

had a slight convulsion, and as none of the other children in the family had ever had a similar attack, it caused considerable anxiety to the parents, who, however, presumed that it was due to some derangement of the digestive organs, and did not call in a physician. Three months after, the child was seized with another convulsion, which was more severe than the former one, and medical aid was at once invoked. The cause assigned for the convulsions was that term so commonly, and yet often so erroneously, used "worms," which, I fear, are too frequently called upon to account for morbid conditions with which they have no connection. During the next five years the convulsions returned with marked frequency and with such effect that the child once bright and active began to manifest symptoms of impaired mental activity and the parents were inclined to look upon the case as hopeless. During these years the child had been given, as far as I could learn, careful medical treatment but nothing seemed of the slightest avail. At the age of six he commenced to learn the alphabet, and for a time seemed to grasp the subject, but as the convulsions became more frequent memory grew weaker, and the alertness and brightness of youth gradually gave place to the characteristic appearances and actions of a mild imbecile. During his ninth year the convulsions occurred at least every two or three weeks and general symptoms, prominent among which were nocturnal enuresis and involuntary passage of feces, indicated to the grief of the parents that their son had become a confirmed invalid. Shortly after a severe convulsion his father brought him to me. His appearance was that of a well developed child with that expression of countenance peculiar to children of weakened intellect. After careful examination of the patient, his habits and family history, and realizing that the lad had doubtless had excellent medical treatment, I suggested that the cause might perchance be due to an abnormal condition of the penis.

On inspection I found distinct evidence of phimosis the prepuce being greatly elongated, and on making an effort to retract it and expose the glans, I discovered that the prepuce was completely glued down to such an extent that there was no trace of it ever having been anything but adherent. Placing the child under chloroform I made a complete circular incision and removed a portion of

the prepuce and slowly dissected the remaining portion until the glans became gradually exposed. In this case there was marked enlargement of the glans, and behind the corona and completely encircling it was smegma as tough as leather, as large in circumference as an ordinary lead pencil and containing chalky concretions. This too was partially adherent, and when taken off left a surface studded with small granulations which bled freely on touch. After dressing in the usual manner, and giving strict precautions as to cleanliness, etc., I allowed his father to take him home the same evening by train. He reported favorably of the child's condition every few days, and a month afterwards brought him to me again. He had had no convulsion during that time and had every appearance of improved health. The wound had healed completely and showed no sign of the mutilation, which has sometimes been urged as an objection to circumcision. The prepuce was freely movable. For the following four months the little fellow was brought to me each month, and from the date of the simple operation in November last, to the present time, he has not had a single convulsion. Within two months after the operation his parents noticed that the child's mental faculties were commencing to improve, and although I assured them that a considerable time must necessarily elapse before the intellect, impaired as it had been by the long continued convulsions, could, if it ever would, be clear, they remarked with pleasure several indications of improvement in mind and memory. A few weeks ago, being convinced that the cause of the convulsions had been removed, and noting the anxiety of the parents to hasten the acquirement of the lad's intellectual faculties: I advised his removal to an institution where special attention is given to the mental treatment of children. I am glad to know that by following my advice the child has been given the best possible chance for acquiring that which the persistency of his disease deprived him of for such a length of time.

These and the other cases, which I have had the privilege of reporting, furnish, I think, further distinct evidence that in some instances, where there is no evidence of an organic lesion in the brain or nervous system, and where the practitioner is puzzled in determining the exact cause he may discover those reflex nervous symptoms to be due