

Granting, however, that such cases of pneumothorax do exist, they are very rare, and each case suspected of being such must be carefully followed out in order to determine whether or not perforation is present, and if absent, what forms of organisms account for the formation of gases. Clinically such cases are scarcely within the range of precise diagnosis.

Pneumothorax occurs not infrequently in those apparently healthy, and many observers regard it possible that such may be really healthy. This observation gathers strength in the light of many such cases going on to recovery within a few weeks, leaving no sign of the cause of such a condition.

However, in such cases there is ample ground for doubt, and among those who oppose this teaching no one has done so more strongly nor more logically than Samuel West, who maintains upon the following grounds that in all probability a pulmonary lesion has given rise to a perforation under conditions of over-strain.

Perhaps all will admit the grounds upon which he reasons concerning this point. They are in substance as follows :

1. Lesions exist undetected clinically.
2. Recovery may be complete from pneumothorax, even though there be a tubercular process at the bottom.
3. The bursting power of a healthy lung is greater than could be exerted by any expiratory effort.

Doubtless many cases occurring in the apparently healthy are caused by tuberculosis.

Not only in the advanced cases with cavity formation may this complication occur, but an early case where small superficial caseating areas exist,—so small that they can not be discovered clinically—pneumothorax may develop while the subject of it is regarded as previously healthy.

Of interest under this division of the subject are the statistics of a large number of cases. Some years ago Biach collected from the records of 38 years the reports of 918 cases in three of the large hospitals in Vienna.

His table showed :

Tuberculosis in.....	715 cases, 76 per cent.
Gangrene of Lung.....	65 "
Empyema.....	45 "
Injury.....	32 "
Bronchiectasis.....	10 "
Lung Abscess.....	10 "
Emphysema.....	7 "
Necrotic Hæmorrhagic Infarct.	4 " Total, 888