hip-joint, especially when it has happened in young children.

From our considerations of the normal actions of these muscles we can easily understand that should the neck of the femur be broken across, that bone will be drawn up on the dorsum of the ilium. The degree of this distortion will depend upon the positive seat of the fracture, was it within the tense and firm capsular ligament, it would be but little elevated above its natural position, but was it without that texture, and implicating the shaft of the bone, its retraction might amount to several inches, and the deformity be sufficiently marked by the eye. Was the head of the bone dislocated upon the dorsum of the ilium, the shaft of the bone would be thereby elevated above the plane of the acetabulum the origin and insertion of these muscles, consequently approximated; they would be relaxed and loose a great degree of their power over this bone. Such also, (but slightly modified), would be the case in dislocation into the ischiatic notch, but when we have luxation into the thyroid hole, the thigh-bone has descended, the distance between their origin and insertion is considerably increased, consequently they are in powerful action and serve to