100 YEARS AGO

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As we approach the Millennium I thought it would be interesting to see what our forebears were writing about 100 years ago. The Journal of Laryngology, Rhinology and Otology was then published by Rebman Publishing Company, Limited, 11 Adam Street, Strand, London, W.C.—Editor

MALIGNANT DISEASE OF THE LARYNX

Perhaps one of the greatest gains to humanity from increased skill in laryngology lies in the possibility of the *detection* of *Malignant Disease* of the larynx at a period when it is still capable of removal with hope of recovery, whether by intra- or extra-laryngeal means. The case of epithelioma brought before us by Dr. Stoker in this Association is almost a historical one. Fränkel has drawn renewed attention to the possibility of the removal of malignant disease of the larynx by intralaryngeal operation, and his results are most striking. On the other hand, the reports of results obtained by extralaryngeal operation by Sir Felix Semon are more within the scope of the practical surgeon, and I cannot help thinking that it is in thyrotomy rather than in intralaryngeal surgery that we shall see our way to curative interference. It is obvious that without early diagnosis nothing radical is of any avail, and it is to this that our energy and activity should be devoted. It is true that, in the records of this Society, there are cases in which *Tracheotomy* has afforded complete relief, and has even appeared to prolong for several years a life whose immediate extinction was threatened. But this, although a desirable result, can only be termed a very relative success. *Complete Excision* of the larynx, with the attachment of the trachea to the front of the neck, is a new and highly successful operation so far as the technicalities are concerned, as shown in such cases as Mr. Lambert Lack's; but as Bryson Delavan has feelingly impressed upon us, other circumstances may outweigh the advantage to be derived from the removal of the disease, and life, even in case of cure, may be scarcely preferable to death.

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