

EARLY USES OF ACUPUNCTURE IN  
THE UNITED STATES,  
WITH AN ADDENDUM (1826) BY  
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SCHOLARS are well aware that acupuncture was introduced from Asia and tried out in Europe as early as the 17th century. It is even better known that this measure subsequently achieved a substantial European vogue during the early decades of the 19th century, that several score physicians of that period published accounts of their experiences using it, and that the practice acquired some permanent roots, especially in France.<sup>1</sup>

It is not so well known that interest in the measure also spread to the United States fairly early in the 19th century. It was, to be sure, a limited phenomenon. While there is no way of knowing just how many American physicians tried acupuncture during that century, it is apparent that the number was relatively small. Certainly the principal evidence of their activities focuses upon a period of hardly a quarter of a century. This note surveys some of those early practitioners, at least those who published their experiences, and reproduces an historical document from that era which summarizes their knowledge and uses of the measure.<sup>2</sup>

Acupuncture was introduced into 19th century American medi-

1. A recent discussion of this aspect of the subject is Haller, J. S.: Acupuncture in nineteenth-century Western medicine. *New York J. Med.* 73:1213-21, 1973. However, so far as the United States was concerned, Haller concluded (p. 1217) that, apart from the work of a single physician, Franklin Bache, "there is no evidence that acupuncture received any further notice among American practitioners in the nineteenth century." Other recent correspondents have alluded briefly to William Osler's variant use of acupuncture. See, for example, Fernandez-Herlihy, L.: Osler, acupuncture, and lumbago. *New Eng. J. Med.* 287:314, 1972; Brody, H.: Chinese vs American acupuncture. *New Eng. J. Med.* 287:724-25, 1972; Jaffe, B.: Osler revisited: Imperfect acupuncture. *New Eng. J. Med.* 287:725, 1972.

2. Equally unexplored perhaps is American experimentation with moxa during this period. Again, knowledge of that measure was well disseminated through medical encyclopedias and other works; at least a few articles resulted from actual use. See, for instance, Taliaferro, W. T.: Case of paralysis, successfully treated with moxa. *Amer. J. Med. Sci.* 6:99-103, 1830.

cine under perfectly respectable auspices. This is not to say that no questions were asked or doubts expressed about it. The method came from Europe along with a generation of radical medical or pseudo-medical innovations—mesmerism, homeopathy, phrenology, hydropathy, and others—some of which initially enjoyed respectability but later lost it. With acupuncture, the process seems to some extent to have been reversed. At least some American physicians were cautious about adopting it because they had been burned by earlier medical panaceas. An editorial reviewer summarized this hesitancy in 1822 in the *Medical Repository*:<sup>3</sup>

We should, e'er this, have given some account of Acupuncturation and its surprising powers; but we reckoned it, erroneously it would seem, a-kin to the famous *tractors*, and remembering how many were gulled by that simple bauble, we felt backward in troubling its Eastern relative, least we might lend ourselves to swell the list, already too numerous, of the credulous and enthusiastic. But we have probably been mistaken—Acupuncturation is likely to become, employed with discrimination and directed with skill, a valuable resource.

Partly because of such caution, acupuncture was not so badly tainted as the other European innovations referred to eventually were, with the stigma of quackery or sectarianism, but rather it remained essentially an experimental procedure of the regular profession. Perhaps it would have acquired greater popularity if more of the century's medical controversies had touched it.

American medical interest in acupuncture did not become evident until almost a decade of European experimentation and use had gone by. Then, in the early and mid-1820s, American medical journals began to publish abstracts of various European experiments and notices of the literature—especially the French but also some British. In 1825 the physician and chemist, Franklin Bache, great-grandson of Benjamin Franklin, translated from the French and published in Philadelphia an American edition of Morand's *Memoir on Acupuncture*.<sup>4</sup> During the next two decades various other European works on the measure were

3. Unsigned review of James M. Churchill's *Treatise on Acupuncturation* in *Med. Repos.* (new ser.) 7:441-49, 1822. The reference, of course, is to the metallic device of Elisha Perkins.

