

**Critical notes of Mr. Gilbert's operative chair, with external fulcrum, for the extraction of teeth.**

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CRITICAL NOTICES  
OF  
**Mr. Gilbert's Operative Chair,**  
WITH  
EXTERNAL FULCRUM, FOR THE EXTRACTION OF TEETH.

(From the *Lancet*, Dec. 2nd, 1848.)

A NEW CHAIR, ADAPTED TO THE PRACTICE OF DENTAL SURGERY.

We have lately examined a chair, to be used in the practice of dental surgery, which has been invented by Mr. Gilbert, a surgeon of Suffolk-place, Pall Mall, and which we consider presents very ingenious and useful peculiarities. Its chief feature is, that it removes the fulcrum required in the extraction of teeth *out of the mouth*, so that the jaw is not liable to sustain injury. It consists of a padded and easy seat, with arms; a moveable back, which can be readily let down to any inclination, and which (the back) at its summit is semicircular, so as to receive and retain steadily the head of the patient. At the right-hand side is let in a strong circular steel bar; on this runs another at right angles, which can be promptly fixed by a screw at any required height. The cross bar, at its termination, holds a flat piece of metal, which, being covered by lint, is brought opposite to, or within, the mouth, and serves as the fulcrum for the forceps used by the operator to rest on. In extracting the teeth of the lower jaw, the forceps is placed *superiorly* to this fulcrum. In the removal of teeth from the upper alveoli it is only necessary to let down the back of the chair, when the operator, standing behind the patient, makes the *inferior* surface of the bar his fulcrum, and proceeds to extraction in exactly the same manner as in the former case. The forceps having grasped the tooth, the operator, with a single movement *in one direction*, raises the latter out of its socket.

Mr. Gilbert states, "that he was led to the construction of his invention, which he has fully matured, by a remark of John Hunter, to the end that the extraction of a tooth should, 'if possible,' be effected perpendicularly, or *in the direction of its axis*. (See 'Natural History of the Teeth,' p. 166.) Every surgeon and anatomist must needs admit, that the more extensively a *lateral* force is used, the greater is the extent of injury to the alveolar process, to say nothing of the increased pain and hemorrhage consequent upon the crushing the jaw and the structures by which it is surrounded, which is inevitable unless the fulcrum can be removed from these structures."

Mr. Gilbert (with a certain degree of modesty which is not exhibited by all inventors) forbears to assert that by means of his apparatus, tooth-drawing will be rendered a positively *pleasurable* operation to the



patient, but he contends that by its use the suffering is rendered "quite bearable." He hopes entirely to banish the "key" from dental surgery, which terrible-looking instrument has long been the great bugbear of the art. He has shown us, very satisfactorily, that with his chair any species of forceps may be used, at the pleasure of the operator; we believe that Cartwright's forceps is that which he commonly employs. He states to us that he will feel pleasure in showing and explaining the use of his chair to any practitioner, and we can confidently direct attention to it as a boon to the profession and the public.

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"We have had an opportunity of again examining this most ingenious chair, and consider it a highly meritorious invention. To the dentist and the surgeon it will prove most important while performing their operations. We have already given a description of this instrument, and it is only necessary for us now to say, that it allows of the extraction of teeth in the most scientific and easy manner,—the forceps when introduced into the patient's mouth, resting on a fulcrum, thus rendering its application more easy and more effectual. In performing certain other surgical operations, the chair will prove of inestimable value to the surgeon, as it is capable of being placed at any angle. Mr Gilbert is entitled to professional patronage for his ingenuity."—*Medical Times*, Feb. 10, 1849.

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(From the *Literary Gazette*, Dec. 9, and *London Journal*, Dec. 30, 1848.)

#### PAINLESS TOOTH-DRAWING.

Comparatively painless tooth-drawing, without the aid of chloroform or any "exhibiting" whatever! The inventor of such a practice deserves the thanks and support of his fellow-creatures, and Mr. Gilbert, of Suffolk-place, Pall-mall, has rendered it available to any operator. He has devised an easy chair for the extraction of teeth, with a back that can be inclined to any angle, and the top of which is semi-cylindrical for the reception of, and to enable the operator to come close to, the head of the sufferer. There is fixed at the right hand side of this comfortable back a strong steel bar, traversed by a moveable arm, which may be secured at any height, and brought round to the mouth of the patient. The single steel finger, as it were, of this arm, bound round with lint, within the mouth, for the jaw teeth, or opposite to and just above the front teeth, serves as a rest or fulcrum for the forceps of the operator, and the pull is straight in the direction of the axis of the tooth. For the upper or lower jaw, the back of the chair is inclined accordingly, the lower or upper surface of the finger respectively serves for the fulcrum, and the operation, we were assured by one who had experienced it, is thus divested of its terrors, and its hitherto frequent distressing consequences. The assurance of experience, however, is not required to support the fact of the immense improvement of this over the old and soon, we hope, the forgotten practice. The horrid wrench of the "key" instrument, the jaw itself the fulcrum, or the painful wriggle of the forceps by the iron wrist of the operator, are no longer to be dreaded, the tooth is lifted from its socket by a single direct movement, and no fracture of the jaw nor laceration of the gum can occur. Many a grateful heart will Mr. Gilbert's invention secure to him.



