

patient and efficient prophylactic measures in the early days of the disease.

As I look back through many years of active hospital practice, I cannot divest myself of the thought that the plaster-of-Paris jacket-treatment, of which, I confess, I have been a warm advocate, must be held responsible for much of the existing deformity of Pott's disease. Many a time have I seen the angular projection coming on and increasing when the child has been getting about in a plaster-jacket or some other form of support.

Though the child is to be lying flat for six, twelve, eighteen or more months, he is not to be shut up in a close bedroom. The windows are to be kept open and he is to be carried out every day into God's blessed sunshine, which is as necessary for warm-blooded animals as for plants. His muscles are to be maintained in good trim by massage, but he is to be kept all the time in a horizontal position. I know that in these days of activity and progress such unromantic treatment demands great confidence on the part of the parents in the judgment of the practitioner who insists upon it, but no little experience of it enables me with the utmost confidence to recommend it. Certainly it is not a new method. Hear what Sir Benjamin Brodie says upon the subject. This is the sentence at the very beginning of his valuable chapter on the *Treatment of Curies of the Spine*: "From the first moment, therefore, in which the nature of the case is clearly indicated, the patient should abandon his usual habits and be confined altogether on his bed or couch."*

Naturally, one turns also to see what Percival Pott has to say upon the question of the treatment of the disease which bears his honored name. And it is somewhat of a disappointment to find him so taken up with the subject of the *Palsy of the Lower Limbs* which follows destruction of the bodies of the vertebrae, that apparently he has not the inclination to discuss general measures. But it is all delightful reading, and even to-day it is brimful of clinical instruction. What a relief it is to read a chapter or two of Pott, or Brodie, or Chassaignac after one has been poring over the pages of some modern text-book, in order, as the saying is, to "keep abreast of the times"! Pott always seems to put his red velvet sleeve around one's shoulders and to draw one aside from the bustling crowd of the "busy practitioners" (in whose peculiar interest modern text-books are quaintly said to be written), and to talk to one in the delightful manner of those whose literary style has not been spoilt by the habit of counting words on telegraph forms, or of compiling "copy" of precise length, and in a limited time, for medical publishers!

However, Pott has a few remarks to make in a general way about the treatment of the later stages of spinal disease, but I am afraid that they will not prove acceptable to most modern surgeons any more than my own poor remarks on that subject may do. Still,

* "Observations on the Diseases of the Joints," 1850, page 342.