4. Philadelphia, Desilver, 1825. *The Medical Repository* published a notice of European work as early as 1820.

made known in this country. Among these, the 1829 American edition of Tavernier's *Elements of Operative Surgery* included a three-page section on how and when to perform acupuncture, as well as the similar operation of electropuncturation.<sup>5</sup> In 1833 the editors of the *Medical Magazine* reprinted a slightly abbreviated version of an article on acupuncture by an Englishman, John Elliotson, which had originally appeared in the *Cyclopaedia of Practical Medicine*. A few years later, American editions of the *Cyclopaedia* gave further broad circulation to the same article.<sup>6</sup>

Despite such publicity, New York and Boston physicians apparently had relatively little to do with acupuncture. So far as a reviewer in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* was aware in 1829, the measure had "never yet crossed the Atlantic to this new world," and that was just as well so far as he was concerned.<sup>7</sup> However, in 1836, the editors of that journal at least thought the subject newsworthy enough to reprint a recent article about it from the *Southern Medical and Surgical Journal*. There, the author, William M. Lee, of Indian Town, S. C., had reported some of the results of his experience using acupuncture for six years on "many cases" of rheumatism. Lee's judicious report noted varying results for the different types of rheumatism, and assured physicians that the process of inserting needles involved little pain, that the method produced quick results, and that needles were easily obtainable through supply houses. He concluded that acupuncture was "entitled to far more attention than it has yet received in the United States."<sup>7</sup>

Apart from this South Carolina enthusiast, the native American application of acupuncture during this early period seems to have been largely confined to Philadelphia physicians. Of these Bache was far and away the most active. As assistant physician at the state penitentiary in Philadelphia, Bache determined in 1825 to test acupuncture on the prisoners whom he was called upon to serve. With the aid of

5. Tavernier, A.: *Elements of Operative Surgery*, Gross, S. D., translator and editor. Philadelphia, Grigg, Crissy, Towar & Hogan, Auner; New York, Collins & Hannay, Collins, Roorbach, 1829, pp. 55-57.

6. Elliotson, J.: Acupuncture. *Med. Mag.* 1:309-14, 1833; Elliotson, J.: Acupuncture. In: *Cyclopaedia of Practical Medicine*. Philadelphia, Lea & Blanchard, 1845, vol. I, pp. 54-57.

7. Anonymous: Acupuncture. *Boston Med. Surg. J.* 2:502-03, 1829; Lee, W. M.: Acupuncture as a remedy for rheumatism. *Southern Med. Surg. J.* 1:129-33, 1836-1837; Waring, J. I.: The Carolina acupuncturer. *J. S. Carolina Med. Ass.* 69:46, 1973.

a colleague, he used the needles to treat 12 different prisoners who were suffering from highly painful afflictions: three with muscular rheumatism, four with "chronic pains," three with neuralgia, and two with ophthalmia. He also used acupuncture among the prisoners in relieving several lesser pains, including a headache accompanying bilious fever, the head pain of an epileptic, an elastic tumor near the elbow joint, and a dull pain caused by pulmonic inflammation.

Bache reported varying successes. In summarizing 17 subsequent cases, some of which were not among the prisoners, he noted that seven "were completely cured, seven considerably relieved, and in the remaining three cases, the remedy produced no effect." Over all, Bache was convinced that the measure offered great promise for "removing and mitigating pain." He concluded that it could well be "a proper remedy in almost all diseases, whose prominent symptom is pain."<sup>8</sup>

No other American reported such broad experience with this measure as Bache. However, a few others shared their more limited, though sometimes significant, efforts with the rest of the medical profession. In 1826 J. Hunter Ewing reported having used acupuncture "many times, and been present when others have performed it," apparently with good results. His most striking success, it seems, was in relieving and curing a thitherto intractable case of neuralgia.<sup>9</sup>

That same year a group of three Philadelphia physicians—Edward J. Coxe, D. T. Coxe, and Samuel Jackson—conducted experiments with acupuncture as a possible means of resuscitating the drowned. European experimenters had claimed to have successfully revived drowned kittens by inserting needles into their hearts. The Americans, however, were unable to duplicate this success and gave it up in disgust. As Edward Coxe reported: "Whatever others may think of the possibility of resuscitating drowned persons by acupuncture, I can only say that I should think myself highly culpable, if, called to a case of asphyxia, I were to waste time, every moment of which is precious, in endeavouring to resuscitate by a means which I sincerely believe to be good for nothing."<sup>10</sup>

8. Bache, F.: Cases illustrative of the remedial effects of acupuncture. *N. Amer. Med. Surg. J.* 1:311-21, 1826 (*vide* Addendum).

