and yet the patient has recovered. Wounds both of the ſmall and large inteſtines have healed ſpontaneouſly, even when they were of ſuch magnitude that the contents of the inteſtine was freely diſcharged through the wound in it, and after part of the inteſtine itſelf has been protruded through the wound of the integuments.

When the meſentery is injured, the danger is extreme, on account of the numerous vessels and nerves ſituated there. Wounds of the liver, ſpleen, and pancreas, are alſo exceed­ingly dangerous, although there are ſome inſtances of the ſpleen being cut out of living animals without any conſider­able injury.

From the preceding account of the ſymptoms attending wounds in the different parts of the body, the ſurgeon may be enabled to judge in ſome meaſure of the event ; though it muſt always be remembered, that wounds, even thoſe which ſeemed to be of the ſlighteſt nature, have, contrary to all expectation, proved mortal, chiefly by inducing convulſions, or a locked jaw ; ſo that no certain prognoſtic can be drawn on sight of recent wounds. We ſhall now, how­ever, proceed to conſider their treatment.

For the cure of wounds, it has been already obſerved, that the ancients imagined balſams, the juice of herbs, &c. to be a kind of ſpecifics. In after-ages, and in countries where balſams are not eaſily to be procured, ſalves have been ſubſtituted in theſe place ; and even at this day there are ma­ny who reckon a ſalve or ointment essentially necessary for healing the slighteſt cut. It is certain, however, that the cure of wounds cannot be effected, nay, not even forwarded in the leaſt, by ointments, unleſs in particular caſes or by accident. That power which the human frame has of re­pairing the injuries done to itſelf, which by phyſicians is called *vis medicatrix natura,* is the ſole agent in curing ex­ternal injuries ; and without this the moſt celebrated balſams would prove ineffectual. When a wound has been made with a ſharp inſtrument, and is not extenſive, if it be imme­diately cleaned, and all the extravaſated blood ſucked @@(a) out, it will almoſt always heal by the firſt intention in a very ſhort time. Indeed the cures performed by this simple proceſs are ſo ſurpriſing, that they would be incredible were we not aſſured of their reality by eye-witneſſes. When this proceſs is either neglected or proves unſucceſsful, there are three ſtages to be obſerved in the cure of a wound: the firſt, called *digestion,* takes place when the ends of the wounded veſſels con­tract themſelves, and pour out the liquor which is converted into pus. As ſoon as this appears, the ſecond ſtage, in which the fleſh begins to *grow up,* takes place ; and as this pro­ceeds, the edges of the wound acquire a fine bluiſh or pearl colour, which is that of the new ſkin beginning to cover the wound as far as the fleſh has filled it up. This proceſs con­tinues, and the ſkin advances from all ſides towards the centre, which is called the *cicatrizing* of the wound. For the promoting of each of theſe procesſes, ſeveral ointments were formerly much in vogue. But it is now found, that no ointment whatever is capable of promoting them ; and that it is only neceſſary to keep the wound clean, and to prevent the air from having acceſs to it. This, indeed, na­ture takes care to do, by covering the wound with a cake of coagulated blood; but if a wound of any conſiderable magnitude ſhould be left entirely to nature, the pus would form below the cruſt of coagulated blood in ſuch quantity, that it would moſt probably corrupt, and the wound dege­nerate into a corroding ulcer. It is necessary, therefore, to cleanse the wound frequently ; and for this purpoſe it will be proper to apply a little ointment ſpread on ſoſt ſcraped lint. For the firſt dreſſing, dry lint is uſually applied, and ought to be allowed to remain for two or three days, till the pus is perfectly formed ; after which the ointment may be applied as juſt now directed ; and, in a healthy body, the wound will heal without further trouble. As to the oint­ment employed, it is almoſt indifferent what it be, provided it has no acrid or ſtimulating ingredient in its compoſition.

But though, in general, wounds thus eaſily admit of **a** cure, there are ſeveral circumſtances which require a diffe­rent treatment, even in ſimple diviſions of the fleſhy parts, when neither the membranous nor tendinous parts are in­jured. Theſe are, 1. Where the wound is large, and gapes very much, ſo that, if allowed to heal in the natural way, the patient might be greatly disfigured by the scar. It is proper to bring the lips of the wound near to each other, and to join them either by adheſive plaſter or by future, as the wound is more ſuperficial, or lies deeper. 2. When foreign bodies are lodged in the wound, as when a cut is given by glaſs, &c. it is neceſſary by all means to extract them, before thc wound is dreſſed ; for it will never heal until they are diſcharged. When theſe bodies are ſitu­ated in ſuch a manner as not to be capable of being ex­tracted without lacerating the adjacent parts, which would occasion violent pain and other bad ſymptoms, it is neceſſa­ry to enlarge the wound, ſo that theſe offending bodies may be eaſily removed. This treatment, however, is chiefly ne­ceſſary in gunſhot wounds, of which we ſhall treat in the next ſection. 3. When the wound is made in ſuch a man­ner that it runs for ſome length below the ſkin, and the bot­tom is much lower than the orifice, the matter collected from all parts of the wound will be lodged in the bottom of it, where, corrupting by the heat, it will degenerate into a ſiſtulous ulcer. To prevent this, we muſt uſe compreſſes, applied ſo that the bottom of the wound may ſuffer a more conſiderable preſſure than the upper part of it. Thus the matter formed at the bottom will be gradually forced up­wards, and that formed at the upper part will be incapable of deſcending by its weight ; the divided parts, in the mean time, eaſily uniting when brought cloſe together. Indeed, the power which nature has of uniting different parts of the human body is very ſurpriſing ; for, according to au­thors of credit, even if a piece of fleſh be totally cut out, and applied in a ſhort time afterwards to the place from whence it was cut, the two will unite. That a part, cut out of a living body does not entirely loſe its vital power for ſome time, is evident from the modern practice of tranſplanting teeth ; and from an experiment of Mr Hunter’s at London, he put the teſticle of a cock into the belly of a living hen, which adhered to the liver, and became con­nected to it by means of blood-vessels@@\*. We have there­fore the greateſt reaſon to hope, that the divided parts of the human body, when cloſely applied to each other, will cohere without leaving any ſinus or cavity between them. However, if this method ſhould fail, and matter ſtill be col­lected in the depending part of the wound, it will be neceſ­ſary to make an opening in that part in order to let it out ; after which the wound may be cured in the common way. 4. During the courſe of the cure, it ſometimes happens that the wound, inſtead of filling up with fleſhy granula­tions of a florid colour, ſhoots up into a glaſſy like ſubſtance which riſes above the level of the ſurrounding ſkin, while,

@@@[m]\* See Blood, n⁰ 19.

@@@(a) See an account of the method of fucking wounds in Mr John Bell’s *Diſcourſes on Wounds,* Part 1. Diſcourſe v. p. 215.