

by Mauser bullets with impunity. I remember the case of an officer who was shot through the knee joint at the battle of Korn Spruit. In six weeks he was walking about without a crutch, and had returned to duty. Ten days later this officer, with his squadron, was ordered to take a kopje. His brother officers were killed beside him, and he was shot again in the same knee. The wound proved to have been caused by a spent bullet, and was unimportant, though the missile had lodged in the patella tendon. Wounds of the chest by Mauser bullets were comparatively innocuous, and healed readily. In some cases there was a considerable hemorrhage into the lungs, with marked difficulty of breathing. If the obstruction was not so great as to seriously interfere with respiration, these cases, recovered. Wounds of the head were necessarily more serious, but I observed several in which there was considerable destruction of brain tissue, which afterwards made good recoveries. One case was that of a boy who was shot in the left side of the skull, close to the coronal suture, the wound running antero-posteriorly, and who had right hemiplegia, from which, after removal of fragments and depressed bone, a good recovery was made. A young Boer was shot through the mastoid, the ball coming out just above the zygoma. He made an excellent recovery, with impaired hearing. I notice that many apparently minor cases of grooving of the outer table of the skull were accompanied by reflex symptoms. Wounds of the eye were of frequent occurrence, and in most cases were most destructive. I saw two cases in which both eyes were lost, the bullet passing through the orbit and cutting the optic nerves. Another man had the optic nerve cut on one side, and, strange to relate, on the nerves of motion, cut on the other. There was almost complete ophthalmoplegia and mydriasis, but the vision was otherwise unimpaired. Cases of injury from fragments of shell and sand, thrown into the eye by exploding projectiles, were very common. Altogether, wounds showed a surprising tendency to heal rapidly, even under the most trying circumstances, which was due to the character of the bullet, the early application of an antiseptic dressing, enforced temperance among the troops, their general good health, and the careful and painstaking work of the Royal Army Medical Corps.

Before closing I wish to make a very few brief remarks upon the hospital administration in South Africa—a subject which is occupying a large place in the public mind because of the attacks which have been made upon the administration under the guise of philanthropic interest in the welfare of our soldiers, but which is in reality a thinly disguised and discreditable political attack upon the Imperial Government. The position was this: The Orange Free State is a land which produces