9. Ewing, J. H.: Case of neuralgia cured by acupuncture. *N. Amer. Med. Surg. J.* 2:77-78, 1826.

10. Coxe, E. J.: Observations on asphyxia from drowning. *N. Amer. Med. Surg. J.* 2:292-93, 1826.

Among other Americans who applied this measure, the most prominent was undoubtedly Robley Dunglison. In 1843, some years after arriving in Philadelphia, Dunglison reported his use of acupuncture "to drain off the fluid from the cellular membrane in anasarca"; he suggested employing larger needles for this operation than were ordinarily used in other diseases. Dunglison apparently also tried acupuncture in other diseases. Even more important than his experiments, however, was his role in publicizing the method. This was largely through his *New Remedies*, an 1839 compendium in which he included his eight-page account of acupuncture.<sup>11</sup> The same article subsequently appeared almost unchanged in each succeeding edition of the book. The last edition, the seventh, came out in 1856.

Despite the interest of Dunglison, Bache, and some of their contemporaries, acupuncture failed to take hold in the highly volatile and uncertain medical world of Jacksonian America. This was undoubtedly due in part to a lingering suspicion that the measure was quackery, but doubtless even more to the perception of its inherent drawbacks and also to such added complications as infections rising out of this pre-Listerian operation. Another reason for the decline in interest may well have been the emergence during the 1840s of ether and the various other anesthetics as effective means for the relief of pain in surgery. In any case, after that time the discussion of acupuncture almost disappeared from American medical literature. Samuel D. Gross concluded in 1859 that "its advantages have been much overrated, and the practice . . . has fallen into disrepute."<sup>12</sup> Subsequently, the *Index Catalogue* of the Surgeon-General's Library tended to confirm this judgment, since its compilers could identify hardly half a dozen scattered American publications on the subject for the entire half-century 1850-1900. However, acupuncture did not die out in the United States. Even during this later, more skeptical period, occasional physicians, not the least of whom was William Osler, took sufficient interest in the practice to keep it alive.

11. Dunglison, R.: Editorial additions to Elliotson, J.: Acupuncture. In: *Cyclopaedia of Practical Medicine*. Philadelphia, Lee & Blanchard, 1845, vol. 1, p. 57; Dunglison, R.: Acupuncture. In his *New Remedies*. Philadelphia, Waldie, 1839, pp. 23-30.

12. Gross, S. D.: *A System of Surgery*. Philadelphia, Blanchard & Lea, 1859, vol. 1, pp. 575-76.

Note: Haller notes some use of acupuncture or related devices both by eclectic practitioners and by charlatans in late 19th and early 20th century America, particularly

## ADDENDUM

BACHE, FRANKLIN: Cases illustrative of the remedial effects of acupuncture. *North Amer. Med. Surg. J.* 1:311-21, 1826.

From the attention recently bestowed on this revived remedy, both in England and on the continent of Europe, by practitioners of eminence, and from the numerous cases detailed in the foreign Journals of its efficacy, in various affections, I was favourably impressed in regard to its powers, and determined, on the occurrence of a proper opportunity, to give it a fair trial. My situation, as assistant physician to the State Penitentiary in this city, soon afforded me this opportunity; and the cases which I am about to detail, occurred in my practice among the prisoners.

