

great care, and to keep very quiet for some time to come.

*Remarks.*—The continuous escape, in the first place, of “thin” blood, then of what looked like blood-stained serum, and subsequently of a watery fluid, together with the loss of power of hearing on the same side, all point to the existence of a fracture through the petrous bone, with laceration of the cerebral membranes. On the other hand, the absence of any symptom of concussion or cerebral irritation proves that the brain could not have been injured by the accident to any appreciable extent.

The next case is one of much interest, and though by no means very uncommon in its nature or its termination, is yet pregnant with instruction when looked at from a clinical point of view. First, it teaches us the same lesson as the three preceding cases—viz., that fracture of the base may occur without injury to the brain, or any immediate consequent brain symptoms; but it teaches the lesson much more forcibly, for the patients in two of those instances were rendered insensible for a time, whereas in this case the man after a few moments protested he felt quite well, and proceeded on his journey as though nothing had happened. Secondly, it shows the necessity of immediate rest after an injury to the head, even though no cerebral disturbance is produced. After fracture of the base of the skull without immediate symptoms, death may, and does often follow in one of two ways: either within thirty-six or forty-eight hours from hæmorrhage slowly going on, perhaps from a branch of the middle meningeal artery, dissecting off the dura mater from the bones and producing compression of the brain, as in this case; or it may be after several days, or even after three or four weeks, from inflammation and suppuration of the membranes of the brain. Death in the manner first named might possibly often be prevented by immediate and prolonged rest and the early application of ice; whilst death from meningitis would no doubt much oftener than is now the case follow fractures of the skull, were not the rules of absolute rest, low diet, and cold applications to the head as commonly insisted on as they are.