I have repeatedly put up fractures in this way in a couple of hours after the accident occurred. Still, if the circulation appears impeded, or if the patient complains of pain, it will be safer to relax the apparatus than to run any risk of sloughing or gangrene.

Of the applicability of this mode of treatment in compound fracture I have had too limited an experience to speak with certainty; there is, however, no difficulty or danger in applying it when the fracture is such as will probably become simple by the union of the wound in the soft parts; and in such a case it will aid in bringing about this result.

In fracture of the patella it is very useful, and it is only necessary to strengthen the lateral splints by a second layer of pasteboard. It is evident, of course, that the lateral splints prevent motion in the antero-posterior direction, and the anterior and posterior splints prevent lateral displacement. Inattention to this simple mechanical fact may lead to disappointment.

ART. XVIII.—A Case of extensive Laceration and Contusion of the Thigh, with Exposure of the Femoral Artery, followed by mortification of a large portion of the injured soft parts, and rapid progress towards Recovery. By CHARLES F. MOORE, M.D., Medical Officer of the Galbally Dispensary; Late Senior Surgeon in the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Packet Company's Service.

On the 5th January of this year, Mary Maher, aged 28, was caught between the vertical and horizontal cog-wheels of a water-mill. Her weight, nearly thirteen stone, aided by the increased resistance which her clothes and powerful muscles opposed to the machinery's working, broke the brass axle done of one of the wheels. The moment the mill was put out of gear, Maher was thrown with great force against some sacks of corn, a few yards from the wheels; all this was the work of a moment, of which she retains no consciousness. It would appear, however, that approaching too near the machinery, her clothes were first caught and torn, and then the glutæi muscles of the left side, by the teeth of the wheels, which continued to cut, bruise, and lacerate the muscles and other soft parts of the thigh, leaving a deep, irregular wound somewhat in the form of the letter J, extending from about four inches behind the anterior superior spinous process of the ilium, in a direction downwards, forwards, and inwards, laying bare the femoral artery for three inches of its course, the skin, areolar tissue,
Contusion of the Thigh.

fascia lata, and part at least of the sartorius, being torn through, the laceration thus extending round some three-fifths of the circumference of the thigh, curved again about half-way to the knee, towards the outer aspect of the limb, ending an inch above the knee-joint.

The marks of the teeth of the wheels were visible on a considerable portion of the skin of the outer aspect of the thigh, which was severely bruised and subsequently mortified.

Besides the extent and depth of this lacerated wound, a mass of fat, areolar tissue, torn fascia, and muscular fibre, larger than a man's closed fist, hanging from the centre of the injured parts, increased the unpromising appearance of the case.

The poor woman, being alone on recovering from the stunning effects of the fall and injury, walked to the mill-door and some distance across a large yard, unassisted; and in all probability she owes her escape from total destruction to her very considerable weight having broken the axle of the wheel, as above stated; it is equally probable, too, that had her health not been the best, and her previous habits temperate, she could not have recovered from an injury of such extent, and involving, as it did, exposure of the femoral artery and extensive injury to nerves and other important parts.

I saw the case about an hour after the accident occurred; by that time the hemorrhage, which had been very slight in comparison to the extent of the injury, owing doubtless to the nature of the wound, had almost entirely ceased. Having despatched a messenger to the nearest gentleman's house (the accident having occurred in a remote part of the Glen of Aherlow), for some wine to support the patient who had fainted, and was in a very low state, and having applied warm blankets and bottles to her feet, &c., I examined the wound with as little disturbance of the injured parts as possible. The portion of the femoral artery which was exposed was where it gave off a large branch, that from its size and direction I considered to be the profunda. I could not detect any injury to either arteries or veins; having brought the opposed surfaces of the wound as well into apposition as I could, and replaced the protruded mass of soft parts before mentioned, I tied a linen cloth round the limb, and then commenced to unite the wound by the interrupted suture.

I had some difficulty in retaining the protruded parts in their proper place, and from the strain on the stitches and length of the wound, over twenty-two inches, I was obliged to use about fifty stitches. During their insertion, which in many instances gave great pain, the patient fainted three times.