(From the Morning Herald, Dec. 7, 1848.)

THE SOCIETY OF ARTS.

The third ordinary meeting of the above body, for the present session, took place last night in the great room of the society's house, John-street, Adelphi. A variety of ingenious and useful modern and other contrivances and improvements in science, art, and manufactures were displayed. Amongst these, one attracted a good deal of attention—it was a sort of arm-chair for the greater facility of operations in dental surgery, designed by Mr. Gilbert, 1, Suffolk Place, by which the painful and often dangerous process of tooth-extracting appears to be very considerably modified by the application of obvious mechanical principles to the purposes required. Several medical and scientific gentlemen present expressed their approval of the invention.

(From the Court Journal, Dec. 16, 1848.)

“Amongst the numerous inventions of the present day, we know of nothing that is likely to prove more useful, in diminishing the sum of human suffering, than a chair by Mr. Gilbert, with an apparatus attached, for the extraction of teeth perpendicularly, instead of as now—by a torturing and dangerous crush. John Hunter long since pointed out the great advantages to be ensured by extracting the teeth in a line of their axis, and it is surprising that it should have been left for Mr. Gilbert to accomplish what is obviously so necessary for the safety as well as the comparative ease of the patient obliged to submit to the operation of tooth-drawing.”

“Royal Medico-Botanical Society. At the last monthly meeting of this society, Earl Stanhope in the chair, a paper was read by Mr. Foote, the honorary secretary, entitled “A less painful and more scientific Mode of Extracting Teeth,” and describing a newly-patented invention by Mr. H. Gilbert, M. R. C. S. The right hon. chairman expressed the highest approval of Mr. Gilbert's ingenious contrivance, and complimented that gentleman in warm terms for having introduced a merciful instrument in dental surgery, well deserving the thanks of the profession and the public. One of Mr. Gilbert's patients, in answer to questions put to him, said he had had three teeth successively drawn by the aid of the new fulcrum, and that he suffered but little pain by the operations, while he felt that his jaw remained whole and uninjured.”—*Douglas Jerrold, Dec. 30.*

IMPROVEMENTS IN DENTAL SURGERY.

At the last monthly meeting of the Medico-Chirurgical Society, held in Berners-street, on the 13th inst., J. M. Arnott, Esq., F. R. S., in the chair, the attention of the members was engaged by the exhibition of a new surgical chair for operations, to which is attached what is termed a dental fulcrum, by which teeth can be extracted more scientifically, causing infinitely less pain, in consequence of the scientific directions of the celebrated anatomist, John Hunter, being followed. By the new system the tooth is raised perpendicularly, or in a line with its axis. The invention is by H. Gilbert, Esq., M. R. C. S., of 1, Suffolk-place,



Pall-mall, by whom it has been patented, and is now adopted by him, being found a perfectly successful and satisfactory mode of practising dentistry. The members of the above society expressed themselves much pleased with the invention, viewing it as one of a philanthropic kind, calculated to effect great public good, as well as being of professional service.—*Observer, Feb. 18.*

“The operation of tooth extracting has, up to the present time, been regarded by most persons as a very unpleasant one; and certes, it is no wonder since the structure and arrangement of the teeth in the mouth are of that character, that to withdraw them therefrom frequently requires the exercise of much physical force; but the unpleasantness that really does accompany this operation, has hitherto been greatly augmented by the incompleteness of the apparatus used to effect it; for although the operation, considered mechanically, is but a simple one—the application of a lever to withdraw the tooth from its socket—yet the peculiarities of the case seem to have baffled the ingenuity of all until now, albeit the propriety of extracting the tooth in a vertical direction has been fully comprehended, and the necessity of having a suitable fulcrum for the lever to act upon to effect this, acknowledged.

Thanks to Mr. Gilbert, who has invented and patented an apparatus which supplies the desideratum in a simple and effectual manner, the extraction of teeth will be deprived of most of its terrors. Mr. Gilbert who is a surgeon, has operated most successfully with the aid of this apparatus, and it has received the commendations of very high authorities.”—*The Artizan, Jan. 1, 1849,*

