

hours, and the intervals of freedom from them from one hour to three days. The most remarkable symptom of the disease is the enormously increased electric excitability of the nerves, not alone of those which supply the muscles, the seat of the spasms, but of nearly all the peripheral nerves of the body. The only exception to this, and that is only occasional, is the facial. What is still more remarkable, is, that during the "latent period," when the patient, to all appearances, is quite well, this increased electrical reaction is present, and although not so prominent as during the cramp period of the disease, it is marked enough to be considered as absolutely diagnostic of the disease. So decided is this irritability, that in some cases, without causing the patient much uneasiness, a tetanus of the muscles can be produced by opening the kathode—the kathode-opening tetanus (*Ka O Te*). In a normal state of the nerves and muscles, the above reaction requires such a powerful current as to be very dangerous to life. Why the nerves of the extremities and trunk should always respond in the manner described, and the facial only sometimes, is not known. The increased excitability of the nerves to mechanical irritation, which was first pointed out by Dr. Weiss of this city, is always present, and it is especially marked in the facial. A slight pressure on the skin over the part where the facial divides into its terminal branches in the case reported was sufficient to set the muscles supplied by this nerve into contraction. Very few cases of the epidemic form of the disease prove fatal, but it is otherwise with those following the removal of enlarged thyroids. In Vienna there have been five deaths from tetany due to this cause. Since the introduction of antiseptic surgery has banished septicæmia in these cases, tetany leads the list as the cause of death following these operations. It is often very chronic. In one case it lasted, with intervals, for eighteen months, and eventually proved fatal. I believe that all the very chronic cases are those that follow Goitre removals.

As to the nature of the disease, nothing definite is known. Weiss, taking, as a starting point, its frequency after thyroid operations and its intermittency, throws out the suggestion that it may be owing to irritation of the sympathetic nerves, by means