AN INAUGURAL DISSERTATION,
ON
Epilepsy
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If diseases are ranked according to the severity and disastrous consequences which they produce on the human family; there is none in the whole catalogue, extensive as it is, that claims precedence to Epilepsy. This we understand to be a disease of the nervous system, which is the most delicate and highly organized of any in the animal economy; fulfilling the most important functions that nervousness is privileged to exercise; hence a disease having its seat in such tender organs should demand from the medical world, the most profound and thorough investigation. And although distinguished physicians have pronounced this disease whenever unaccompanied with deformity of the extremities or insensibility of the animal
incumbent; yea, we think it be the duty of every physician, who may be called to treat such cases as to hold back such a progress until the shall have of exhausted every effort, to correct in the patient; each function disorganized, and shall have wasted the whole armory of the suspensio.

Each year the industry of the naturalist, the ingenuity of the Chemist or the Mechanist, disclose new agents or more refined effec-
tents, for the purpose of abating the discomforts arising from indig-
ness and pains; in short the multiplied improvements and discoveries, which are being m-
ade in medicine, and all the collateral branches, added to the improved mode of studying disease—such as the science of post-mortem,
Examinations, together with what is already known of this fearful disease, may we not hope that physicians will soon acquire such knowledge of the various causes of this disease, and skill in treatment, if not permanently to cure it, greatly to alleviate the unfortunate sufferer when it has seized as its victim, and not only of this disease may that hope be cherished, but of all those which have been termed "epilepsy in medicine,"

epilepsy, whether considered in its immediate phenomenon or in its remote consequences, has in all times and countries been considered one of the most disgusting and deplo-
able of all human maladies, its tendency to injure the understanding
To produce multitude and even total abolition of the national power, lead often to a condition infinitely more lamentable than death itself. This disease has in the history of medicine received various applications according to the different authors who have described it, though the one or the other. The more appropriate to epilepsy, the name which seems preferable at this time is derived from the Greek word ἐκπήρωσις, by signifyng a seizing, an abrupt invasion, this disease may be either idiopathic or syphilitic, characterized by convulsions returning at uncertain intervals accompanied with the loss of sensation and a convulsive emotion of the insensible, its attacks may be sudden or preceded by premon
victory symptoms, such as a confused and wandering state of the mind, vertigo, ringing in the ear, included vision, pain in the head, suffering and anxiety in the thoracic region, spasmodic twitches of the muscles, a warm glow which proceeds from the epiphysis. Toward the head, called "aura epileptica." The countenance exhibits feelings of fear and alarm. And these symptoms "denote themselves more truly in the approach of the paroxysms.

This disease has also received the name of "falling sickness," from the fact that the patient falls if in an erect posture when the paroxysm comes on.

Symptom of the Paroxysm.

The first thing that we notice is the pressing and tight.
cry, which the patient generally, though not always, utters and if in an erect position he falls suddenly, densely and convulsively, he strains and struggles violently. The countenance is frightful by distortion of a lid, and sometimes almost black, occasionally pale, the veins of the head and neck taut, the heart galloping violently, breathing is oppressed and laboured, a choking sound is heard in the windpipe, he seems to be strangling, he foams at the mouth, a frothy saliva, which is more free towards the termination of the paining, a constant grinding of the teeth, a gushing of the blood in the neighbourhood, if the muscular contraction, in short, the patient seems to be suffering all the agonies of death. But presently and by degrees
The alarming phenomena diminish, and at length cease. The patient is then left in an exhausted condition, and as the convulsions depart a stupor or deep sleep comes on, after which the patient recovers apparently well, with the exception of a mental torpor or confusion which often continues for varying periods. The convulsions exhibit a fatal cast. The duration of these paroxysms range from a few minutes to many hours, sometimes following each other in quick succession, or as many as fire or sir.