“‘Give me a fulcrum,’ said the philosopher, ‘and I will displace the earth.’ Now the teeth, gums, or alveoli, are the fulcrum when a molar or even a bicuspid stump *must* come out. Nails, iron nails, are made to provide their own fulcrums, but they yield and accommodate themselves to the pincers,—besides, they have no nerves that run right up through their heads; the teeth, however, proud grinders that they are, can break but will not bend, and they suffer as much, probably more, from the fulcrum or resting place, than the lever or forceps. Invention however goes on, and Mr. Gilbert, surgeon of No. 1, Suffolk-place, Pall Mall East, has invented an apparatus calculated to give confidence to the operator and security to the sufferer, to say nothing of the torture it must save the latter. It is something to have no fear of after consequences, and from an inspection of this contrivance, it is obvious that no harm can be done to the jaw by the operation of tooth drawing. In short a fulcrum is provided in connection with the chair in which the patient is placed, and in an exact line with the tooth. This avoidance of danger is important, and the ingenuity of the inventor is worthy public praise and patronage. We are convinced, from the simplicity of the invention, that it must become common; and our blood curdles at the thought of what agony such an “Elevator,” as it is termed, might have helped dentists to avoid.—*Era, Feb. 11, 1849.*

“We feel great pleasure in giving our testimony to the new invention of Mr. Gilbert, for lessening the pain, and ensuring the success of the operation of extracting teeth. It consists of an easy chair, so constructed as to afford a complete support to the patient, while attached to it is a beautiful mechanical contrivance by which a complete fulcrum is obtained for the instrument, by means of which all pressure is avoided,



and the tooth extracted without the dreadful wrench and tearing of the gum, which has hitherto given such terror to the operation. Mr. Gilbert has conferred a real benefit on the public by lessening thus the suffering of those who have courage to undergo the dreaded ordeal, and rendering it bearable to many whose timidity has hitherto made them endure pain rather than visit a dentist.—*Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard, Feb. 13.*

73, Harley Street, Dec. 15, 1848.

Dear Sir,—I have much pleasure in certifying that your Chair for Dental Operations is an admirable invention, correct in principle, efficient aid in practice to extract teeth without injuring the soft parts, and thereby save the usual infliction of pain during and after the operation. The Chair will equally serve the convenience of the surgeon in operating upon the face, mouth, throat, and eye.—I am dear Sir, yours faithfully,

EVANS RIADORE,

Lecturer on Surgery in the Hunterian School of Medicine.

To H. Gilbert, Esq., &c.

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“I have used the chair to-day for the first time in three cases with the most satisfactory result, and certainly think it will become a very useful instrument in Dental operations.” *Extract from a Letter from NORMAN SPENCER, ESQ., Surgeon Dentist, Oxford.*

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“I received the Chair safe last night \* \* \* This day I have used it three times—all for the under jaw; a second molar—a second bicuspid stump, just before broken very low down by another dentist, and given up as a bad job—and a dens sapientiæ. The patient declared he scarcely felt the extraction of the molar; another patient declared she knew the stump was not out, and the other said the pain was not half what she had experienced on former occasions.”—*Extract of a Letter from RICHARD WHITE, ESQ., Surgeon Dentist, Norwich.*

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*Extract from a letter from GEORGE FRY, ESQ., Surgeon, &c.*

St. Leonard's-on-Sea, April 3rd, 1849.

\* \* \* Relative to my experience of your Patent Dental Fulcrum, I cannot speak in too much praise: every practitioner ought to possess one, who wishes to extract teeth with ease and confidence to himself, and less torture to his patients.

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*Extract from a testimonial from G. EVANS, ESQ., Surgeon, &c.*

22, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall.

\* \* \* Mr. Gilbert has extracted teeth for me, and I have seen him operate on others, and I can confidently say, the usual pain of the operation is so much diminished (the soft parts being uninjured), that rather than be subjected again to the usual method of extracting teeth, I would go one hundred miles to Mr. Gilbert, or to any one using his Dental Fulcrum.

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Many other high testimonials, too numerous to mention, could be added; both from those who have used, or seen used, Mr. Gilbert's Instrument, as well as the evidence of his patients.



W. MATTHEWS,

**Surgical Instrument Maker**

TO KING'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL, &c.,

10, PORTUGAL-STREET, LINCOLN'S-INN-FIELDS.

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SOLE MANUFACTURER OF

Gilbert's Patent Dental Operating Chair and External  
Fulcrum,

AND INSTRUMENTS FOR THE EXTRACTION OF TEETH;

*Original Maker and Inventor of the COATING for  
PROFESSOR FERGUSON'S SPECULA for the VAGINA,  
UTERUS, and RECTUM, and for MIDWIFERY  
FORCEPS, BOUGIES, &c., &c.;*

SOLE MANUFACTURER OF DR. SNOW AND ROBINSON'S  
CHLOROFORM INHALERS;

INVENTOR AND MANUFACTURER OF A NEW RESERVOIR ENEMA  
APPARATUS, WHICH DISCHARGES ITSELF AT  
ONE STROKE OF THE PISTON;

MANUFACTURER OF DR. TODD'S STETHOSCOPE,  
NEW SLING FOR FRACTURES;

&c., &c., &c.