

day. At the end of ten days the patient might have the treatment for two hours—an hour in the forenoon and an hour in the evening. A glass of warm milk should be given after the massage, and the patient should lie quietly resting in a darkened room for at least an hour.

When the condition of the patient has improved sufficiently, he should be advised to go to a health resort, preferably to one which is new to him, for a few weeks, in suitable company.

#### HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors are accorded honourable mention:—Miss Dora Vine, Miss L. M. Moffitt, Miss F. Sheppard, Miss M. Robinson, Miss D. Priest, Miss O'Brien.

#### QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

Describe (a) one disease due to bacteria in the air; (b) one disease due to bacteria in water and soil; (c) one disease due to bacteria in food.

### “SCIATICA.”\*

By CHARLES PRESTON-BALL, M.D.

(Continued from page 268.)

We must now pass on to consider what other conditions besides hip-joint disease are likely to be confused with Sciatica:—

(B) *Ileo-Sacral disease* is another possible cause of Sciatic pain, but as the conditions are the same as in the hip, we will not dwell too long on this, more especially as it is more rare, and, as before, the X-Ray will always decide the question as to the condition of this joint.

(C) *Pressure from Pelvic tumours* will cause symptoms of Sciatica, and in old people especially it is most important to make sure when they complain of Sciatica that all is well in the Pelvis, and that they have not got any malignant growth either from the bowel or, in women, from the Uterus.

Some years ago while I was at practice in England I was called in by two Doctors to see a patient—an elderly lady, who, hearing I came from Dublin, expressed a desire to see me. She was in a very weak state, and was suffering a great deal of severe pain in her right Sciatic nerve, so much so that she had not slept except by the help of morphia for some time previously. During the consultation the patient asked me if I knew Sir Arthur Macan, of Dublin, and of course the mention of his name at once made me think that she must have attended him at some time for some uterine trouble, and this subsequently proved to be the case. I asked permission to examine her inter-

nally, and I found that she had a very large tumour on the right side of the pelvis, probably growing from the Uterus, and this was pressing on the sciatic nerve. An operation was performed in her case, and the Sciatica left her as soon as the tumour was removed, and I fear I got more “kudos” than I deserved, as the tumour had been overlooked, and I would not have found it out myself only for the patient having mentioned Sir Arthur’s name.

I have since then come across a few similar cases, and I am convinced that in all cases of supposed Sciatica it is most important—especially, as I say, in old people—that the pelvis and the bowel should be carefully examined for any tumour or malignant growth.

(D) The next condition which will simulate Sciatica very closely is that which I have previously mentioned:—it is muscular rheumatism of the muscles around the Sciatic Nerve and in the thigh, buttocks, and legs.

Dr. Arthur Luff calls this “Fibrositis” a name which I think is very suitable, as it signifies more or less the true pathology of the trouble. In the past, this diseased condition was called “muscular rheumatism,” but the term Fibrositis is now used as describing a wider range of rheumatic disease, the pathology of which is degeneration of the connective tissues, not only of muscle, but more particularly of the tendons of muscle as also all the connective tissues connected with the joints, such as the ligaments around a joint and the periosteum around the bones.

The causes of Fibrositis are briefly:—Damp and Cold, extremes of Heat and Cold, *Injuries*, such as strain to muscle, and the absorption of toxins from Influenza, acute septic Tonsillitis, and poisons from the alimentary tract.

Fibrositis is a very common form of rheumatic trouble, and may cause Lumbago, Stiff neck (now very common from the fact that so many suffer from the cold at the back of the neck from motoring behind a screen which causes a double back draught of wind, pointed directly at the nape of the neck) and various more or less obscure pains in all parts of the body.

If we get lumbago or pains in the muscles of the thighs or around the hips, as may be contracted from sitting on wet grass, these are forms of Fibrositis which simulate true Sciatica. Indeed, the sheath of the Sciatic nerve itself may be attacked in this way, as well as the muscles around the nerve, and it is more than possible, therefore, that simple or true Sciatica, when there is no disease in the

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[previous page](#)

[next page](#)