AN
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION
ON
Typhus Fever
and
Inflammatory Diseases

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Typhus Fever and Inflammatory Diseases

It is probable, that the disease now called typhus existed from a remote period, and though it is alluded to by Sydenham, it appears not to have been distinctly characterized as an infectious complaint of its own kind, until about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Since that time various works have appeared, and thrown considerable light upon this interesting disease, yet it must be
Confessed, that the term typhus is still used in medical writings but more particularly in medical speeches, for too indiscriminately. In stead of being solely confined to the individual disease in question, it is made to include a great variety of widely different affections, especially when in their course the concomitant fever puts on a low or putrid type, as frequently happens in the last stages of many inflammatory diseases of the external and internal.
Strikes me, that to call any species of fever typhus, which was not the contagious essence capable of producing unequivocal typhus, it is equally incorrect in logic as in language. In this essay, therefore, the word typhus should be limited to the peculiar disease, which is allowed to originate from a specific contagion and which, doubtless, has the power of producing an affection of its own nature, individuals exposed to its influence. The term typhus is too generally associated with the opinion, that the fever
which it properly designates, is in all its stages a disease of real debility, from my own observations, during the last few years, has convinced me that the genuine Typhus is far from being of an asthenic nature, is most certain by an affection of excitement or of congestion, in its first stages, demanding at such times the evacuant plan. Entertaining these sentiments, the professional reader will perhaps excuse their brief announcement in entering on the subject; as they may contribute to ward against the undue influence of some
early associations, and thus incline him to give a fair hearing to the facts and arguments about to be adduced.

