

## TABES DORSALIS.

BY AD. LIPPE, M. D.

All the various and different atrophies of the spinal marrow, were formerly comprised under the collective term "Tabes Dorsalis," but of late the modern and progressive pathologists have classified them. The form to which our attention is most frequently called, and of which we propose to speak at present, has been termed "the primary degenerative atrophy of the spinal marrow."

Men suffer much more frequently from this disease than women, who are but rarely affected by it. Persons are more subject to it between the 22d and 42d year, and again between the 44th and 58th year. The causes which have been assigned are onanism, venereal excesses, over exertion of the muscles, and colds from suppressed perspiration of the feet; to which we here add, from our own observation, corroborated by other observers, that in many cases of men—at about the age of 40 years—suffering from this disease, the cause can be traced to an attack of syphilis, in which the chancre had been externally treated by Nitrate of Silver, and the patient had been further subjected to the ordinary mercurial treatment. It has been further observed that the results of such a common treatment are frequently appearing after the lapse of seventeen years. Predominant symptoms of this disease are great debility and paralysis. The disturbances of motion generally begin in the lower extremities, and

at times only one leg is affected at first, later the other leg also becomes paralyzed. As the disease progresses walking becomes more uncertain, more difficult. The foot is put down violently with a peculiar jerk, all the weight being thrown on the heel; the legs are widely separated when attempting to walk. The sensation when walking, is as if he walked on some soft thick carpets, or as if he had cushions under the soles of the feet. When closing the eyes, and in the dark, walking is impossible; the patient does not know where he puts his feet. The expulsion of the fæces and urine becomes more difficult. There is seldom much acute pain experienced in the spine; the sensation of numbness and formication predominates. At times the patient complains of a sensation of constriction around the abdomen. The sensitiveness of the skin is continually decreasing till, finally, all sensitiveness to the touch or to any painful excitations, ceases.

The pathology of this disease, comprising its anatomical description, its ætiology and symptomatology, are admirably given to us by the allopathic school (Virchow, Turk, Romberg, Hasse, etc.), and I have confined myself to state in this short paper only the most prominent characteristic symptoms of it. The great aim of medical science is the cure of the sick, but the therapeutics have scarcely held pace with the increasing ability to diagnosticate disease; while even in our school, which has done so much for therapeutics, a wide field for development and research remains yet open. The aim of these

lines is not only to state characteristic indications for certain remedies applicable to the disease under consideration, but also to demonstrate the manner in which previously obtained pathological knowledge will aid us in our search for curative agents, and that this mode of research is in full harmony with our law of cure, and the teachings of our great Master. The allopathic school is honest enough to acknowledge their utter inability to cope with this disease, and having no law of cure, no reliable materia medica, obtained by provings of drugs on the healthy organism (all other so-called speculative statements of the effects of drugs based on the experiment on the sick have proved utterly worthless), they, as a school, possess no means, have no prospect to improve their utter hopeless aspect of the case, and do say so themselves. Vide Virchow's *Pathologie and Therapie*, vol. 1, part 1, paragraph 83, where he says:

"Guided by general experience it will be proper to agree with Romberg in advising the patients to abstain from long and expensive trials of treatment, and that the physician should confine himself to a symptomatic *relief* and careful nursing. This remark is especially applicable to the form termed primary degenerative atrophy. Against this process, the pathogenetic connections of which is little known throughout its slow development, *we know of no remedy*. The anti-phlogistic treatment and counter-irritants are of no avail, and appear to be rather injurious. A partial improvement, a suspension of the progressive development is said to have been observed after a methodical hydropathic treatment, after sea-bathing, by the use of mineral waters, especially those of Teplitz, Gasstein, Pfeffers, and Wildbad. Strychnin, Brucin,

*Secale Cornutum*, etc., as well as the much praised *Kali hydrojodicum* do no good and only cause injurious, spasmodic and painful nervous irritations."

Homœopathy\* teaches us how to cure this as well as other chronic diseases formerly thought to be incurable.

At an early stage of the disease we will find *Nux Vom.* often corresponding with the condition. *Nux Vom.* causes (vide Hahnemann's *Mat. Med. Pura*) volume I, symptom 548, painful, unsuccessful desire to urinate. 893. Shaking and instability of the legs. 896. Sensation of heaviness and fatigue in the legs (and arms) in the afternoon, especially when ascending. 897. The legs are not able to support (carry) the body; he must lie down. 898. Sensation of a sudden weakness of the legs. When constipation, paralysis of the bladder and sensation of formication in the spine are also present, *Nux Vom.* will be indicated.

*Sulphur.* Hahnemann's *Chronic Diseases*, volume V., symptom 1559. The soles of the feet become soft, sensitive and painful when walking. 1476. Great heaviness in the legs when walking, as if they

\* In the October No. (1869) of the *British Journal*, a learned colleague holds up to us (page 550) the newly discovered existence of *three* species of Homœopathy. We only know one kind of Homœopathy, progressively following out the eternal truth first taught by Hahnemann, following his developments, appropriating to itself and aided by all new discoveries in the collateral sciences striding forward. We will be able to perpetuate this school and the well-intentioned compromisers, the Quixotic knights in search of specifics for specific diseases, the halfway men, the logicians who pretend to be able to take out of Hahnemann's developing teaching, just what suits them, will be left outside of this school of true Homœopathy, they will be like the camp followers, left behind on the onward march,—to repent.

were paralyzed. 1479. Weakness in the legs, so that she can scarcely walk, and sensation as if there were no marrow in the bones. Sulphur will often follow well after Nux Vom., and will be especially suitable if cough, oppression of breathing and afternoon fever set in.

