ADDITION TO THE FOREGOING PAPER.

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THERE is reason to hope, that the simple and ingenious method of treatment proposed by Dr. Physick, of Philadelphia, for the purpose of effecting the union of ununited fractures, will prove a considerable improvement in the surgical art. It remains, however, to be ascertained, whether the treatment alluded to, is, or is not applicable to all cases indiscriminately, and what are the circumstances to which the attention of the surgeon should be particularly directed, as calculated to ensure its success, or lessen the probability of its failure. In the present state of our knowledge, it seems desirable, that some of those, to whom an opportunity occurs of adopting this practice, should record the results of their experience, and hence I am induced to communicate to the Society the following account of a case, which came under my care some time since in St. George's Hospital.

John Verrall, a boy between 12 and 13 years of age, residing in the country, had both his thighs fractured by the wheel of a waggon passing over them on the 30th of December, 1812. The left thigh was fractured in two places: union took place at the end of the usual period. The right

thigh was fractured in one place, about the middle of the bone. It was supported by splints in the usual way, but the fractured bones did not become united. The boy was kept in bed from the day of the accident, to that of his admission into the hospital on the 2d of June following.

At this time the right thigh was somewhat shortened, the upper fractured end of the bone overlapping the lower; and the two portions of bone were very moveable on each other. In other respects the boy was in good health.

On the 14th of June, having first made a small incision of the skin, on the inside of the thigh, I passed, by means of a long seton needle, a skein of waxed silk, between the two ends of the bone. The needle met with so little resistance, that I was led to conclude that there was no union even by soft substance, but that there was a complete artificial joint. After the operation, there was a good deal of pain in the thigh, which however subsided in a few hours,

No considerable inflammation followed the introduction of the seton. The boy was kept in bed, the limb being laid on a pillow till the 25th of June, when a splint was applied on each side, and he began to walk on crutches.

At the end of a month from the time of the operation, a good deal of soft union had taken

place. On the 2d of August, the union was more complete; and the splints were left off. On the 10th of August, he was able to walk with only a single crutch, and to press with considerable weight on the foot of that side.

On the 30th of August, an attack of erysipelas took place, beginning at the wounds made by the seton, and extending over a great part of that limb. The seton was withdrawn.

It was now necessary again to confine him to his bed. The erysipelas subsided, but left him much debilitated; so that he made no more attempts to walk while he remained in the hospital. On the 20th of September he returned into the country, as a better air appeared to be necessary for the recovery of his health. At this time the fracture was firmly united, but on minute examination a very slight degree of yielding motion was perceptible between the two bones, as if the uniting substance was not completely ossified.

From this time, I had no opportunity of hearing of my patient, till the present summer (1814), when Mr. Lucas, a very intelligent gentleman, who had watched the progress of the case, while a student at the hospital, and on whose observations I can perfectly rely, had an opportunity of seeing him in the place where he resided; and from him I received the following account.

After his return into the country, the boy was able to walk about very well ; but being naturally timid, and also being much depressed by his long illness, he never attempted to walk without the assistance of a stick.

During the unusually severe weather which began immediately after Christmas, he was seized with a violent rheumatic fever, which confined him to his bed for a considerable time, and left him with contractions of his lower limbs.

At the time when Mr. Lucas saw him, in July of the present year (1814), he was lame from the cause just mentioned, but on examining the right thigh no motion whatever could be perceived between the two ends of the bone, which were evidently firmly consolidated by bony union.

We learn from this case, that the operation proposed by Dr. Physick, may be practised with safety and success in the thigh, as well as in the arm. It must be owned, however, that the youth of the patient placed him under more favourable circumstances, than if he had been a person advanced in life : I have lately had an opportunity of performing the same operation on a man 30 years of age, with an ununited fracture of the thigh ; but sufficient progress has not yet been made towards a cure to enable me to lay the history of his case before the Society.