

case was treated after Dr. Jacob's plan. One of the finest sewing needles that could be procured—a No. 16 sharp—was fixed to a handle and introduced through the cornea to the diseased lens, and the latter broken as effectually as possible. As much absorption has not taken place, the operation will require to be repeated. In private practice we have treated several cases in this manner with the most satisfactory result. Little or no inflammation follows the operation, and almost no skill is required in its performance. On the third patient it was not deemed advisable to operate.

The case of glaucoma afforded us an opportunity of being convinced of the utility of Sanson's method of examining the eye, and of appreciating Professor Mackenzie's opinion that glaucoma is not owing to partial opacity of the vitreous humor, as was supposed; but that the seat of the disease was the crystalline lens.

Having heard so much of the effects of veratrine, it was tried in a case of amaurosis where strychnine and other remedies had failed. The skin being removed from a blister on the temple, the powder was scarcely dusted on the surface when the patient screamed with acute pain. He danced about like a madman, and when somewhat appeased, though a full-grown man, he wept like a child. This is related as a caution.

The removal of tumors has been frequently effected by an ointment composed of a scruple of the iodo-hydrargyrate of potassium to an ounce of lard. This preparation produces counter-irritation by exciting a peculiar herpetic eruption, while at the same time the mercury and iodine of this very soluble salt produce absorption of adventitious matter. Its good effects have been experienced in discussing tumors in various parts of the body. A rather remarkable case occurred about three months ago. The patient, who was of a strumous habit, had received a blow on the temple about Christmas last. Shortly afterwards there arose on the edge of the orbit a swelling, which had increased to such a degree that in the month of March, when he applied, he was unable to open the eyelids. The tumor appeared to be exostosis; the probable consequences of which, in such a situation, seemed rather alarming. The ointment was applied every two or three days or as often as it could be borne, and in the course of six weeks there was scarcely a vestige of the complaint. This valuable addition to the materia medica was introduced to the profession by Dr. Channing, of this city, who published an account of it in the American Journal of the Medical Sciences, in 1833. Since that time it has been found in very many cases an agreeable substitute for the knife.

As was to have been expected, the patients have not been numerous. Perhaps another year may afford a greater variety.

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TEETH AND THEIR DISEASES.

[THE following sensible and philosophical remarks are by E. G. TUCKER, M.D., extracted from a manuscript discourse.]

The fundamental error with regard to the preservation of the teeth

arises from the mistaken notion of the inorganic nature of these parts of the animal economy. The teeth, in their external physical appearance, resemble inorganic bodies, and the superficial observer can hardly be convinced that they possess *any*, still less a *high degree* of organization. By this term organization is meant the possession of an internal structure of parts, adapted to the performance of peculiar functions.

These parts, this organization, consist chiefly of minute vessels conveying fluids. Not the grosser fluids; not the blood in its totality, but its finer parts, and such probably as are adapted to the production and nourishment of the peculiarly dense osseous structure of which the teeth and their enamel are composed.

Thin lamellæ from the teeth of the largest quadrupeds have been ground down so as to be semi-transparent. They have then, when strongly illuminated, been viewed through microscopes of high magnifying power; and in this way, different orders of vessels have been abundantly demonstrated. Perhaps the question of the organic or inorganic nature of the masticating organs is seldom presented to the mind of the careless observer of nature as a distinct proposition. But they all proceed in their treatment of these organs as if they supposed them inorganic. The common language, too, used in speaking of their diseases, clearly points to such an opinion. Nothing is more common than to hear talk about rotten teeth; *the teeth never rot*. The experiment has been made of burying an extracted tooth in a heap of putrefying matter, and keeping it in that state for years. And it comes out as sound as it went in. The teeth rot if injured internally, just as your hand rots if you get a thorn in it; and the internal and still more highly organized—*i. e.*, more nervous and vascular parts, are exposed to the influence of external agents.

The causes which lead to these morbid processes resulting in the decay of teeth, are not now fully understood. The Americans, especially American women, are to a certainty more subject to diseases of the teeth than the people of other countries. How far climate or the modes of living, separately or conjoined, may contribute to this effect, is not known. Those who enjoy robust health, seldom have the teeth extensively diseased. Such individuals now and then have a tug with the toothache, but when the offending member is "cut off," the trouble ceases; while others have the best years of their lives embittered by this scourge. In the present state of our knowledge, on this subject, our directions for the *prevention* of diseases of the teeth must necessarily be very general. It is not known that these diseases are occasioned by taking food or drinks, hot or cold, sweet or sour. Chemical agents indeed have little or nothing to do with the matter. A healthy state of the digestive organs is the only circumstance known to exert an influence favorable to the integrity of the teeth. The mechanical process of brushing the teeth daily should never be omitted, if the only object were cleanliness. It is, however, beneficial by preventing the formation of the vile calcareous crusts, called tartar, which surround the teeth, and sooner or later separate them from the gums and render them useless. But it is doubtful if the brush has any tendency to prevent the caries or internal diseases of the teeth of which I have been speaking.