It has been remarked that one side is frequently more powerfully convulsed than the other, sometimes the convulsions commence on the skin, on one side and proceed towards the head, the head...
contracts and twists—to one side
and it not infrequently happens
that the urine and feces are expelled
during the violence of the spasm,
and even dislocation is effected by the
contractions of the muscles. Such joi-
nts are generally the jaws and shou-
der, the tongue is sometimes caught
between the teeth, and violently bit,
which causes the bloody foam above
observed, and so powerful are these
spasmodic convulsions that the
teeth are pratticised.
The above mentioned symptoms are
applicable to one form the most
common and severe. There
are other clapis in which the
symptoms are much milder
and where many are not found
or noticeable. So mild have been
the attacks that the patient himself.
exhibits a consciousness of it, by an attempt to conceal it. Some authors make a distinction in the two clauses, by name; they call the milder form "Petit mal," and the severer "Grand mal." Some think these are different diseases, while others affirm they are the same. But between the two extremes they make various gradation consequent to a correct definition of the disease is very difficult, and these grounds we account for the variety of definitions it received both by ancient and modern writers. The author of the phenomena which引起 anatomists' main made are very few, but it has been noticed by some pathologists. That, that portion of the brain known by the name of "Corbells," is much more frequently found diseased than the one known as
The "cerebrum." They also discovered that
the small deep glands known as "Pineal" glands are often found in a
more vivid state. Tumors and other
structural arrangements at times
found in the substance of
the brain, and at times deposits of
matter have been discovered
between the different lots of the
"cerebellum," with slight destruction
of the substance of the brain itself,
and in many instances and
the slightest trace of organic dis-
order has been discovered, either in the
brain or spinal marrow. Such
are the recorded appearances that
have been found in the inspection
of the brain of "Epilepsy;
Predispensing Causes.
There are sometimes
constitutional, and some author say
even secondary. The attacks are mostly about the age of "puberty."

Exciting Causes

Of these there are two classes, first, those which act directly on the brain and under such conditions, we call the disease "idiosyncratic." While there are others which act on remote parts, affecting the brain sympathetically; this constitutes the "sympathetic form."

Among the causes which have been found to act directly on the brain are 1st Malformation of the Skull, depressed bone, "Exastsis," from the internal Table of the Cranium, Organic alteration, vascular congestion and effusion upon the brain, Disease of the Cranial bones and of the vertebrae, Diseases of the head and spine, Dissecions of the internal
table from external injuries, affect
Obstruction in the brain or its Tissues,
Obstruction of its arteries, Muta-asis
of "goat" or "haematemesis" to the "encephalon",
which are some of the direct Causes
which may act on the organization
and cause these symptoms. Next, if
the symptoms are equally as seriousness, as in the
former case. Among the most
common ones are mental irritability,
Irritability in females, suppression of the
emotions, sudden clapping up of idea.
Ipsa, "Intemperant, ABUSE, various po-
isons, habitual intemperance, urinary
Calculation, tumors, anger, grief, and often
the sight of person affected with this
Disease.

Diagnosis
This Disease is very often
complicated with "lysteria", but there
are certain symptoms which enable us to distinguish with certainty this disease from hysteria. And there is no foaming at the mouth, nor is the countenance so livid and distorted as in epilepsy. The hysteric paroxysm does not resemble that in insanity at all, as does the epilepsy.

In hysteria there are what is called "Elocutus Hystericus," involuntary laughing or weeping.

**Prognosis**

This disease seldom takes life during the paroxysm. The idiotic form is most rare to lead to insanity. The sympathetic is frequently cured, particularly in young persons, and the insane frequently the reverse frequently. The occurrence of these paroxysms as more difficult in the disease to cure. Paroxysms depend much upon the healing cause.
It is said. cases produced by falls are hardly ever curable. From childhood to puberty is the most favorable period. It is more unfavorable when the precursory symptoms consist of some affection in the head, than when they are felt in other parts, particularly in the extremities. Protracted sleep and stupor are unfavorable indications.

