

CANADA

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A Case of Fracture of the Odontoid process of the Axis. Recovery.

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(WITH PHOTOGRAPH).

I believe the following case to be unique, inasmuch as I am not aware of any record of recovery after fracture and displacement of the odontoid process.

In September, 1864, I was called with Dr. Botsford, to visit Charlotte Magee, of this city, a little girl of six years of age, well formed and robust, who had been labouring for three weeks under what was supposed to be "neuralgic pains" of the head and neck.

Her mother reported that in August, the child fell from a pile of boards, about five feet high, striking on her head and neck; that she cried severely at the time, and could not move her head without pain, but no other indication of injury was observed; that the inability to move the head continued, and the pain in the neck increased to such an extent that on the sixth day after the accident medical aid was sought.

I found her able to walk well, though she moved carefully, and supported her head with her hand placed under her chin. The head was inclined forward and to the right side, and any attempt to rotate or move it caused great pain; there was little swelling or pain upon pressure on the occipito cervical region, and no irregularity could be discovered in the vertebrae of the neck; the pulse was natural, and the general system was undisturbed. Beyond the pain and inability to rotate the head, there was nothing to indicate the severe character of the injury, though it was apparent that the child had been badly hurt.

Warm fomentations and chloroform liniment were applied to the neck, and bromide of potash and anodynes given to relieve pain, with directions to keep the child perfectly quiet and as much as possible in the recumbent posture.