The cases, in which I used acupuncture, were, for the most part, painful affections, and may be arranged under the four general heads of *Muscular Rheumatism, Chronic Pains, Neuralgia, and Ophthalmia.*

## I. MUSCULAR RHEUMATISM.

CASE 1ST. *June 30, 1825.*—J.M. aet. 33, complains of pain in the small of the back, on the left side of the spine, rendered very acute upon flexing or extending the trunk. Acupuncture being determined on, an attempt was made to insert a needle into the painful part, about two inches from the vertebrae of the loins, and on a line with the spine of the ileum; but in consequence of the patient suddenly receding, from the sharp pain excited by the needle, thereby withdrawing the instrument, it proved unsuccessful. Another needle was then tried somewhat lower down, and successfully inserted to the depth of half an inch; although, in its passage, it caused a great deal of pain. Upon the patient's starting, in consequence of the acute pain produced by this needle, he perceived that his back was no longer painful on motion. Accordingly, the needle was withdrawn, after having

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among Midwestern German communities. He concludes that this further discredited the measure among the regular medical profession (Haller, op. cit., pp. 1217-20). Presumably, the use of acupuncture among Chinese populations in large American cities at the same time had the same effect. In a related matter, it would be of interest to examine the reactions of 19th century American medical missionaries toward acupuncture as they encountered the practice in Asia, and to determine whether their collective attitudes played any role in shaping the sentiment of American physicians generally.

remained half an hour. The patient now tested the state of his back, by motions performed in various directions, and declared that all painful affection was entirely removed; there remaining only a slight sensation of stiffness. An areola was formed round both punctures.

*July 2.*—The morning after the operation, the pain returned, but without half its original force. The patient, to-day, however, has only a sensation of numbness in the back, but no pain.

*Oct. 26.*—The subject of this case states, that the sensation of numbness went off in a few days, and, up to the present moment, he has had no return of pain.

CASE 2ND. *June 30.*—D.G. aet. 43, has been affected for the last two months with a pain in the right shoulder, in the situation of the deltoid muscle. The pain has varied in force at different periods, and is always increased by motion.

A needle was inserted to the depth of an inch, into the substance of the deltoid. At different stages of its introduction, the instrument occasioned very severe pain. After remaining inserted half an hour, the needle was removed; and the patient was very much pleased to find, that the motions of the shoulder, heretofore so painful, could now be performed with facility, the pain experienced being inconsiderable. A remarkable circumstance occurred during the time the needle remained inserted. At four several times, a pain shot, with the velocity of lightning, through the affected part. This was so severe, as to cause the patient to scream out. Observing him attentively, the concussion his frame received, seemed to resemble that produced by a powerful shock of electricity.

In this case, a very faint small areola was formed. The needle was also surrounded with a slight elevation of the skin, forming a minute button.

*July 2.*—Today there is no vestige of pain. The patient came to state his recovery.

*Oct. 26.*—Up to the present time, no pain has been experienced; but some stiffness still remains.

CASE 3D. *Oct. 2.*—J.B. aet. 39, has been affected, at intervals, for the last four days, with severe pain in the small of the back, inclining to the right side, and running over the hip to the right knee. When it occurs, it is usually the consequence of the motions performed in sitting, and rising from a seat, and is sometimes very

severe, producing a sensation as if the hip joint were wrenched. These severer attacks leave a sensation of numbness, extending down to the knee. This patient received an injury in the back about four years before, produced by a fall, the force of which was received on this part; and it is to this circumstance that he attributes the occasional attacks of pain in the back, to which he has ever since been liable.

Four needles were inserted in this case; two nearly in a line, over the right half of the sacrum, the 1st, at the distance of three inches from the spinous processes of that bone, to the depth of three-quarters of an inch,—the 2nd, about an inch from the same processes, to the depth of an inch. The 3d needle was introduced about three inches externally to the 1st, in a line with the great trochanter, to the depth of an inch and a quarter, and the 4th, half way between the 3d and the trochanter, to the depth of an inch and three-quarters. All the needles gave considerable pain at particular moments of their passage, and, except the last, were surrounded with areolae.

The patient being directed to stand, in order to observe the effect of the operation, the last needle inserted was found to cause much pain, which appeared to arise from the contraction of the muscle, into which it penetrated, throwing the skin into folds on its upper side. The patient, feeling a little faint, was desired to sit down, and the painful needle was immediately removed, after having remained about ten minutes. Shortly afterwards, the three remaining needles were taken out; the 1st, and 2nd, after having remained about an hour, and the 3d, twenty minutes.

The patient being now directed to ascertain the state of his back, declared that it was perfectly well. The motion of stooping, the performance of which was almost impossible before the operation, can now be performed without the least pain.

