

cicatrix of the former operation. He found that the silver wires had not cut the tissue, but having become untwisted they had given. With the view of avoiding repetition of this accident he devised the following proceeding.

Above the level of the stump of torn triceps muscle and tendon he threaded a strong piece of silver wire perpendicularly to the muscular fibres in such a manner that it could not possibly give. Then, to parallel pieces of silver wire were passed through the patella and drawn upwards so as to pass over the first transverse wire. Thus, by means of a bony base below and a metallic above, he was able to exert sufficient traction to bring the patella and the triceps tendon into approximation, these in their turn being sutured with catgut. To prevent any entanglement of the wires, they were carefully doubled on themselves. Healing was rapid, and the patient left the hospital in three weeks, but was seen again seven months after the operation, when it was found he could walk perfectly; extension of the limb was complete, there was no pain, and the knee presented no abnormal characters. On examination by the radiograph it was discovered that the silver wires were broken, from which fact the writer draws the following conclusions:—That in suturing the muscle and tendon by a silver wire healing results by fibrous union brought about by means of the wire acting mechanically. Should it be necessary to keep the wires permanently in place it is better to employ platinum rather than silver.

INHERITED TRAITS.

The scientific study of heredity is considered a recent departure, but, like many other novelties, is only the rounding of a cycle. Moses evidently regarded the transmission of diseases and deformities very seriously, as we find from the care with which he regulated the marriages of the priesthood. The directions in Leviticus xxi. clearly show the precautions taken to keep pure the blood of the tribe destined to perform the sacred offices.

The children of Israel have ever since jealously guarded the purity of their descent,

and remain, among the changing types of the world, a distinct people whose characteristics are everywhere recognised.

Other races have profited little by the lawgiver's precepts regarding heredity, and give so little study to the subject that its only modern data must be sought in the text-books of medicine and its cognate sciences. The meagre literature of this topic calls for additions to our stock of information, and mere conjecture is valueless.

Certain diseases are clearly proved hereditary to a frightful degree; of these, consumption, scrofula, insanity, gout, defects of vision, are well-attested instances. Others are undeniably repeated in many families; for example, a mother who suffered from attacks of erysipelas transmitted the predisposition to five of her thirteen children, one dying from a severe form of the disease, and at least two of the grandchildren have the unpleasant legacy.

Dr. A. Barkan mentions a Parisian family that in the sixteenth century had night-blindness which has developed in a number of the descendants.

Dr. Kerr, of Pasadena, recently published strong evidence proving the hereditary nature of neuralgia, which he thinks as transmissible as scrofula.

These may be sufficient illustrations of inherited misfortune, and the question may arise, "Of what benefit is this melancholy knowledge?"

Much may be done to avert ill consequences when we know the liability of children to certain diseases; for instance, a lad of twelve years old, whose mother, grandmother, and half-a-dozen uncles and aunts died of phthisis, began to droop with lung trouble. He was placed in careful hands for a year, outdoor exercise and nourishing food were abundantly supplied, and with but little medical treatment he rallied, and is now at twenty-six a healthy man. The influence of active pursuits, pure air, and proper climate is wonderful in its power to check incipient pulmonary disease.

Formerly, the delicate son, in mistaken kindness, was given a sedentary occupation, and the vigorous boy sent to the farm; wiser judgement now reverses the decision.