

matters carefully and rendering a judgment creditable to the surgeon and equitable to the patient. In dealing with such cases one great truth should be before the mind of every surgeon, viz.: "To save one limb is more creditable than to remove, no matter how skilfully, one hundred."

In regard to dealing with mangled extremities immediately after injury, it is a matter well known that in railroad injuries there is much comminution and crushing of the parts, and no one at the time of the injury can estimate the extent of the destruction to the integument or the parts beneath; hence it is best to deal with such cases by tentative measures, and when we are in doubt about the extent of destruction *to wait*. Relying on vigorous cleanliness and thorough asepsis, experience teaches that there is no danger from septic infection, and in cases of injury which entail a probable amputation we are perfectly safe in not doing a primary operation until we can say precisely how much tissue is irrevocably destroyed. Examine, as I have said before, under strict asepsis the injured part, making free incisions if necessary. Examine the vessels for pulsation, the parts below the injury for warmth, clip away small detached fragments of bone which have been crushed, carefully coaptate the bones, using mechanical means to keep them in place if necessary. Do not endeavor to favor primary union; it is better to allow the parts to heal by secondary intention, thus preventing the accumulation of discharges which are apt to follow destruction of tissue. Apply some reliable dressing and place in a comfortable position.

In some cases of compound fractures, or those intentionally made so by the surgeon, it may be impossible to keep the fragments in apposition without the application of direct mechanical means. It must be an unusually out of the way place where we cannot find some wire or horseshoe nails, and these two will serve almost every demand, holes being drilled through the fragments and united by one of these means. I quote the following, illustrative of my meaning:

J. H., aged 40, sustained a compound oblique fracture of leg by being struck by a railroad engine. The wound was enlarged, the parts thoroughly inspected, contused and lacerated shreds of muscular tissue removed. Difficulty was experienced in keeping the fragments in place owing to muscular contraction. Two ordinary horseshoe nails were drawn through the approximated surfaces, perfect apposition was obtained, the nails were removed on the twenty-second day, when the external wound had healed.

NOTE.—Miss L. J. returned to her home at the end of ten weeks with complete use of the arm.