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In addition to these cases, I may mention one of stiff neck under this head. The affection had existed for a week, and resisted the use of cups and other topical applications. The least motion of the head occasioned severe pain. The insertion of a single needle caused the pain immediately to disappear.



## II. CHRONIC PAINS.

CASE 1ST. *June 14.*—F.D. aet. 40, is affected with pains, which have their seat more particularly in the right hip, thigh, and knee, extending sometimes to the ankle. The affection has existed, in a greater or less degree, for a number of years. A trial of acupuncture being determined on, one needle was inserted into the upper and front part of the thigh, and another, obliquely upwards, into the outside of the upper part of the knee. On the penetration of the first needle, the pain in the thigh was immediately removed and that of the knee joint, very shortly relieved by the second. The needles produced but little pain at the time of their penetration; but, after remaining for some time, gave rise to a burning and smarting sensation.

*Oct. 26.*—At this date, the pain which remains is very trifling.

CASE 2ND. *June 21.*—G.C.C. aet. 55, has been affected, at intervals, for the last four years, with a pain in the top and back part of the head. For the last fifteen months, it has been nearly constant. Cupping and blistering have been frequently resorted to, but only with temporary relief.

A needle was inserted obliquely into the crown of the head, to the depth of an inch and a half. No sooner was the instrument inserted, than the pain in this situation, entirely disappeared. A second needle was then introduced into the back of the neck, and had the effect of entirely removing the pain in the back of the head, in the course of fifteen minutes. After the lapse of an hour, the patient still continued free from all pain, except a smarting sensation, occasioned by the needle last inserted.

*June 22.*—The needles were withdrawn to-day, after having remained twenty-four hours. The cure still continues complete.

*Oct. 26.*—The pain in this case has never returned up to this date.

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On the 16th of July, the subject of this case, requested me to try acupuncture for a swelled and painful gland under the jaw, connected with some soreness of the throat on the same side. I readily consented, and the effect of the needle was really surprising. In fifteen minutes, the pain was very much diminished, and at the end of twenty-four hours, at which time the needle was extracted,

the pain had entirely subsided, and nothing remained but a slight soreness. In five or six days, the swelling disappeared, and has not returned up to the present time. (Oct. 26.)

No conclusion can be drawn from an isolated case; but if subsequent experience should establish the power of acupuncture to effect the rapid absorption of enlarged glands, its benefits would be incalculable.

CASE 3d. *June* 28.—A.G. aet. 64.—In this case, pains had existed, at intervals, for sixteen years, being seated, for the most part, in the knees, and running up to the hips. This day inserted three needles,—the first, in front of the thigh, two inches above the patella, to the depth of an inch and a quarter; the second, into the inside of the leg, near the knee joint, to the depth of an inch; and the third, over the scapula, one inch deep, for a pain occupying that part. They were all withdrawn after intervals of fifteen or twenty minutes. The first and second needles relieved the pains in their vicinity, in a few minutes after their insertion; the third produced no sensible effect.

*July* 2.—The patient experiences a dull sensation, not amounting to more than one-third of the original pain. The relief continued for about ten days, after which the pain returned. The affection finally disappeared under the use of the volatile tincture of guaiacum.

*Oct.* 26.—None of the original pain remains.

CASE 4th. *July* 17.—H.M. aet. 24.—This patient has been affected, for the last four months, with a constant pain over the sternum, about an inch and a half above the ensiform cartilage. Two needles were introduced,—one, in an oblique direction at the seat of pain, to the depth of three-quarters of an inch; the other, one inch below this cartilage, to the depth of one-third of an inch. After remaining about three-quarters of an hour, they were withdrawn. In the course of several days, the painful affection entirely disappeared, and, up to the present time, (Oct. 26,) has not returned.

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I had another case, which may be arranged under this head, in which the patient was affected with pains in both knees, occurring with most severity at night. Two applications of the needles, on successive days, entirely removed the affection.

## III. NEURALGIA.

CASE 1st. *July 18.*—J.R. aet. 39, was attacked the day before, with severe pain in the forehead, thence shooting through the back of the neck, to the right shoulder, where it became stationary. To-day, a needle was inserted into the shoulder, to the depth of three inches and a quarter. During its passage, the pain was translated to the elbow. In fifteen minutes, however, it returned again to the shoulder. In an hour and a quarter, the needle was withdrawn, without producing any relief.

