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THE DISEASES OF
THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

*A TEXT-BOOK
FOR PHYSICIANS AND STUDENTS*

BY

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PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF Breslau

SECOND AMERICAN EDITION

TRANSLATED AND REVISED FROM THE SECOND GERMAN EDITION
WITH NUMEROUS ADDITIONS, BY

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WITH ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS



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TO
WILHELM ERB
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
AS A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE AND ESTEEM
BY THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION
TO THE SECOND GERMAN EDITION.

ON the first appearance of this work some fears regarding its success were entertained not only by the author, but by some of his colleagues and friends. The favorable reception accorded to the first edition has proved such fears to be groundless. While the interest shown by German physicians has rendered it necessary to issue a second edition within a comparatively short time, the translations into English, French, and Italian, which all came out in the same year, have proved that members of the profession in foreign lands have found much in the work that has appeared to them attractive and worth reading.

The great kindness of a number of prominent American neurologists who have sent me reprints of their articles has made it possible for me to incorporate in the present edition several very interesting woodcuts which have been borrowed from these authors. I take this opportunity of expressing my sincere thanks to my colleagues abroad for these favors.

The many, sometimes very essential, changes in the text, as well as in the arrangement of the subject-matter, will show my critics how readily their hints have been received. I can only express a hope that the work in its new form may meet with the same approval which it has, perhaps undeservedly, received on its first appearance.

DR. LUDWIG HIRT.

BRESLAU.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE pleasure of introducing to the profession of this country a translation of a standard work is enhanced by the opportunity it affords of acknowledging how great is our debt to those—translators and publishers—who have made current in English the works of Trousseau, Niemeyer, Virchow, Cohnheim, and others. All recognize the necessity of teachers knowing the classical works in all languages, but of equal importance is it that the practitioners in all countries should have easy access by means of translations to the thoughts and experience, the ways and methods, of the masters of our art the world over. No better corrective exists to the vice of Philistinism—that narrow conceit of the special prominence of medicine in any one country—than a wide diffusion in all of the best works of each.

Early in 1890 my attention was called by Dr. Weir Mitchell to the first part of Prof. Hirt's *Handbuch der Nervenkrankheiten*, which he characterized as an exceptionally well arranged and thorough work on diseases of the nervous system. The completed work seemed in many respects so admirable a text-book that I wrote to Prof. Hirt and asked his permission to have it translated.

The arrangement of the subjects to which the author refers in the preface, though somewhat novel, is justifiable and entirely satisfactory; and it is a distinct advance in classification to place *tabes dorsalis* and *dementia paralytica* among the diseases of the general nervous system, instead of in the sections on diseases of the cord and diseases of the brain respectively.

The fact which makes the work of value to the teacher, the student, and the practitioner is the graphic description of the anatomy and symptomatology of the different diseases. Where all is so good it is invidious to select, but the chapter on *tabes*

is an illustration of our author's lucid and, at the same time, thorough treatment of his subject. The various affections are treated of also from an advanced modern standpoint; conflicting theories and passing observations are submitted to a wise criticism through which the author's own large and varied experience is very apparent.

An attractive aspect of the work is the excellent character of the illustrations, which, as they are in great part original, will be a pleasing relief to the hackneyed cuts which have for so long passed from book to book in English works.

Pursuing the *via media* in the important question of treatment, neither displaying the pessimism which too many maladies of the nervous system would seem to justify, nor an optimism so flagrant as to savor of quackery, Prof. Hirt is a safe guide in the highways and byways of neurotherapeutics.

And, lastly, I think the author has been fairly handled by his translators, who, bearing in mind the admonition of Dryden, "not to lackey by the side of his author, but to mount up behind him," have given a clear and interesting rendering of the original.

WILLIAM OSLER.

BALTIMORE.

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