

The electrical irritability was not tested ; there was marked hyperaesthesia of the limbs.

Tetany appears to occur under a variety of conditions. Among the causes we find mentioned diarrhoea, exposure to cold, debility due to lactation, rickets; it may appear during gestation, ceasing after delivery, or after parturition, intestinal worms ; it has followed most of the acute infectious diseases ; it sometimes occurs in the epidemic form, after thyroidectomy, with dilatation of the stomach, Bright's disease, lead poisoning, and in hysteria symptoms simulating tetany have been observed.

The opinion is entertained by some that it is of the nature of an infectious disease. It is thus classed by Osler in Dercum's Nervous Diseases by American Authors.

Von Jaksch describes an epidemic form coming on in the spring, affecting men of the working class about the ages of 17 or 18, in whom the facial phenomena, or Chovestek's symptom, was very constant ; this is ascertained by tapping on the facial which causes tetanic contraction of the muscles supplied by it. Bernard Vaughn, in an article in the *New York Medical Journal*, December, 1893, holds this view in regard to its etiology.

It may be doubted that a special organism exists, whose toxin has a selective action, as in tetanus. Owing to the great variety of causes which may induce an attack, the view that we have here an unstable condition of the nervous system, either hereditary or brought about by debilitating influences, in which various forms of irritation, either central or peripheral, mostly toxic and central, excite the attacks, would seem more in accord with our present knowledge.

The fact that in all cases there is an increased excitability of the nerves and muscles to mechanical and electrical irritation is interesting ; this is better observed in the intermittent variety. Most observers find increased excitability to the galvanic current as compared with the faradic, and spasm is more easily excited with anodal opening and closing, than with cathodal, as pointed out by Erb. In this case the child has a history of having had a similar attack to the present one while teething, and we have here a well marked neurotic family history, and the child's liability to convulsions points to a weak and unstable nervous system. The cause in most instances is probably some toxic condition of the blood, as