*Phosphorus.* Hahnemann's Chronic Diseases volume V., symptom 1523. Periodically returning insupportable pains in the spine, preventing walking. 1524. Continuous stitches in the spinal marrow all day, at various hours. 1469. Heaviness and sensation of fatigue, especially when ascending steps. 1494. Drawing pain from the knees extending to the feet. 1529. The feet feel as if they were paralyzed. 1533. Sensation of heaviness of the feet. 1544. Pains in the soles of the feet, as if she had walked too far. 1545. Pains in the soles of the feet when walking; they are red. The feet feel weak and as if they were asleep, with great restlessness. Phosph. has been administered to advantage when the pain in the back was a burning pain, great sexual irritation, frequent involuntary seminal discharges, great irritability and nervousness.

*Nux Moshata.* The lower extremities are painful and languid, as if after a long journey, with great uneasiness in the limbs, and pain in the dorsum of the feet, as if a hard body had fallen on them. Pain near the lumbar vertebræ, as from blows with a fist. Pain in the back, or small of the back, as if broken and bruised. Sensation of great weakness in the small of the back and knees. Pain in the

back when riding in a carriage. This last symptom may frequently call our attention to this remedy, but if the pain in the back is always worse while *sitting*, then our attention will be called to Zincum Met., Cobaltum Met. and Sepia.

*Aluminium Metallicum.* The profession is indebted to our late colleague Dr. V. Bœnninghausen for the finding of this valuable remedy for this disease. Dr. B. says in the *Allgemein Hom. Zeit.*, volume 54, No. 12 (May, 1857), in a paper on Aluminium Met. "My attention was called to the possibility that Aluminium Met. might become a curative remedy in *Tabes Dorsalis vera* (and in fact one case has already recovered under its action), from comparing the symptoms of Alumina where we find *vide* Hahnemann's chronic diseases. Symp. 981. Pain in the soles of the feet, as if they were swollen and too soft. 821. Pain in the back and small of the back, as if bruised. 831. Pain in the back, as if a hot iron were thrust through the lower vertebræ. 924. Heaviness of the limbs, she can scarcely lift them. 974. Numbness of the heels when stepping on them. 1002. Sensation of soreness in the loins, above the hips, in the muscles of the calves, while walking. 1012. Slow, staggering gait, as after a long sickness."

This combination of symptoms called B.'s attention to the similarity existing between them and the symptoms of which those complain suffering from *Tabes Dorsalis*; and these early disciples of the great master, following him implicitly, have done

much to develop the school, and have given us much good advice, both in facts appertaining to the cure of the sick, and in the manner in which we may safely go forward and assist the further developments of the healing art.

*Æsculus Hippocastanum.* Of this remedy we know but little, the provings are not exhaustive and have been made with too large doses; but we do know that whole flocks of sheep having been fed during the winter on horse chestnuts, have been afflicted with *Tabes Dorsalis*, and many have died of it. The constriction in the rectum, which has been observed by the provers of *Æsculus*, is often present in this disease. The lameness in the back as well as the severe aching in the knees, with aching in the lumbar and sacral region, are fully stated by the provers. In several cases where there was also present a great soreness of the spine, an almost complete paralysis of the lower limbs, *Æsculus Hippocastanum* has been of great service. Like all other remedies I have only administered one dose of the 200<sup>th</sup> potency and have not repeated even that dose till its effects were exhausted.

We hope that these few remarks, which by no means exhaust the subject, may induce some of our colleagues to give their own experience in the treatment of this dreaded disease, and give us some additional indications for the use of these, or other remedies.

## LEUCORRHŒA.\*

BY ROLLIN R. GREGG, M. D.

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Secretary Central New York Homœopathic Society.

DEAR DOCTOR: In response to your urgent solicitation, I send you, for your society, the following paper upon the important subject which is to be up for discussion at your session next month.

All physicians, I believe, having the welfare of their patients at heart, must have experienced something of the perplexities incident to the proper and successful treatment of leucorrhœa. I would myself class this disease as next in importance to chronic nasal catarrh, and next to this in the difficulties of treatment and the obstinacy of cure. And as I think these difficulties and this obstinacy arise, in part, at least, from the want of a fuller knowledge of the pathology of this malady, and of its relations to other diseases, and diseased conditions; no less than from the little knowledge we yet have as to how our treatment may affect all those relations, I proceed upon these bases in my discussion of the disease under consideration. If it shall be thought that I do not give sufficient attention here to the therapeutics of leucorrhœa, your members will please bear in mind that there is some advantage in being able to determine, if we can, how much and just what there is to be done in a given case, together with all the bearings of what we do; and *what we must not do*, in prescribing for that case, as we shall see further on.

First, then, we will consider the pathology of leucorrhœa. Not to go into confusing details, I will only mention the more common points, in this, with which all are familiar. Leucorrhœa, as all must know, is the result of, or arises from, acute

\* This is the paper we promised to publish a year ago in these pages, but could never before find space for it. It will be seen by the date given above, that it was written before we commenced the publication of our *Quarterly*, and repetitions will be found upon a few points hitherto presented and discussed in these pages, but this must be excused, as we have been unable to get time to change the article to the changed circumstances; besides, had we done so, it would not be the paper we presented for their consideration.