

10th.—Removed splint with saw. Patient able to walk about without splint." Thus in a week she was completely set upon her feet.

Case 4.—On the 5th November, 1880, I was called in the greatest haste to see a man whose leg was said to have been broken. I found a burly brewer's driver, about 22 years of age, surrounded by friends, and groaning with pain. He had been scuffling, half in fun, half in earnest, with a fellow-workman, and had received an injury of the right ankle joint, he did not exactly know how. A swelling as large as an orange covered the external malleolus. No fracture could be detected. Applied common rollers soaked in iced water. The next day, having forgotten my plaster, I applied a starched bandage. On the following day I found him walking about the yard, playing the trombone. On the sixth day he was back again at work. Starch does not answer well for this purpose, as it takes too long to dry.

It is obvious that great care must be taken that the joint be not kept too long fixed. After a week the splint should be removed, and applied only when the patient is obliged to undergo some extra exertion. Sir James Paget (Clinical Lectures and Essays, p. 96) states that too long rest is by far the most frequent cause of delayed recovery after injury of joints in nearly all persons who are not of a scrofulous constitution. Mere long rest, he says; stiffens them and makes them over-sensitive, cold douches and elastic restraints and pressures make them worse; and nothing remedies them but movement, forced or voluntary. He tells us, too, that such are the cases successfully treated by bone-setters, who get a joint that has been sprained and kept too long at rest; then, pretending or believing that it has been dislocated, wrench it, and tell the patient that it has been put in, and that now he may use it.

I have no doubt but that many of those who take the trouble to read this communication will say that I am deceiving myself by the *post hoc* argument. These cases were all severe ones. I have treated cases by the older methods, and have reason to know how long such cases last. I have seen a patient, a strong young man, lame for upwards of six months from the

effects of a simple sprain. I may here throw out a suggestion that practitioners will find, in many instances, that book-muslin is a great improvement on gray cotton as a bandage for common use. Some weeks ago I used it on a Colles' fracture. It is well starched, and, when applied wet, sticks firmly to adjacent parts, making a stiff, firm covering. It cannot stretch or get pulled out of place, is porous, light and comfortable, and is not more expensive than the common article.

1433 St. Catherine Street, Montreal,
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FRACTURE OF THE SKULL, WITH A COMPLICATED FRACTURE OF THE LEFT FORE-ARM—RECOVERY WITH UNAVOIDABLE RESULTS.

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The case which I am about to report is intensely interesting to the profession in two particulars: firstly, its being of extremely rare occurrence; and secondly, from its having formed the subject matter of a supposed case of malpraxis.

ACCIDENT.

Duncan Tost, æt. 14, carpenter, while assisting his father in the erection of the new Town-hall at Georgetown, fell, on the morning of the 17th of August, 1878, about 22 feet, with a pair of rafters in his hands, on the hard floor, his head striking against a scantling. The results were fracture of his skull above the left orbit (with both concussion and compression of the brain), also fracture of the radius and ulna in their lower third, with rupture of three of the tendons of the flexor sublimis digitorum at their attachment to the muscle, and severe contusion of the other flexors. There were no abrasions of the skin at the seat of either fracture. Drs. Wm. Freeman, Standish, Starr and Raunay were summoned immediately, and found the patient apparently lifeless, with little or no prospect of recovery. After the free use of salts of ammonia and other stimulants, Dr. Freeman reduced the fracture of the arm and applied Day's splints. He then cut down and elevated the depressed bone of the skull with the assistance of the medical gentle-