Typhus is unquestionably most prevalent in cold temperate climates. Though it is universally known, that the warmth of tropical regions is most congenial to the generation of those effluvia, which produce the remittant yellow fever. I have known practical men, who were confident that the contagion of typhus occasionally exist in sum hot countries; in the summer of fifty-four I seen some well marked cases. They were
all more or less marked with confection of the brain from the beginning, all though there was no deaths exist as mongue that class of poitence in my practice; during that year, there is sum writers that says, in england, typhus is evidently favoured by a low temperature, being most prevalent in the cold seasons of winter and spring, generally a bating or disappearing, as the heat of summer advances, and after prevailing to a considerable degree in cold wet autums I have noticed in a number of persons exposed to
contagion of Typhus, some though sparingly, are attacked as early as the first or second day, and others even after the thirteenth, but perhaps the most common periods of sickness after exposure are, from the end of the first, to the middle of the third week. It has been affirmed, that it follows at so great a distance as to the ninth or tenth week after exposure, but this seems very questionable. If an author is persuaded, that there must be specific contagion as the source of every fever resembling Typhus, he will undoubtedly go far to
To seek for it. When this disease once prevails it generally assumes different forms which may, however, be arranged under three varieties, the simple, the inflammatory, and the conjunctive typhus. These three varieties may first be concisely characterized, and afterwards separately examined, in order to illustrate the rules of treatment fitted for each. Strictly speaking, of typhus care only be denominated simple in a relative sense. It is in reality, the least complicated form of the disease, in which the
febrile excitement, or hot stage, is completely developed, and in which there are no decided marks of typical inflammation. The inflammatory typhus has the same open character of general excitement as the simple, but with there are conjoined symptoms of some visceral inflammation. The conjunctive typhus is distinguished by the hot stage not being at all, or only imperfectly developed, and by simultaneous signs of venous congestion in one or more of the internal organs.
The simple typhus has a first stage of oppression, a second of excitement, and a third of colaps. These successive stages, but more particularly the two last, bear a pretty exact ratio to each other as to degree, but not as to duration. The stage of oppression is usually marked by a variety of symptoms, among which the following are mostly conspicuous: Paleness of the face; a peculiar look of dejection and weariness; some degree of or livor in the integuments.
Surrounding the eyes; prostration of strength; diminution of mental energy, and of sensibility; cold creeping sensations on the surface, or short hot and chilly fits alternately; loathing of food, nausea or vomiting, white or clammy tongue; sense of weight or anxiety about the precordia; occasional sighing and hurried breathing; aching, heaviness, or giddiness of the head; coldness of the back, and pain of the loins; a quick, low, struggling pulse, changeable as to
changeable as to frequency, and even irregular as to force. These symptoms are accom-
panied with feelings of general uneasiness, somewhat resembling those which are experienced after a journey, or any other great fatigue. The stage above described sometimes comes on and reveals itself with rapidity but generally it is more insidious in its approaches, and occupies, from first to last, a period of two or three days; when, after various irregular demonstrations of reaction, it is suc-
ceeded by the second stage, or that of excitement, in which there is a complete development of the fever. In subjects who possess constitutional vigour, the tone and velocity of the circulation are now preternaturally increased, and the puls accordingly becomes comparatively expansive, thrillingly, and somewhat resisting; at least it is widely different from the variable, confined, incistic puls of the former stage, and from the uniform free, and smoothly flowing one
of health. The cheeks are flushed with a dusky redness; the eyes heavy; and the lips parched. The respiration is quick; the skin all most invariably dry; the heat universally diffuse, and steadily above the common point; the tongue foul; the thirst urgent; the uneasiness in the head increased; the sensibility in a highly susceptible state—every symptom, in fine, denoting an excess of excitement. This second stage of the simple Typhus naturally holds a tolerably even tenor for some
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time. As it proceeds, however, the brain, at intervals, is usually disturbed with reveries, or slight delirium, coming on towards evening, when there is an exacerbation of the fever, and receding to towards morning, when there is a remission; but the prostration of strength, which is at all times very evident, is generally greatest in the periods of the exacerbations and the tongue is then drier. During the predominance of the excitement the bowels for the most part have a
Tendency to constipation. The excretions as well as secretions also undergo gradual and material changes, which are evidenced by the dark and offensive nature of the feces, and by the peculiar odour of the breath and whole body, and by the morbid appearance exhibited on the tongue, in the fluids formed from the liver, from the kidneys, and from other organs of secretions. After six or seven days, sooner or later according to its mildness or severity, the stage of the excitement gradually gives place to
That of collapse, which is first announced by signs of depression in the voluntary powers; by a certain degree of relaxation in the skin; by a more variable and less concentrated state of the temperature; and by a notable diminution in the force of the circulation, the pulse being of less volume, softer, and undulating. In the mildest cases, the approach of stage of collapse may be viewed as an indication of convalescence. Although the patient may complain of much general weakness, and sometimes of
soreness in the flesh, with flying pains or cramps in the extremities, yet the tongue will be found softer and cleaner, the thirst diminished, the pulse slower, the breathing deeper and less frequent, and the skin of a natural warmth as well as moisture. Besides the patient will pass much better nights, the functions of the stomach will be restored to a certain degree, with an evident improvement in the appearance of the face, and in general with a copious and frequent sediment in the
urine. Whereas, in the more marked instances of this sort of typhus, the supervision the stage of collapse considerably augments the danger. The prostration of strength then becomes far greater; the pulse is commonly quicker and all ways much weaker; the tongue fowler, darker, and, driest; the voice fainter, and the articulation less distinct; the respiration shorter, feeble, and more anxious. The sensorial functions, too, are more disorder, and the countenance is more dejected, sunk and
Inanimate. Added to these symptoms, the skin feels looser, and appears more shrunken, while the temperature is no where so intense as in the stage of excitement, but variable in course of the day, even on the central parts; and there is an increase of general restlessness, a more perceptible and peculiar fever about the body, and often an irritating species of cough which comes, as it were, in convulsive fits. In this state the patient is disposed to lie upon his back. As the peril increases, he not only labours
under subsultus tendinum, visual deceptions, to muttering delirium, and difficulty of deglutition, but has also a tenancy to slide downwards in bed, and to draw up the feet frequently towards the body. The foregoing description is intended to apply to the simple typhus, as it runs an unimpeded course; but between its slightest and its most marked forms, there are intermediate ones, whenever it extensively prevails. Some of the worst cases of it which I ever saw, exist in subjects
who had been kept in a warm close atmosphere; and some of the mildest, in those who had inhabited cool, dry apartments. At the same time, however, I cannot help suspecting, that in almost every instance of the simple typhus, there is really a degree of lesion in the structure of some vital organ. In the present state of our knowledge, there are perhaps many morbid changes, which elude the inquisitor of the anatomist. The cold stage of the former is somewhat analogous
To the Stage Apothesis.

