

*Case 4. Foreign body in meatus auditorius.* Schurig (6) has published the following instructive story :

An 11-year-old boy of pale aspect and stupid appearance was brought to him complaining of his ear. He heard in his right ear very badly (watch on contact only), and on examining it a very large and hard plug was found to fill the meatus. It seems that eighteen months before the child had fallen out of a "kindergarten," and was dragged along the graveled street. Except a little scratching of the face and filling the ear with dirt he seemed none the worse for the accident. Two months after he began to have epileptic fits, which increased in number and severity during the next three or four months. Since then they were less frequent. The syringing of the meatus and the removal of the plug produced a slight epileptic seizure. In the center of a hard mass of ear-wax a small, sharp-edged stone was found. Patient had had no return of fits ten months afterward.

*Case 5. (7) Resection of diseased nerve.* A servant-girl, aged 31, suffered for a year from chronic syphilitic ulcer on the outer aspect of the left leg. It had been treated in a Hamburg hospital and had been healed. It however broke out again, and while under von Thaden had reached large dimensions. During this time she became epileptic and had severe and frequent seizures. It was noticed that in the wound lay the superficial peroneal nerve. This was extremely sensitive. Patient also complained of a dull feeling in the back of her great toe. She was chloroformed and six ctr. of the nerve resected. It was found to be the seat of a chronic inflammation and to be surrounded by indurated connective tissue. The neurilemma was also affected by the inflammation. Six months after the operation patient was entirely free from convulsions.

And so on, practically *ad infinitum*. Before leaving this subject, however, reference should be made to a paper by Dr. Archibald Church, (8) of this city, in which (among other interesting matters of the kind) attention is drawn to a collection by Dr. A. P. Brubaker, (9) of Philadelphia, of sixteen cases of epilepsy permanently cured by the extraction of diseased and irritating teeth.

6. *Jahresbericht d. Ges. für Natur und Heilkunde zu Dresden*, p. 69, 1877.

7. Von Thaden. *Deutsch. Ztsch. f. Chir.*, p. 520, 1875.

8. *Peripheral Irritation in Nervous Diseases*. Peoria Medical Monthly, April, 1890.

9. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*. Dr. Brubaker in answer to a letter of inquiry, has also kindly drawn my attention to his valuable contribution to the *American System of Dentistry* on this subject where many cases of reflex neuroses of dental origin are recorded.

*Surgical cures of idiopathic epilepsy.* Ever since medicine ceased to be a pure empiricism a large number of surgical proceedings have been suggested for the cure of epilepsy. These were usually based upon some theory which concerned the causation of the disease; they were more or less faithfully tried; they had their advocates and opponents, and all that now remains of them is a mass of literature, a few extracts from which may be both instructive and entertaining.

Almost every one of these surgical remedies, it must be noticed, could claim its list of cures and a fairly working hypothesis to explain how these cures were brought about.

*Setons and issues.* These remedies are quite ancient, and they have their advocates even to this day. Gowers (10) thinks they often do good, but their *modus operandi* is unknown unless one explains it by the use of that *very indefinite term* "counter-irritation." Many cases of cure by this means are, however, to hand. For example Dr. T. J. Griffiths (11) furnishes several of these. He introduces a large seton (15 or 20 strands of silk or flax thread), into the back of the neck, and allows it to remain for months, removing it only when there is too much local irritation. Of five cases so treated (tonics being the only other treatment), four were cured or greatly benefited. The disturbance of the mental faculties, which is a common attendant in such cases, rapidly improves after the insertion of the seton.

The cure in the following case was undoubtedly due to the open wound and not to the electrical phenomena sought to be induced. The patient was under the care of Dr. Usher Parsons. (12.)

*Case 6.* Michael H., age 25, a stout man, never had an attack of epilepsy until two years before treatment. From that time the fits became more frequent until he had them daily. They began with an *aura*, a creeping sensation along the left arm from the fingers to the shoulder. He was

10. *Epilepsy and other Convulsive Diseases*, p. 235.

11. *Naphey's Medical Therapeutics*, p. 53.

12. *New England Medical Journal*, vol. xv., 355, 1826.