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**THE SURGICAL TREATMENT OF MALIGNANT DISEASE OF  
THE LARYNX.**

THE Section of Laryngology and Otology, presided over by Dr. P. Watson Williams, at the recent meeting of the British Medical Association at Swansea, may be looked upon as eminently successful, especially when we consider the judicious selection of subjects for discussion and the status of those by whom the discussions were introduced and continued. The numbers present at the Section were, of course, scarcely to be compared with those at Manchester or the larger of our other towns, but the quality of the attendance was certainly not below the average.

The discussion on the operative treatment of cancer of the larynx was of special interest in view of the fact that it was introduced by two authorities on the subject, who had approached it from diametrically opposite points of view. Sir Felix Semon's teachings on the subject are well known, and he stated the case for the almost exclusive adoption of thyrotomy, with certain modifications as required, in cases of intrinsic carcinoma of the larynx, diagnosed at so early a stage that complete removal was possible. He has been able to report twenty cases, in eighteen of which the patients had shown no sign of recurrence, and had lived for a year or longer; the other two died under circumstances which left it extremely doubtful indeed that a recurrence of the carcinoma was the cause of their death. These results are such as all may well envy, and none, who know the difficulty of the cases, grudge. Much must be attributed to judgment in the choice of cases, and not to mere accident.

Professor Gluck has been more impressed with the necessity of finding a means of treating those cases which have either from their origin been unsuitable for treatment by thyrotomy, or which have developed to such an extent that this method was no longer available. He has made total excision of the larynx a matter of comparative safety, and out of twenty-seven cases in which he carried out this formidable operation, twenty-six recovered; the main element seems to be the reduction of the tendency to "swallowing pneumonia," effected by the complete detachment of the trachea from the larynx and the stitching of it to the front of the neck, so that fluids when swallowed have no chance of finding their way into it and thence into the lower air-passages.

The speaker illustrated the results of complete excision of the larynx, and the methods by which the voice could be made useful for purposes of speech, by means of two patients on whom he had operated, and who had undertaken the fatigue of the journey from Berlin to Swansea to testify to the benefits they had received at the eminent surgeon's hands. He described his operations for removal of portions of the pharynx, also for resection of constricted segments of the trachea, and incidentally described a method of enabling a patient to breathe when no tracheal canula, even Koenig's flexible one, could be introduced. This consisted in the resection of a portion of one rib on the back of the chest, cutting and stitching the pleura to the opening thus made, then the removal of the portion of lung which was thereby allowed to prolapse; through this improvised "trachea" he stated that the patient was able to oxygenate his blood.

Other speakers followed, and gave their experiences both of the smaller and the greater operations, the discussion bringing out the various details, the communication of which from one to the other goes such a long way towards making these meetings useful to those who attend them.

It is a matter for great regret that on account of serious illness in his family Dr. E. J. Moure, of Bordeaux, was prevented from attending and reading his *rapport* on Operations for Malignant Disease of the Larynx. The headings, as set forth in his synopsis (*vide* JOURNAL OF LARYNGOLOGY, August, 1903), indicated that his views coincided in the main with those of the other introducers of the discussion. It would, however, have added interest and distinction to the occasion if the results of his experiences in a field of action independent both academically and geographically had been placed side by side with those of Sir Felix Semon and Professor Gluck. We hope to be able to fill the hiatus by reproducing his paper at an early period.