

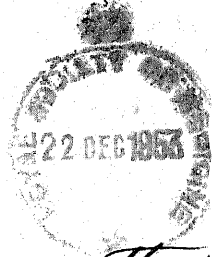
The Case of the German Crown Prince
and its treatment by Sir Morell
Mackenzie.

By Dr. Wilhelm Meyer

and Dr. Holmer

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[1887]



In view of the violent attacks
that have recently been made
on Sir Morell Mackenzie by
the German lay press, the
question arises whether his
treatment of the case of
the Crown Prince of Germany
affords sufficient grounds
for the charges against the
renowned English specialist
of want of judgment and
trifling with his August
patient, and of want
of consideration for his German
colleagues

From the facts which
have been published from
time to time, and after
a perusal of the Report

Medical report by Mackenzie
 we see nothing to justify the
 hostile attitude of the German
 press.

It appears, that when Mackenzie
 was called to Berlin, Gerhardt
 had been treating the case
 for some time, that Bergmann
 had been subsequently called
 in, and that, shortly before
 the date of Mackenzie's visit,
 Wold had once seen the
 Crown Prince, and nothing
 official is known of the
 treatment carried out by
 Gerhardt, but it is generally
 believed that when they had
 recognised the formation
 of the growth on the left
 vocal cord they tried to
 remove it by instruments
 introduced per vias naturales.
 No where is it stated whether
 they succeeded in removing
 any part of the growth, but

it is certain that they never had any portion examined microscopically. This is as we intend to show further on a point of the greatest importance.

It is ~~certain~~ understood that the three professors hesitated to arrive at the opinion that the growth was cancerous and that it could only be removed an external operation. Realising ~~that~~ such an operation would be likely to destroy, or at least greatly impair the voice, and considering the position of the patient would render such destruction of the vocal function a matter of the gravest importance they were unwilling to undertake an external operation without further advice.

Mackenzie arrived in Berlin in the month of May, and as soon as he saw the growth he stated that in his opinion there was nothing characteristic about it; it was not typical

of Cancer nor did it resemble a common benign growth; in fact it was one of those tumours ~~occupying~~ which, according to naked eye observation occupy a neutral ground; and which, on microscopic examination alone, can be proved to be either malignant or benign. Mackenzie proposed taking away a small piece of the tumour to enable a pathologist of the highest rank to report on the nature of the neo-formation. In giving this opinion Mackenzie acted entirely in accordance with the generally accepted surgical principle, i.e. - not to undertake any serious operation for the removal of supposed malignant growths until they have been microscopically examined, always presuming that

they occupy situations which permit of the removal of portions for examination.

It appears to us that a grave fault was committed by the German doctors in not taking these steps before Mackenzie was called in.

On the 21st May Mackenzie removed the first pieces of the growth; these were sent to Professor Virchow for microscopical examination, who reported that they shewed no signs of malignancy. The portions removed seem only from the superficial part of the growth.

On the 9th June Virchow gave another report on the piece then removed; the section shewed no sign of malignancy and Virchow declared that the healthy condition of the "tissue warranted a very favourable prognosis". It was then decided that the Crown Prince should go to England in order that Mackenzie should be able to remove any new growths that might form, it being well known that even benign tumours often recur. The Crown Prince went to England on the 13 June accompanied by two German physicians, namely,

Dr. Wegner and Dr. Landgraf, a throat Specialist. It will be thus seen that the German doctors were able to watch the progress of the case.

The English specialist Dr. Norris Wolffenden also daily attended the Crown Prince. On the 29 June Mackenzie removed the last portion of the growth, and concerning it - Vichow reported "that the excised piece has, even more distinctly than the piece taken away at the previous operation, proved to be a hard wart growing from the highly irritated and hyperplastic surface. There was not the slightest trace of proliferation into the deep lying tissues." When we consider that Professor Vichow is recognised as the first living authority in pathology, that he was entirely impartial in the ~~excised~~ case, that the general health of the Crown Prince

7
was in every respect satisfactory.
And that his voice was freely
improved, it must be considered
that all the circumstances
pointed to the conclusion
that the treatment of the
Case had been ^{entirely} satisfactory.

It is absurd to suppose that
the treatment carried out
by Mackenzie can have
had ~~an~~ injurious effect on
the patient, notwithstanding
the statements of Professor
Stork, (who was not called
to San Remo). Indeed the
remarks of the professor would
appear to have more of
passionate animosity than of
scientific reasoning.

The utmost support to
Mackenzie's views was derived
from Professor Virchow's
lecture, delivered at the
Berlin Medical Society on
July 27th. The professor
applied a new name to
the disease, namely, pachydermia laryngis.

~~though~~ Specialists have been ^{hitherto} satisfied with the term papilloma. It was fully understood at the time that Verchow spoke that the Crown Prince's case called forth the lecture, and that he regarded the case of His Imperial Highness as a typical example of the disease. He remarked, "that if in the base of a growth there be found no proliferation of foreign elements, no matter what is found on the surface the local growth is of a benign nature, from which no mischief may be expected to arise later on."

that It will thus be seen, ~~that~~ the repeated microscopical examinations absolutely confirmed ^{the idea} that the disease was benign and fully justified Mackenzie's treatment.

We had at this time the opportunity of hearing the opinion of many impartial specialists, who all approved of the treatment then being pursued, while at the same time communications from the most trustworthy sources convinced us that Mackenzie was conducting the case with the most conscientious care, and that he was showing a high degree of despatch in his operations.

As Autumn was approaching Mackenzie tried to find a suitable resort for his ~~patient~~ patient, where he could have absolute rest and a favourable climate. That Mackenzie not only visited the Crown Prince on several occasions, but even travelled about with the object of finding a proper health resort for

his ~~last~~ ^{August} Report pattern
 shows ~~that~~, in our opinion
 that Mackenzie did not
 think lightly of his
 responsible task.

Finally Joblach was
 selected, because the Crown
 Prince had previously been
 greatly pleased with that
 place, having been there before
 and being well acquainted
 with the climate. Unfortunately
 the bad weather, so prevalent
 this last autumn in the
 South of Europe, affected
 the Crown Prince's throat
 unfavourably, it should
 be remembered that Mr
 Mark Howell who has been
 for ten years on the Surgical
 Staff of the Throat Hospital
 in London, was in daily
 attendance on the Crown
 Prince.

To suppose that

new frontiers have been
 constantly forming, and
 that Sir Morell Mackenzie
 and Mr. ~~W. H. Horell~~ Horell wilfully
 ignored their existence, is
 an accusation of so ridiculous
 and monstrous a character
 that we do not think it
 necessary to refute it. It
 has been used against
 Mackenzie that he did not
 issue bulletins frequently
 enough, the explanation
 offered by Mackenzie, namely,
 that the issue of bulletins
 was entirely out of his province
 and depended on the will
 of the patient, appears to us
 conclusive. We have little
 doubt that when the wave
 of national antiprism and
 professional jealousy has
 rolled by, the impartial
 judgement of competent
 judges will be in favour
 of the English specialist.

And that in future years
Sir Morell Mackenzie
will be able to look back
with satisfaction on his
share in the treatment of
the most important and
eventful case in the
history of Medicine.

W. H.

[Signature]