

REPORT OF A CASE OF INJURY TO THE SPINAL CORD, CAUSED BY A FRACTURE DISLOCATION IN THE CERVICAL REGION.

The Anterior Horn of Grey Matter and the Pyramidal Tracts were Implicated at the Seat of Injury, whilst the Sensory Paths Largely Escaped Damage.

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A complete transverse lesion of the spinal cord, the result of traumatism is of common occurrence, but we do not often encounter cases where the injury has produced conditions which are analogous to hemisection, such as may be experimentally performed on animals. Whilst the usual experiment on animals is that of lateral hemisection, the case which I now place on record exhibits symptoms such as one would predict if one were to cut the cord half way through the substance from the anterior towards the posterior surface.

The lesion in this patient was obviously produced by an injury to the cord, the maximum degree of which was located between the origin of the sixth and seventh cervical nerves from the cells in the anterior horn of grey matter.

The following history of the case was taken on November 23rd, 1903 :

J. N., aged 14, met with an accident on July 19th, 1902, i.e., sixteen months ago. He was standing under a shed when it fell, and the roof of the shed pinned him down, with his neck acutely flexed forward. When he was released, a few minutes after the accident, he was found sitting on the ground, with his head bent forward on his chest, this attitude having been assumed apparently because of the weight of the roof of the shed, which rested upon his head. He was stunned for a few minutes, but soon recovered consciousness. The moment he regained consciousness he found that he had lost the power of the right leg and of both arms; the power of the left leg was impaired also, but he could use it a little, and he was able to stand upon it. He, however, had no sensation in either the arms or the legs, they were absolutely numb. Twenty minutes after the accident he was carried into the house, and by the time he arrived there sensation began to return everywhere, except in the right arm. At first the sensation was like "pins and needles," but it soon became normal. The sensation in the right arm returned about 48 hours after the accident. He made his first attempt to walk two or three days after the accident, and succeeded in doing so, but in a very stiff manner,