

tions exist in our profession "that all was well with the lad as the matter was collecting nicely."

2. Are we justified in doing immediate amputation in these cases?

I well recollect, when house surgeon a good many years ago, a case of tetanus ending fatally in a jockey who had sustained a compound fracture of the leg while racing. This lad might have had a better chance, I think, if a less conservative treatment of endeavoring to save the leg had been carried out by immediate amputation.

I do not mean the justification of amputation when the first signs of tetanus appear. That is considered at the present time to be the correct line of treatment, although it appears to me very much like closing the barn door after the horse has gone.

One is, of course, reluctant to advise amputation when a small skin wound is the only external mark of injury, but we err too much by dilly-dallying and forgetting that in tetanus we are dealing with a local infection creating a general toxæmia. The pathology of tetanus points to the fact that the bacilli do not enter the blood but remain localized in the neighborhood of the wound.

The toxins produced there act on the nerves of the central nervous system in a manner similar to strichnine, and unlike other infections, appears to travel in the nerves themselves and not in the blood. One should, therefore, open the apparently small wound and thoroughly disinfect it, for it has been shown that careful antiseptics applied to wound is the surest means of preventing tetanus.

The tetanus bacillus is a strict anærobe and does not grow in the presence of oxygen.

If the wound is allowed to remain septic for some time, the septic bacteria absorb the oxygen present and so make the condition of the tissues best suited for the propagation of the tetanus bacillus.

3. What is the value of antitetanic serum and what other means have we at our disposal to combat this disease?

When we remember that the toxin rapidly unites with the protoplasm of the nerve centres, and that its spread is by way