

Another instance of the favorable course which undoubted and severe tuberculous disease may run without active surgical interference, is seen in the case of old-standing hip-joint disease, the boy actually "growing out of his trouble." The disease, let us suppose, began at that period of life when it is customary to send a boy to school, and his school-life was frequently interrupted and was continuously clouded by the affection. But he is now a young man at college, and though he walks lame and is precluded from taking an active part in athletics, still he is vigorous, and he has evidently and completely triumphed over his disease. I am not sure that I have in clinical work ever before used the specious expression, "growing out of a disease"; and possibly I might not do so now if I thought that there were any students or unqualified persons present, for its adoption might prove unfortunate or even dangerous. It is a rather favorite expression, however, amongst parents and other ill-informed persons when confronted with a child with a tuberculous lesion. Would they expect a garden to grow out of its weeds or a field out of its thistles? No; it is a popular superstition, but, like most erroneous beliefs, it is founded on a substratum of truth. For, as a matter of fact, many patients do "grow out of" tuberculous disease, and, strange to say, sometimes most markedly so after a surgeon has made the clear pronouncement that without operation recovery is quite impossible. A boy, for instance, has chronic tuberculous and suppurative disease of his tarsus; he is albuminuric and very ill. His able young surgeon says that unless his foot is removed the boy will die. This, of course, is a very unwise thing for any surgeon to say, for he cannot possibly know for certain exactly what is going to happen. But what *may* happen is this—the operation is declined; the child is put under the care of another practitioner who, though not so clever a surgeon, is, perhaps, older and a better man-of-the-world. By good luck rather than by good management the disease clears up, and in a couple of years' time the boy is walking about with scarcely a limp. "See that boy?" says the proud father. "Well, Dr. Omniscient wanted to cut off his foot, but his mother and I would not let him!" According to the rules of the game the foot, of course, ought to have been amputated; but Nature does not always play according to the rules, as the young practitioner sometimes finds out to his cost. *Knowledge* is the prerogative of youth, but *wisdom* should come with years.

I am aware that I have wandered from that case of chronic hip-joint disease: I was instancing it merely to say that though the head of the thigh-bone and the socket in which it worked have been quietly destroyed by a growth of tuberculous granulation-tissue, so that the limb is greatly shortened, still it is now, years afterwards, solidly fixed and fairly ser-