

100. NEURITIS ISCHIADICA, NEURALGIA ISCHIADICA UND HYSTERIE (Sciatic Neuritis, Sciatic Neuralgia and Hysteria). Max Biro (Deutsche Zeitschrift für Nervenheilkunde, 11, 1898, p. 207).

Biro presents some diagnostic points between inflammation, neuralgia, and hysterical disease of the sciatic nerve. In neuritis the Achilles tendon reflex is absent, and altered electric reaction and muscular atrophy are noticed; these signs are not present in neuralgia. Painful points (*points douloureux*) are present in neuralgia, and are rare in neuritis. When no symptoms of inflammation, no disturbance of sensation, other than the *points douloureux*, are noticed, the case may more properly be considered one of neuralgia than one of neuritis, but from the perusal of the paper it is evident that Biro does not regard the distinction between neuritis and neuralgia as very sharp. The Achilles tendon reflex has not received the attention it deserves; often it disappears in disease before the patellar reflex (tabes, diabetes). When the sciatic nerve is only slightly affected, the Achilles tendon reflex may not be altered, and every doubtful case in which this reflex is present is not one of neuralgia, but its absence always indicates neuritis. Hysteria not infrequently simulates true sciatica, but in hysteria the painful points are absent, or are not limited to the course of the nerve, passive movements are not painful, Lasèque's sign (flexion of the extended lower limb on the trunk causing pain) is not present, the pain is seldom confined to one extremity, the muscles do not atrophy, no change is noted in the electric reactions, and the tendon reflexes are not absent. Hysterical sciatica occurs at a period when true sciatica is uncommon (before the twentieth year), is more frequently observed in females, and may be associated with other signs of hysteria. No theory satisfactorily explains the scoliosis of sciatica, and many of the so-called causes are doubtful.

SPILLER.

PSYCHOLOGY.

101. AFTER-SENSATIONS OF TOUCH F. N. Spindler (Psychological Review, 4, 1897, Nov. 6).

Frank N. Spindler experimented on five subjects, applying weights ranging from 25 grms. to 1,000 grms. to the back of the hand. He found it absolutely impossible to have the results absolutely accurate, as the after-sensations fade always gradually. He sums up the results as follows:

(1) The minimal time of stimulation which will yield an after-sensation of the kind under investigation is about 5 seconds, with a pressure of 150 grms.

(2) The relation between the duration of stimulation and the length of the interval which elapses before the appearance of the after-sensation is very irregular. The intervals increase up to stimulations of about 3 minutes and then again decrease.

(3) The duration of the after-sensation increases with the duration of stimulation, though without any discoverable regularity.

(4) The longest duration of after-sensations is given by pressures of from 150 to 500 grams. Above and below these limits of pressure the duration decreases.

(5) In quality the after-sensations are very variable. The writer could discover no waves in his own after-sensations, but only a steady, persistent feeling of contraction. Other subjects experienced waves of heat, of pain, etc., but they also in most cases felt a steady, persistent underlying touch on contraction sensation, lasting through the dull aches, the smarts, and the heat or cold.

CHRISTISON.