

THE CANADA LANCET.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF

MEDICAL AND SURGICAL SCIENCE.

VOL. IX. TORONTO, APRIL 1ST, 1877. No. 8.

CASE OF GUN-SHOT INJURY OF THE BRAIN—RECOVERY.

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The following interesting case is, I think, worthy of being placed on record.

On the 14th December, 1876, I was called to see James Anderson, aged fourteen years, (son of David Anderson of this village,) who was injured by the explosion of a gun. He had gone out on a pier in the river to shoot ducks, having an old shot-gun which he had very much overloaded both with powder and shot. When he fired, the gun barrel burst, leaving the breach-pin fast to the stock. About eight inches of the breach-end of the gun-barrel was blown away so that it could not be found. The rest of the gun-barrel, over two feet long, was projected backward, and the end of it entered his forehead just above the left eyebrow. The broken end of the barrel passed through his skull, and penetrated about three inches into the brain. The boy instantly fell, and some persons who were looking at him went to see what had happened, and found the gun-barrel so firmly fastened in his head that it stood up like a stake planted in the ground. In a few minutes Dr. Clarke, of this village, arrived and extracted the gun-barrel, which he said required firm traction to do. I arrived on the spot immediately after its removal from the wound. A large quantity of brain substance that was broken up bulged out and blood flowed freely. The boy was carried to his father's house. The quantity of brain that was broken up and removed, was estimated by myself and others present to be at least half a tea-cupful. We removed several fragments of bone that were most easily detached, made a pad of a piece of soft cotton cloth, laid it over the bulging brain, and applied a bandage around the head. His

pulse was very weak, and appeared as if it would soon cease. There was quivering of the body, and the legs moved convulsively.

The explosion occurred at half-past five o'clock, p.m. I remained beside him all night. During the night his pulse became stronger and fuller, and in the morning had increased to 100 per minute. I then removed most of his hair, and applied snow in a bladder, and cold cloths to his head; this had the effect of lowering the pulse to about 85. We continued to make cold applications to his head, being careful to avoid chills. We used no other dressing to the wound than a cloth wet in water. At subsequent dressings four fragments of bone were removed. His room was kept at a temperature of between 60 and 65 degrees. During his recovery he was kept on light nutritious diet, and occasionally, when required, a saline purgative was administered.

For several days at first, when fast asleep or when arousing from sleep, the patient talked incoherently, but this passed off as soon as he was spoken to. I might here state that the patient was, previous to the accident, a strong, healthy, active boy.

Jan. 8th, 1877.—He was able to get up, dress himself, and walk about the house. At this time the integument was rapidly forming over the wound, and further attendance was discontinued.

Jan. 31st.—I was again requested to see him, and found him in bed, suffering from severe headache. The skin had formed quite over the wound, which was now full, or bulging, instead of depressed, as it had been when there was an opening for the matter to discharge. I made an incision through the integument, and then passed a probe one and a quarter inches into the brain substance in the same direction as the gun-barrel had entered. At the depth indicated a small abscess was found, and more than a teaspoonful of pus escaped. This afforded immediate relief to the pain in his head. Matter continued to escape for several days, and he steadily improved. He is now going about the village in good health, and as far as I can see, without any injury to his mental powers. The skin has again formed over the opening, and the margin of the bones are forming thick and smooth edges as if they would close, at least partially, over the opening.

At the time of the explosion there was consider-