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of the stage of oppression: when the reaction has once
taken place, the pulse continue to rise, unless
timely controlled; through nearly the
whole of the second
stage; and the preter-
natural acceleration of
the blood can only
be said to subside on
the approach of the last
stage. It cannot but
be supposed, that this
long continued id of the
fever, though it may leave
no visible traces behind it,
must make considerable
impressions on certain
Organs of delicate structure; such as the brain for example, through which currents of blood must have repeatedly flowed with more velocity and in greater quantities than natural. But in the mildest instances of this variety, it must be admitted, that no kind of organic lesions is produced, and they consequently end favourable; and in this they likewise resemble the simplest intermittent, in which the morbida excitement of the circulation doe not give rise to
greater local irregularities or accumulations of blood, than can be finally removed by the energies of the constitution alone, or by very gentle expedients of art. Almost all the larger viscera can sustain a certain degree and duration of vascular distention, with out their structure being there by at all impaired, or even there functions very greatly disorders. The character of the simple typhus, it will be perceived, very according to the time of its continuance; and as
Some of those variations demand correspondent changes in the mode of treatment, it is hoped that the attempt which has been made to point out the pathognomonic signs of each of the leading stages, will be found correct. And by having dwelt principally upon the last, contributed to support the dangerous doctrine, that typhus is always a disease of real debility. There is, so wide a difference between apparent and real debility, that the practitioner,
who would successfully conduct the treatment of febrile disorders, must attentively distinguish the one from the other. In the first stage of the styple typhus, the debility is merely apparent and chiefly dependent upon the prelunatural accumulations of blood in the veins about the head, heart, liver, and other internal parts, while there is less circulating upon the surface of the body than in a natural state. In the second stage, the debility is still only
apparent, being then the consequence of over-
excitement of the heart
and arteries; but in the
third and last stage,
beyond all dispute, the
debility is real, as it is
then connected with a
general collapse, which
sooner or later succeeds to
a state of febrile excite-
ment, as certainly as
exhaustion follows a fit of
intoxication. So great
indeed, in a practical point
of view, is the importance
of attending to the state
of the circulation in
its febrile complaints.
That guarding against what are called determinations of blood to the different viscera, and removing preternatural accumulations, whether congestive or inflammatory, when they actually take place, will be found to constitute one of the grand secrets of successful treatment.

It seems an acknowledge law of the animal economy that when any part of the body is once put into a state of irritation, there is a greater flow of blood than natural in that direction. This law
Should always be remembered in typhus and similar fevers, which necessarily gives rise to more than one local irritation at the same time. If opportune attended to, simple irritation may generally be soon removed, but if neglected in its origin, it may tend to produce not only an increased afflux of blood, but an actual inclination in some part.

There is an opinion very prevalent in this country, that any fever originating from a common cause, such as cold, heat, intemperance, or the
like, may become contagious in its progress. This opinion has probably acquired all its force from the prejudice of education, for it has happened in physics, as in other departments of human knowledge, that men believe certain things merely because they taught to believe them; and it is too humiliating, in general, to acknowledge that as an error which has been long cherished as a truth. This feeling has greatly tended to impede the progress of my own mind, but I could wish, above all things, to weed out every vestige of prejudice or pride, that I might have no discolouring or distorting medium between me and nature; but that, on the contrary, I might be enabled to see things as they really are, and to investigate them in the spirit of sincerity.

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John [illegible]