*July 19.*—Acupuncture was again tried to-day. A needle was inserted over the deltoid, to the depth of an inch and a half, and removed in about an hour. No benefit, however, was experienced, and the next day, the affection was relieved by cupping, and disappeared in the course of a few days.

CASE 2nd. *August 5.*—J.T. aet. 36, has for several years been affected, at intervals, with a pain over the right eye. A needle was inserted into the part affected, to the depth of three-quarters of an inch, and allowed to remain ten hours. The effect was the complete removal of the pain.

The next day, the pain returned partially, but in a few days entirely disappeared.

*Oct. 26.*—No return of pain up to the present date.

CASE 3d. *Sept. 26.*—J.H.B. aet. 23, has been affected, for the last six months, with a pain, extending from the right hip, along the back part of the thigh, down to the knee, and occasionally occurring in very severe paroxysms. This day, a needle was inserted into the inner part of the thigh, four inches above the knee, to the depth of one inch, and allowed to remain three hours. Immediately after its insertion, the pain became very severe for the space of five minutes, and produced a disposition to faint; after which, it gradually subsided, and, in a short time, disappeared entirely. At the time the needle was withdrawn, the pain was not felt in the recumbent posture, but was induced, though with less than its original force, upon standing or walking.

*Sept. 27.*—The pain having returned, four needles were this day inserted—the first in the centre of the gastrocnemius, and the second, third, and fourth, in a longitudinal direction, into the back part of the thigh. After remaining four hours, they became so painful as to require removal. The diseased pain was now found nearly subsided.

*Sept. 28.*—The pain has recurred with nearly its original severity. The patient's impression is, that the needles have afforded him no relief.

*Oct. 4.*—Having been much struck with the result of a case, somewhat similar, in which remarkable relief was obtained from performing the acupunctures on the back, (see case third, under muscular Rheumatism,) I induced this patient to submit to another trial of the needles. Five needles were accordingly inserted; three over the right half of the sacrum, about an inch from its spinous processes, and the fourth and fifth, lower down, in the course of the ischiatic nerve. During the operation, the patient was seized with several excruciating paroxysms of pain, which had the peculiar character of suddenly shifting from the small of the back, to the calf of the leg. Occasionally the pain would subside instantaneously, from a degree of intensity, sufficient to make the patient scream out. A sixth needle was attempted to be inserted over the glutei muscles; but, a severe paroxysm of pain coming on, the attempt was desisted from. At this time, the patient seemed to suffer so severely, that, at his own request, he was allowed to take 60 drops of laudanum. With respect to these paroxysms of pain, it deserves to be mentioned, that they were precisely similar to those experienced before acupuncture was resorted to.

About half an hour after their insertion, the two lower needles were removed. Another effort was now made to insert a sixth needle, which succeeded, though not without exciting a great deal of pain. The buttock and upper part of the thigh was observed to be covered with perspiration.

The remaining needles were removed, after having remained in the tissues about three hours. Immediately on their removal, the patient found himself free from pain, arose from bed, and, upon freely exercising his limbs, had no return of it.

*Oct. 5.*—To-day the patient experiences some shooting pains when he attempts to walk, but is perfectly easy when quiet. Three needles were inserted over the sacrum in the morning, and removed in the afternoon. They caused a great deal of pain during their introduction; but at the time of their removal, and for some hours previously, all pain had disappeared.

*Oct. 6.*—Pain this morning very trifling. The patient requesting to have the needles again tried: four needles were inserted in the same region as yesterday. During their penetration, the pains appeared to

shoot towards their points. The operation was much less painful than on former occasions. After remaining seven hours, the needles were extracted. The result was, that the pain had disappeared, and was only excited in a slight degree by walking.

*Oct. 8.*—This day the patient had a return of pain, principally seated in the calf of the leg. A needle was inserted into this part to the depth of an inch, with evident relief.

*Oct. 9.*—The needle inserted yesterday was taken out to-day, all pain being absent, except a slight one immediately round the needle.

