

Original Communications.

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Mrs. S., *ætat.* 55, spare, thin, cadaverous-looking, general appearance suggestive of malignant disease, states her health to have been always good, but always weak, delicate, and with a very poor appetite. Catamenia, which ceased five years ago, always were regular, but scanty, of a pale color, but accompanied with a more or less (generally a considerable) amount of pain. Never had any children nor any miscarriage. Family history not good. Father, mother and one sister all said to have died of cancer; and since the present subject came under my notice another sister has died of (presumably) cancer of œsophagus after several months illness and semi-starvation. About two years previous to July, 1875, a large lump was perceived on the upper surface of the foot, in front of the ankle-joint over the larger metatarsal bones. This remained stationary until about the middle of June, when it became red, swollen, inflamed and very painful. Various domestic remedies were applied, of course with no relief, except that with which "fancy painted it." About the end of June the advice of Dr. Gordon was sought. When seen then the whole foot was very much swollen, very red and intensely painful, especially when held in a dependent position. Rest, linseed poultices, quinine, iron and a generous diet were prescribed. At the end of a few days, pointing was observed. Matter presented itself; was allowed to discharge, *per se*, and the patient having been placed under chloroform, the administration of which she bore very well, the wound was carefully examined with a probe, and unmistakable evidences of diseased bone were found. The patient being very desirous of something being done for her relief, without, if possible, losing her foot, it was determined, after a consultation with Dr. Blackmore, that although it was quite impossible to say how far the disease extended, yet in deference to the urgent wishes of the patient, but contrary to our advice and judgment, excision should be attempted. Accordingly, on the 4th July, the patient being again placed under chloroform, the administration of which Dr. Blackmore kindly undertook, an incision was made by Dr. Gordon in the usual manner, and a good flap having been obtained, the

first and second metatarsal and the cuboid and scaphoid were removed. Part of the os calcis and the astragalus was carefully gouged out. The cavity was plugged with lint, saturated with carbolized oil, an opening left, the parts nicely brought into apposition with several sutures and some strips of plaster, and the leg was placed on a splint. The operation occupied about twenty minutes; the patient lost very little blood, and when seen a few hours later expressed herself as being, and looked, comfortable. There was a considerable amount of suppuration for a few days, of good, sound, healthy matter, and the wound appeared to be granulating nicely. The patient seemed to be doing well, and had a very tolerable appetite: her diet being composed of eggs, milk, fish and beef-tea. &c., at the commencement, with small doses of brandy and wine. Later on mutton chops, rump-steak and stout were prescribed, and great hopes were entertained that our bit of conservative surgery would turn out successful, with a very useful, if not ornamental remainder of a foot for our patient. But alas! a "change came o'er the spirit of the dream." In the first week in August several places broke out round the ankle-joint, discharging matter of a thin, bloody, sanious character. A large sinus formed, extending up to just below the middle third of the leg, the whole of which assumed an aspect of an extremely erysipelatous character, and the patient's appearance was highly suggestive of pyæmia. The whole leg was enveloped in linseed poultices. She was given a good calomel and colocynth purge, and, after large doses of quinine and liq. ferri perchlor., four times a day, gr. ij. full doses of opium at night. Her diet was of the most liberal description, brandy and wine, especially champagne, and whenever it was possible, instead of plain water, a saturated solution of chlorate of potash was ordered to be used. By these remedies the alarming symptoms were gradually subdued, and the patient's health restored to such an extent as to justify our resorting, on the 15th August, to amputation about six inches below the knee. The patient did not bear the chloroform quite so well as on the previous occasions, but she lost very little blood, a tourniquet being applied, and each vessel, as soon as divided, being taken up and secured. The operation was quite successful, and a good stump resulted. With the assistance of a pair of crutches the patient is able to move about freely and well, and we hope in a short time to be able to supply her with an artificial limb. An examination of the amputated limb disclosed extensive disease of