this plaster is quite unirritating, and often retains its hold until the very completion of the cure. Being transparent, it does not prevent any untoward process that may be going on underneath from being observed ; and if any fluid collects under it, an opening can be made for its escape. If su­tures have been previously employed for the partial ap­proximation of the wound, they can be removed by cutting the thread, shortly after the fixing of the plasters, for these alone are sufficiently retentive. No other dressing need be employed in the first instance ; no compress, no pledget, no bandage ; for in general they will not promote union of the wound, and may do harm. The slight discharge that oozes out is from time to time wiped from the surrounding skin, and from the glazed cloth on which the part is laid. In some cases of amputation, after a few days a roller may be applied, to encourage the subsidence of any slight oedema that may have arisen, and to bring the stump into a good form. By such simple treatment, a great dead of suffering is saved to the patient, and he enjoys much comfort and cleanliness ; besides, the surgeon is relieved from a load of most unpleasant and harassing duty.

Wounds produced accidentally are almost always attend­ed with more or less bruising of the parts, and can be united only by the second intention. After bleeding has been sup­pressed by the method recommended for incised wounds, the cold applications are to be superseded by those of an agreeable warmth, such as poultice of bread and water, or, what is much to be preferred, from its simplicity and light­ness, lint of thick texture, and of sufficient size to cover the wound, soaked in tepid water, and overlaid by an ample piece of oiled silk to prevent evaporation. Heat and mois­ture, by which qualities a poultice produces its soothing and beneficial effects, by which the surface is relaxed, its capil­lary circulation encouraged, and discharge promoted, arc thus amply afforded, without any of the weight, putrefactive fermentation, stench, and filth, inseparable from the best of common poultices. The edges of the wound are approximated as much as possible by attention to position ; and by the same means the return of blood is favoured, and engorgement of the vessels and inflammatory swelling prevented to a very great degree. If the wound run across the fibres of the skin and muscles underneath, these are to be relaxed by flexion or ex­tension, as may be, of the neighbouring articulations. Rest of the injured parts is also essential, and to obtain this it is some­times proper to apply splints. Contraction of the wound takes place naturally, and generally with sufficient rapidity ; should the surface, however, from any cause become weak and flabby, the lint is to be wet with a gently stimulating solution, as of zinc, instead of tepid water. Support, by bandage or plaster, may for a like reason sometimes be re­quired. But healing is often retarded by the plasters and bandages which are inconsiderately employed to hurry it on; the granulations are absorbed, the surface of the sore be­comes foul, the discharge thin and offensive, perhaps inflam­mation of the surrounding skin takes place, with extension of the sore by ulcerative absorption. Sometimes adhesion and suppuration may be happily blended in the cure. Thus, when, in a suppurating wound, whether accidental or incised, the discharge begins to thicken, and diminish in quantity, when the granulations are florid, small, and accuminated, and when the surrounding parts are sufficiently lax to admit of easy approximation, the granulating surfaces may then be brought into close apposition, with every prospect of im­mediate adhesion taking place.

Under some circumstances, the rule laid down as to the

propriety of delay in permanently closing wounds, may be departed from with advantage ; as when the entire sur­face can be brought into close and accurate apposition, so that no clot of blood can be interposed ; as, for instance, in penetrating wounds of the mouth ; in division of the lip, as for harelip ; and in repairing some deficiencies of the ge­nital organs. In such cases, either the twisted or quilled suture is used, usually the former, and no other dressing should be applied. To put on strips of plaster, to cover the part with lint smeared with ointment, to interpose dossils of lint between the skin and ends of the pins, to support the wound by a uniting bandage—all this is mischievous, and a remnant of the old meddlesome surgery. Any kind of ap­plication collects and retains the secretions, heats and ex­coriates the surface, promotes suppuration, and interferes with the process of union.

Such is an outline of the simple treatment of wounds now employed, with the happy effects of saving the patient from much pain, and the surgeon from much trouble ; obtaining a more frequent occurrence of adhesion in incised wounds; shortening the process of suppuration, and depriving it of much of its inconvenience. It is almost needless to observe, that this, as well as every other treatment, will however prove of little avail, unless accompanied with a careful at­tention to the general health : in other words, the surgeon, not hesitating to encroach thus far upon the duties of the physician, must ever be employing his medical science.

In no class of diseases is the operating knife now more happily in abeyance, in comparison with former practice, than in affections of the joints. Many a limb is now saved, with its usefulness little if at all impaired, that would, in days not long passed, have been doomed at once, and with very little ceremony, to amputation.@@1 This important saving of life and limb is mainly attributable to the advance of patho­logy. The cultivators of that science, among whom the name of Brodie deserves prominent notice, have shown with great perspicuity the various changes which morbid actions in­duce in the structure of articulations, and established a won­derfully accurate diagnosis of each affection. We can often tell in what tissue of the joint disease originated, of what nature the morbid action is, and can predicate almost with certainty the actual state of the parts, as to extent and man­ner of degeneration. According to the principle that “ the knowledge of a disease is half its cure,” great advantage is thus obtained in adopting and regulating the treatment suit­able to the circumstances of each case. Besides, we can tell at once, and with tolerable accuracy, in what cases we shall probably succeed ; and in those in which we are made aware that the disease is of such a nature, or has proceeded to such an extent, as to baffle all attempts to cure, we are enabled to save valuable time, and thereby to save life, by proceeding at once to the only cure available, amputation. In whatever part of the joint diseased action may have origi­nated,—bone, cartilage, bursæ, or synovial apparatus,—if not arrested, it soon extends to all, converting the whole joint into one mass of disorganization. It is of the utmost con­sequence, therefore, to be early in the employment of the appropriate means of cure. The first and most important object is to secure absolute want of motion in the diseased parts ; and here it is that the greatest improvement has taken place in the treatment of joints. “ If perfect repose and quiet of the affected parts be omitted, all other means are found nugatory, and were as well untried. Nothing but disrepute can accrue to the profession, if hot irons, moxas, and issues continue to be used inconsiderately, to the neglect

@@@1 John Hunter himself seems to have been in the habit of making very unwarrantable abbreviations of living limbs, as the following anec­dote abundantly proves. “ He once had a patient whose leg he considered it necessary to remove. He had got on bis *dress,* and a profound silence reigned in the theatre, The surgery-man disappeared. In two minutes he returned alone, with a face as long as the leg. Why do you not bring in the patient ?’ demanded the expectant operator. 'Because, sir,’ said the astonished surgery-man, ‘ because, sir, he has run away!'’’ It is to be hoped that the custom of amputating legs that are able to “ run away” hot fallen into complete desuetude.