

THE Canadian Journal of Medical Science.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF BRITISH AND FOREIGN MEDICAL SCIENCE, CRITICISM, AND NEWS.

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SUBSCRIPTION, \$3 PER ANNUM.

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TORONTO, DECEMBER, 1880.

Original Communications.

INTERESTING CASE OF SPINAL DISEASE.

REPORTED BY DR. WATT.

The patient, Wm. Welsh, æt. thirty, consulted Dr. Aikins in June last for a supposed affection of the lungs. He is a well-formed stoutly-built man, but much reduced by sickness and confinement. Has been always a very healthy and hard-working man, and prided himself upon his ability to take heavy lifts. About two years ago, in raising a bag of flour to the scales, he felt a pain or "stitch" suddenly take him in the back, and was laid up then about a month. Recovering somewhat, he continued to attend to business, although complaining constantly of "wandering pains" in the spinal region and around towards the right side, with inability to lift as he used to do.

About six months ago, after exposure at night, he took a severe cold, with cough, and he has been confined to bed most of the time since then. Following the cold, a severe pain set in in the right side, which after two months settled in the spine, one of the vertebræ (the fifth or sixth dorsal) beginning to project backward; this was followed by the outward curvature of two more vertebræ higher up. About three months ago a plaster-of-paris jacket was put on, but it had to be removed in two weeks, because it increased his cough and seriously interfered with his breathing. The jacket appears to have removed the curvature in the spine, but at the time it was put on he spat up considerable blood, caused, he thinks, by the uncomfortable suspension of his body. Had not

before and has not since spat up any blood; but the spectrum is occasionally pink or rust-coloured, and sometimes very tenacious and stringy on standing. Previous to the jacket being put on no disease of the lungs had been diagnosed, but after it came off he was told that the left lung was affected; and by another physician, some time after, that the lower lobe of the right lung was also diseased.

For the last five or six weeks the patient has been spitting up small pieces of bone, which apparently come from the diseased vertebræ; they come up without causing any special or unusual coughing; the expectoration has not at these times been noticed to be particularly offensive, although at other times it has been. Slight constipation; appetite has all along been fair, but swallowing food or drink causes coughing from local irritation; does not vomit; has lost 35 lbs. in six months. P. 108; T. 101.2.

On coughing or laughing, the patient says he can feel the vertebræ gliding back and forward one upon the other; and with the hand on the back, the crepitation so caused can be felt.

On the 20th, a superficial abscess in the upper dorsal region, close to the spine, was diagnosed by Dr. Aikins and lanced, a quantity of very offensive pus being discharged. The abscess was washed out with carbolized water the same evening and on the two following days, the discharge during each night being very copious, but not so offensive as on Sunday.

On the 23rd Dr. A. probed from the original opening, and traced the abscess about five inches along the spine downward, when a second incision was made and a drainage tube carried