

THE OPERATIVE TREATMENT OF MOVABLE KIDNEY.*

By JAMES BELL, M.D.

Surgeon to the Royal Victoria Hospital and Consulting Surgeon to the Montreal General Hospital; Professor of Clinical Surgery, McGill University.

A tendency has recently been shown in our profession to sneer at and ridicule the operative treatment of movable kidney—to assert that it is useless, unnecessary, experimental, etc., and, in short, to assume that on account of its simplicity and freedom from danger it is a favourite operation with the unscrupulous and that it is frequently, if not generally, unnecessarily performed.

Now, I would not assert that there is no ground for such belief (although I have no personal knowledge of it), nor would I ask you to believe that every case of movable kidney requires operation; far from it; but in this respect this operation does not differ from many other operative procedures, such, for instance, as those for relief of stone in the kidney, stone or stones in the gall-bladder, bow-legs and many other deformities. It is not necessary to say to the members of this Association that in none of these conditions does the surgeon operate simply because of the existence of such a condition, but because of the symptoms which it produces, and which can, it is thought, with at least a fair degree of probability be remedied by operation. Who has not seen, for example, in the autopsy room, renal and biliary calculi which had not been known to have produced symptoms during life? And again, who is there who is not acquainted with men and women who are living happy and useful lives, in spite of various kinds and degrees of deformity? So, too, a movable kidney which gives rise to no symptoms requires no treatment, and I do not doubt but that the discovery of this condition to the patient's knowledge is often one of the greatest misfortunes to her or to him, and is frequently the cause of a train of subjective symptoms which will probably never be entirely removed by operative or any other treatment. My own personal views upon this subject may be expressed in the following statements:

1. That preternatural mobility of the kidney often produces, *per se*,

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