*Oct. 10.*—The pain having returned to-day, two needles were inserted into the back, and allowed to remain between six and seven hours. During their insertion, the pain was very severe; but after the lapse of half an hour, all painful affection subsided.

*Oct. 11.*—The patient was entirely free from pain all last night, and is equally easy this morning.

Subsequently, the subject of this case had repeated returns of his painful affection, though in a mitigated form. No progressive improvement having been observed for some time past from the employment of the needles, their further use was abandoned, and recourse was had to other remedies.

It may conduce to give some idea of the obstinacy of this painful affection, to enumerate the different remedies afterwards successively employed. These were, three caustic issues, each of the size of half a dollar, cicuta, carbonate of iron in large doses, exhibited at first alone, and afterwards at the same time with digitalis. During the whole course of the affection, it was found necessary, at various times, to mitigate the sufferings of the patient by a resort to laudanum.

*Dec. 2.*—This patient has been gradually improving for the last three or four weeks, under the use of the carbonate of iron and digitalis, being at present able to attend to his work as a painter and varnisher. Two of the caustic issues are healed, the third nearly so. The affected limb is somewhat smaller than the other, and, from its weakness, gives rise to a slight lameness.

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A case of shooting pain in the back of the head, suffering an exacerbation once in twenty-four hours, may, perhaps, be arranged here. Two applications of the needle produced partial relief only.

## IV. OPHTHALMIA.

I have had two cases of obstinate ophthalmia, in which acupuncture was resorted to a number of times, with various success. Upon the whole, however, I am strongly inclined to believe, that the needle will be found a valuable remedy in the intense pain, which so frequently accompanies this disease. Its effects were, in many instances, very decided in this way. On one occasion, the irritability of the eye was promptly and remarkably lessened.

While I am thus convinced, that acupuncture has a decided influence over the pain attendant on inflammations of the eye, I am very far from believing, that unaided by other means, it will cure these affections. But, at the same time that the usual general and topical remedies are employed, the needles may be resorted to as an important auxiliary.

Besides the foregoing cases, I have had several of minor importance, in which acupuncture was employed. These were, 1st, a case of headach [sic], occurring in bilious fever, in which the pain was relieved, but returned the next day with its original violence; 2nd, a case of excruciating pain in the forehead and temples in an epileptic patient, in which the needles had no effect.\* 3d, A case of painful elastic tumour, near the elbow joint, the consequence of a sprain, in which the remedy failed; and lastly, a case of dull pain in the side, the consequence of acute pulmonic inflammation, in which the operation produced no permanent benefit.

In the foregoing observations, I have said nothing of the rules to be observed in the introduction of the needle;† as this subject did not come within the scope of my design in writing this paper. But without entering into these details, I may be permitted to remark, that the pain caused by its introduction is not so uniformly slight as some of the French writers would lead us to suppose. It is, indeed, true, that in some cases, perhaps the majority, the pain excited is remarkably moderate; but, on the other hand, in some instances, it is quite severe. With-

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\*In this case, the pain continued to increase, until a state of complete phrenitis was induced, which was combatted successfully by bleeding, cupping, and blisters to the head. Its sequel clearly showed that it was not a proper case for the employment of acupuncture.

†The reader, who may desire information on this point, is referred to my translation of Dr. Morand's Memoir on Acupuncture, recently published in this city.

out doubt, the state of the part in which the needle is inserted, must have a great influence in determining the result in this respect.

So far as I can judge from my limited experience, my impression is, that acupuncture possesses a remarkable power in removing and mitigating pain. This agency, taken in connexion with its safety, and the great facility with which it is performed, points to it as a proper remedy in almost all diseases, whose prominent symptom is pain. I have myself used it in more than twenty cases, and not in a single instance has any unpleasant accident occurred.

In conclusion, it remains for me to acknowledge my obligations to my friend Dr. Harris, who kindly assisted me with his advice, and operated for me in several of the first cases, in which I resorted to the remedy.

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POSTSCRIPT.—*March* 8, 1826.—Since the above was written, I have had in the Penitentiary and in private practice, up to the present date, 17 cases of painful affections of various characters, in which acupuncture was employed. Seven of the cases were completely cured, seven considerably relieved, and in the remaining three cases, the remedy produced no effect.