

the close of the month of April; during the latter part of this month, however, he improved considerably, and when he left Portsmouth Hospital, in May, several of the sinuses had headed, and he had partially recovered the power of motion in the limb, which previously he could not move by his own effort; his general health also was much better.

The foregoing case is therefore important from two circumstances. In the first place, as shewing how far we can extend the practice of conservative Surgery in wounds of the joint when we have a young and healthy subject to deal with, and in whom neither a Scrofulous nor a Syphilitic taint exists; either of which would materially influence the course to be pursued on the performance or not of an operation. But the second and more important point remains to be considered. We have had a most favourable subject to deal with, and yet for a lengthened period, extending over a space of seven months, no attempt at reparation whatever was set up; whilst the incessant discharge of a large quantity of pus, combined with the constant irritation necessarily present, and the confinement to bed, from which, on account of the state of the limb, the man could not for a long time be removed, bore down the constitution; which had it not been originally good, must have given way, and necessitated the removal of the limb, for the purpose of saving his life. Nine months after the original receipt of the injury, when the man was removed from my charge, reunion had only commenced, and a long period must still have to elapse before a permanent recovery, with a partially disabled limb, could take place. (Mr. Guthrie, in his commentaries on Surgery, has mentioned a case of gunshot injury to the head of the humerus, in which, years after the receipt of the injury, disease of the head of the bone still existed.) The question then for consideration is: would it not have been much more preferable in the beginning to have excised the fractured portion of bone? the patient, under the influence of Chloroform, could not have felt the knife, and the operation is not in itself dangerous to life; neither would the ultimate mutilation have been greater than ensued from the attempt to preserve the limb entire, thus removing the great objections to all operations. The answer to the question is therefore obvious. Had excision been performed, the man, in all likelihood, in three or four months, would have been free from pain and suffering, and with an equally, if not a more useful limb, than is likely to result from the course pursued. The constant formation and presence of sinuses, which in a wound of the joint we cannot avoid, are in themselves most likely to bring about Caries in sound portions of the bone; so that we have thus a constant reproduction of disease being set up, and only to be removed by the removal of the entire part. Should such a case again, then, come under my notice, I would not leave