Treatment

The cause of this disease are so various, that there is no specific course of treatment applicable to it. Hence before prescription, it is necessary that we enquire after its original spring. Cure can consist in the state of all the function or organization, which can have any bearing upon the disease, its duration, the time and manner of its first attacks. The constitutional habits, age, concurrent or concurrent diseases, factors
Temper, mode of living, all these should be considered well, for it is upon a rational treatment that the treatment of the disease depends itself into two divisions, viz. "Palliative and Eerative. The former is applicable to the paroxysm, the latter to the interval between, for the first attack of epilepsy. The patient being ignorant of the premonitory symptoms of the disease, knows not what precaution to use, or what to do to avoid the attack, consequently the first, division viz. The palliative, is commenced, while the patient is in the paroxysm and at this time but little treatment is demanded or can be given. When the paroxysm comes on the patient should be placed in a recumbent position, with the head somewhat elevated, all the right part
of the chief should be loosened, especially, around the neck and chest, and also each portion that compresses the blood-vessels. The patient should have access to fresh and pure air, a soft piece of wood or some other substance should be placed between the teeth, to prevent injury to the tongue, and convulsive movements restrained as far as to guard the patient from injuring sometimes when the patient is of full habit, bleeding is often highly recommended to stop. The medicinal, deliberate, nature to the head, cold appl

ication to the head, "Sinapisme," to the stomach has been thought to be beneficial. No treatment has yet been found that will materially mitigate or shorten the symptoms. Repetition of deflecting measures have
been thought to be very injurious by deteriorating the general health. If congestion of the brain is so great, as to threaten apoplexy, blood letting, cold application to the head, subcutaneous, and warm baths to the sphincter, are all of the highest importance. Various "tamas," and measures have been used with great effect. In cases of suspended respiration, the electro-magnetic current and artificial respiration should be had recourse to. After the patient has had severe of these paroxysms, he can tell from the tremor, jerks, symptoms that he is soon to be in like manner affected, and Dr. Garcia has recommended a treatment to prevent the paroxysm, such as treatment consists of clumps of cold water, or brisk cathartics or
centes, a legacy or foundation around the base from which the "cause" seems to come. This treatment has proved very effective in warding off paroxysms in such cases as are thought to continue from habit after the exciting cause has been removed. The radical cure of this disease is to be attempted during the interval between the paroxysms, and when the exciting cause can be ascertained and is of a nature capable of being removed, the exciting cause should be removed immediately, as the first and most important step to wards the cure. The causes which produce epileptic paroxysms are so multiplied that we will not undertake to mention them here, but will say down in our unvaried order, 1st. The exciting cause...
If possible remove all sources of irritation to the brain or spinal marrow.
The therapeutic agents are as various as the exciting causes, and must therefore be used accordingly. If the inflammation is brought about by worms in the intestinal canal as is often the case with children, vomiting will be indicated. When from diphtheria the operation "tubaphoratics" should be employed. When from the aching or of old ulcers vesicatories, purgating applications, warm baths, friction &c. When from Meningeal irregularities, means must be employed to abate the morbid determination to the vital system. When from external injuries a supercilious operation is perhaps the only means of effecting relief. After the removal of the exciting cause, we should inquire into the condition of every function within the organism, ascertaining every change and curtail it if the blood vessels are...
scarlet and the blood. Too weak, gave saline cathartics;
vegetable diet, with proper exercise. If anemic
condition the abnormal condition of the blood, and
in short we that every function performs
its duty. The conclusion, no one course of
remedies, is considered as reliable, because of
the variety of remedies which Mother D. but
each must be treated with reference to
the cure of the disease. Therefore we forbear, men-
tioning the long list of remedies which
were found of great value in the treat-
ment of the disease. In view of the rapid
advancements in medical science we may readily cherish
the hope that the day will soon arrive when this deadly
carcinoma, which alarmed and terrified alike the
great consented fathers, and the bare fleck of Rome, disper-
sing its minions is political and social, ominous of the death
sacrifice of some offended God, and within whose domain
flow the mighty Caesar's stock and weakness, while the
Roman eagle so long ere wont to growls and continues
flow after blow upon His frame until beneath
Bauca. Made his bed at the base of Pompeys Stature. Like Caesar, like Rome and Roman Eagle, he numbered among the thing that were.