

## WOUND OF THE VAGINA.

CASE AT THE WAR-OFFICE.

WE are indebted to Mr. HANCOCK for the particulars of the following case, which has attracted so much public attention:—

M. A. L.—, aged four years and a quarter, was admitted into the Charing-cross Hospital, under the care of Mr. Hancock, on the 23rd of December, 1852, with a wound in the vagina, said to be received whilst engaged in a call of nature over a grating of an area at the Horse Guards.

Mr. Adkins, the house-surgeon, attended to her, and found a wound in front of the vagina, about half an inch long, situated immediately within the fourchette, and into which he could introduce a probe for about half an inch in the direction of the rectum. There was profuse bleeding of arterial-coloured blood. The labia were uninjured; neither could any bruising be discovered on the thighs, or elsewhere, at this time. Pledgets of lint were introduced, and a compress applied and retained over the front of the vagina, by means of a bandage kept constantly wet by cold lotion; notwithstanding which, the bleeding continued to a slight extent for nearly two hours.

Those who brought the child to the hospital were unable to give any information as to how the wound occurred.

The child was pretty well the next day; but as she had not micturated since her admission, Mr. Adkins removed a portion of the dressing opposite the orifice of the urethra, which enabled her to do so without further difficulty.

I saw the child on the 25th. She was then going on very well. Upon turning down the bed-clothes, I observed bruises on the inner and outside of the left thigh; and upon inquiring how the accident had happened, the child informed me, that whilst stooping to make water over an area grating, her leg had slipped through, and something ran into her. As she was not suffering any constitutional disturbance, and as I entirely approved of the treatment pursued by Mr. Adkins, I directed its continuance.

I again saw the child on the 26th. The dressings had been previously removed, and the wound was so nearly healed as scarcely to leave any trace of its existence; whilst the appearance of the parts generally was healthy and natural.

On the 27th, Dr. Chowne having inquired of me respecting the child, I asked him to see her with me. She was then sitting up in bed, apparently quite well. All traces of the wound had now disappeared, but the bruises on the thigh still remained. We asked her how the accident happened, and she still adhered to her former statement, saying, that as she was stooping to make water over the grating of an area in the park, her leg slipped through, and something ran into her. She was then asked by Dr. Chowne whether there was any one near to her, either before, behind, or in any degree close to her. She said, "No; I think my leg slipped through the grating, and something ran into me."

She remained in the hospital until the 3rd of January, 1853, when her mother took her away.

A few days afterwards the mother called at the hospital to say, that since her leaving the institution the child had suffered from

incontinence of urine, and that she could not then retain it. She was directed to bring the child back to the hospital without further delay. Some days, however, having elapsed without her doing so, and my attention having been directed to a statement which she had made a day or two previously at the Bow-street Police-office, that the child still suffered from incontinence of urine, and was probably injured for life, I deemed it my duty to visit the child at her own home, particularly as the child did not show any signs of this malady whilst in the hospital. I accordingly went, on Monday, the 17th of January, in company with Mr. Adkins, to Old Pye-street, Westminster. We found the child in perfect health, playing about the room; and upon examining her, and questioning the mother, ascertained that the incontinence of urine did not then exist; and, from the appearance of parts, I feel very confident that it never did so.