

people have a want of balance in one or other set of their ocular muscles. (58)

2. Oliver (59) (*Phil. Medical Times*, 1887) made a critical examination of the eyes of 50 adult male epileptics—nearly all Americans. Extra-ocular movements were intact in all cases, except weakness of the interni—just about what would be found in any average 50 Americans who never had epilepsy.

3. When this want of balance is present (and refractive errors are corrected) the very great majority of persons in whom it exists are unconscious of its presence; it does not produce any trouble whatever; it is not a genuine peripheral irritant. These propositions prove, it seems to me, that there is not any necessary or, if any, a very rare and doubtful connection between heterophoria and epilepsy. At any rate the unprejudiced observer could hardly accept their relation as that of cause and effect in even a small majority of the cases where both occur—certainly not as Dr. Stevens would have us believe—in the majority of such instances.

Now, as to the effects of treatment:

4. In the minority only of those cases cured by operation, was absolute *orthophoria* (or equilibrium of the ocular muscles) secured. The majority of patients, cured and uncured, remained with more or less of the trouble sought to be removed by graduated tenotomies.

5. Some of the *uncured* were brought into a condition of *orthophoria* or very near it.

6. If we take the figures of the Neurological Society's committee as the true result of Dr. Stephens' work upon the cases submitted to and accepted by him it will be noticed that as good a showing can be made for several other operations now generally discarded, as the use of setons, ligature of the vertebral artery, trephining, circumcision etc. Out of fourteen suitable cases,

nine of epilepsy and five of chorea, six were reported as improved, seven unimproved and one in which the result was unknown. Of the epileptics none were cured, three were improved, five were unimproved and in one the result was unknown.

7. In view of the preceding study of surgical cures in epilepsy it seems justifiable to suppose that the hope excited in the epileptic's breast by the promise of a cure—a cure by means of a new and mysterious remedy—and the lasting mental impression produced by the knowledge that the cure involves an operation perhaps often repeated—that these factors enter as largely into the result obtained as the relief given to a heterophoria not specially recognized by the patient. It is probable that the effect upon the mind is the potent element in many cases of cure wrought by surgical interference. *Among those it seems right to place graduated tenotomies for such cases of heterophoria as do not act as a sensible irritant to the patient.*

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Dr. F. Peyre Porcher, of Charleston, S. C., calls special attention to the extreme value of phenacetine as a remedy for insomnia (*Med. Record* July 12th 1890), given at night, in a little water. After repeated trials, he thinks it the best and most unobjectionable substitute for morphia. It may be repeated and the dose increased to seven or ten grains. No accusations have ever been made against phenacetine, whereas sulphonal, antipyrine, and antifebrine have at times been found to possess toxic qualities. It may also be used in children who are sleepless from fever or excitement.

Dr. D. Coggin writes to the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, July 10th, stating that in the March-April number of *Annales d'Oculistique* is a reference to a paper on the Comparative Action of the Two salts, Iodide of Sodium and Iodide of Potassium, read before the Paris Academy of Medicine on the 4th of March. "It is an unpleasant surprise," he says, "to those of us who have prescribed the sodic iodide, because it is more palatable and also better borne, apparently, than its displaced isomer, to be informed on high authority that it is almost inert. As to the *bromide* of sodium, clinical experience in the use of this salt seems to warrant the belief that its action is nearly identical with that of the *bromide* of potassium."