

SCIATICA AS A COMPLICATION OF CARCINOMA.

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We have all met with cases of carcinoma in or about the pelvis, in which there was, as a prominent symptom, pain down the course of the sciatic nerve. These, however, are not the cases I mean when I speak of sciatica complicating carcinoma. Such cases can be explained, either by direct pressure of the tumour upon the nerve or by invasion of the nerve by the contiguous cancer. In the cases I wish to bring before you to-night the cancer was situated at a distance from the nerve, and, in two in which autopsies were performed, no tumour of any kind was found in the abdomen or pelvis.

The cases are three in number, and the histories are briefly as follows :—

Case I.—Mrs. H., aged 36, came under my care in May, 1892, suffering from a severe sciatica on the left side. At that time there was inability to move the leg on account of the pain, and the affected thigh was one inch less than the other in circumference. There was marked tenderness down the course of the nerve from its point of exit nearly to the knee. She also complained of a swelling in the right breast. Twelve years previously a crochet needle had been run into the breast, and a year ago this tumour appeared as a small nodule at the site of the old injury. It had increased until, when I saw her, it was the size of a lemon, and extended from the nipple upwards and inwards toward the sternum. The nipple was very slightly retracted. The growth was hard, not movable over the subjacent tissues and the skin over it was reddened. There was also present a thickening and enlargement of the joint between the first two pieces of the sternum, a symptom which has been pointed out by Snow as of frequent occurrence. The tumour was removed by the usual operation, and proved to be a scirrhus carcinoma. The axillary glands were not enlarged. A vaginal examination was refused, but no abdominal tenderness or tumour could be made out externally. The patient shortly afterwards left the city and was lost sight of.

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