

- (c) Electric Light Baths.
- (d) Iodine Vapour Baths (useful also in acute cases).
- (e) Salt water Baths.
- (f) Spa Treatment, especially at Droitwich.
- (g) Ionic medication, or Cataphoresis.
- (h) The injection into the nerve of Saline Solutions and Epsom salts, Chloroform, and Distilled water (doubtful if of any use).
- (i) Diet, and the strict avoidance of Tea and stimulants.
- (j) Galvanic Electricity.

I have purposely omitted the following:— Stretching of the Nerve, Blistering, Cauterisation, and the operation of cutting down on the nerve and stretching it. I believe there is always a risk of the cases being worse for such treatments, and, indeed, if there is a likelihood of the disease being arthritic in its nature or due to Fibrositis of the surrounding muscles, these treatments surely can do no good.

In very chronic cases I think that a combination of most of these treatments should be employed; the procedure should be one of trying to discover the cause while if possible giving relief. If it is a case due to toxins from the intestinal canal, the treatment to be complete must be one of trying to cure that condition, and the use of Guaiacol internally or Cyllin or creosote are of benefit. The recent use of paraffin, too, is a good line of treatment, especially if there is colitis and constipation.

Now there very few, if any, cases of sciatic neuritis are due to gout, and unless we are perfectly sure that we are dealing with a case of Sciatica due to gout or excess of uric acid, an anti-gout line of treatment must not be given.

This is, in my opinion, a very important point, as I am sure you know that the treatment of gout is a very lowering treatment, with a very strict meat-free diet. If we should persist in a treatment of this kind in a case of Sciatica, either of the true type due to rheumatism, or due to arthritis or to fibrositis, we would certainly add greatly to the already weakened condition of the patient. It is well to remember that all forms of Sciatica are very distressing to the patient, who will soon get very low in mind and in bodily strength. I have seen a comparatively young man, aged only 34 years, look like a man of at least 50 years after six Months' suffering from Sciatica.

It is important, then, that we should treat the patient who has been a sufferer for some time with every possible endeavour to strengthen him. Tonics should be given, plenty of good food at regular intervals, while not allowing over-feeding. The food must contain meat;

remember you are not treating gout, and a vegetarian diet will certainly ruin and wreck the life of a patient suffering from any form of rheumatic Sciatica or from arthritis.

Cheerful companions also are of the greatest importance, and also bright surroundings, as these cases get into very melancholic states if you let them. Indeed, worry and trouble and sorrow in my experience seem to play an important part in the onset of these diseases.

As regards the treatment at the several Spas, I am of the opinion that with the exception of a few cases of true gout, now getting so rare; the imbibing of sulphur and other waters is useless. Possibly the use of Radium water is good, but in my opinion the patient who comes back home free from any Sciatica of a rheumatic nature, or indeed any form of rheumatism, after a course only of waters is no better, and if they imagine they are well, they most probably imagined the disease before they went for the "Cure."

Of course, the Baths, such as the sulphur, electric, Mud Baths, Vichy douche, Aix douche, all tend to alleviate the conditions, but the main benefit that the patient receives from a course of Spa treatment is, I believe, due to the change of life, scene, and air.

As hinted at before, however, I am strongly in favour of the treatment in Droitwich. There the Brine Baths are among the best in the world, and the Brine is of great density. It is a very beneficial treatment for lumbago, Sciatica, and nervous breakdown, giving the patient strength and vigour so essential in these diseases. I have found that as a final treatment for Sciatica the patient at Droitwich will get in most cases sound sleep. This is important after perhaps weeks or even months of restless nights.

Lastly, just a few words as to the Diet in these cases, as in all cases of rheumatic origin, and indeed also in Gout, a carefully regulated diet is important, but this does not mean that we are to rigidly abstain from meat. I am inclined to believe that even in true gout it is not necessary to abstain from meat, and certainly in Sciatica due to rheumatic arthritis or to rheumatic fibrositis the diet should contain plenty of meat.

If in all these cases any forms of food are to be abandoned, the starchy foods and sugar are the most important that should be abstained from. In other words, we should tell these patients to avoid potatoes, pastry, thick soups, white sauces, underground vegetables. At the same time, other articles of food which are difficult to digest must be avoided, and it is important to see that the Patient does not eat

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)