

Periscope.

CLINICAL NEUROLOGY.

61. "UBER SKOLIOSIS ISCHIADICA" (On Scoliosis ischiadica). Krecke (Münchener medicinischer Wochenschrift, 1900, No. 6).

Four forms of this symptom-complex have been described. The homologous, body inclined towards the side of the existing sciatica, the convexity of the curve in the dorso-lumbar portion of the vertebral column toward the unaffected side; heterologous, body to the sound side, convexity to the affected side; and the voluntarily and involuntarily alternating.

Attempts at explanation of the phenomenon have been based upon:

- (1) Assumption of the easiest position by the patient. (2) Functional disability. (3) Muscular contraction. (4) Muscular paralysis.

The author discusses these different explanations and describes a case of the voluntarily alternating variety, which had come under his notice. The patient was a strongly built man of 33, who, after exposure and wetting, was seized with severe left-sided sciatica. In consequence, upon moving about, he began to incline his body to one side, and for the first six months this was always the left. He then found that by holding fast to some stationary object, he could push his body over to the other side, the lateral curve in the spinal column changing its direction with some suddenness. This movement he had become accustomed to execute quite frequently, changing his position six times during three minutes while under observation. There was a point sensitive to pressure over the left sciatic foramen. When lying on the abdomen the scoliosis entirely disappeared. The patient could bend strongly to either side, but if at the start the body was inclined toward the opposite side, it was necessary for him to go through his regular maneuver of changing sides before he could do so.

It is pointed out that in this case there was evidently no loss of function in the sacrolumbalis, and that a contraction of this muscle could also be excluded.

So to explain it, it is necessary to fall back upon the theory of voluntary assumption of position by the patient.

To relieve the pressure at the sciatic foramen, the patient inclined his body to the sound side, lowering the pelvis on the affected side. Upon so doing, however, the left sacrolumbalis (since Erben has shown that on inclining the body the muscle of the opposite side is the active factor) was contracted, and soon began to exert painful pressure upon the nerves of the back, causing the patient to change sides to secure relief from this last. The pain at the sciatic foramen recurring, he changed back again, and so on. The author thinks that if properly studied, all cases of scoliosis ischiadica would be found to depend upon the assumption, voluntary or involuntary, of a position calculated to relieve certain definite points from pressure.

ALLEN.

62. UN CAS DE TYMPANISME ABDOMINAL D'ORIGINE HYSTÉRIQUE (A Case of Abdominal Tympanites of Hysterical Origin). F. Benoit and R. Bernard (Nouvelle Iconographie de la Salpêtrière, Jan. and Feb., 1900, 13th year, No. 1, p. 57).

A case of a man, normal in appearances, without neuropathic history, either hereditary or personal, who is compelled to give up his work