

prior to May, 1892, the patient, while suffering from a severe pulpitis caused by exposure of the pulp in the inferior left third molar, had the tooth extracted, which was immediately followed by excruciating pain, but of a vastly different character from that which he had previously suffered. He likened the pain unto a severe bruise. The pain continued to increase, and the following day he returned to the dentist and insisted upon his extracting the second molar, although it was not decayed. This the dentist did reluctantly, thinking that perhaps the extraction of the wisdom tooth might have ruptured the nerve, because of the fact that the ends of the roots were bent like a hook. The pain continued for several days, when another dentist was consulted, who continued the process of extracting teeth, but with no relief.

Medical counsel was then sought, but the case baffled all treatment for several months. The patient's health diminished, and the pain continuing in the jaw, he sought relief at the hands of the third dentist, who, like a true knight of the forceps, removed the remaining teeth of both left superior and inferior jaws. The shock to the nervous system and the profuse hæmorrhage which followed, owing to the weakened physical condition of the patient, gave him temporary relief. But the old trouble soon returned, and he found himself back under medical treatment—from which he realized no improvement, finally abandoning his business and becoming an invalid.

After the lapse of two years, he sought the aid of a general surgeon, who, concluding that the trouble was in the gums and alveolar process in the inferior maxilla, cut and chiselled them entirely away, but to no avail. For two years more suffering and medical treatment continued until the patient was little short of a wreck and all but insane. He had lost forty-six pounds in weight, was emaciated and anæmic, and he grew despondent and longed for death to relieve him of his agony.

Diagnosis of the seat of the trouble was based upon the early history of the case at the time of the extraction of the wisdom tooth. It was plain that the inferior dental nerve had been lacerated in the locality of the wisdom tooth, and that no relief could be hoped for until the nerve was severed between it and its centre. To make sure of the result, I decided to remove the entire nerve within the jaw. An incision, about an inch long, was made through the mucous membrane, directly above and back of the location of the wisdom tooth, and the tissues were separated until the nerve was reached as it entered the inferior dental foramen. The nerve was caught up and held with the bull-dog forceps, and severed at this point.

An incision was then made over the mental foramen, the tissues dissected away, and the dental nerve, where it emerged, was separated. The forceps was then tightly grasped and with a