

over the whole of Germany and the neighboring countries to the northwest, whose people were all prepared for its reception by the nervous apprehension which had been excited by the "Black Death," the effects of which had not yet completely subsided. Most of my information in regard to this remarkable malady was secured from Hecker's very interesting work on the "Epidemics of the Middle Ages."

As early as the year 1374, gatherings of men and women, who had come from Germany, were seen at Aix-la-Chapelle, who, united by one common delusion, exhibited to the public both in the streets and in the churches the following remarkable spectacle: They formed circles, hand in hand, and appearing to have lost control over their senses, continued dancing regardless of the bystanders, for hours together, in wild delirium, until at length they fell to the ground in a state of exhaustion. They then complained of extreme oppression and groaned as if in the agonies of death until they were swathed in cloths bound tightly around their waists, upon which they again recovered and remained free from complaint until the next attack. This practice of swathing was resorted to on account of the abdominal distension, which followed these spasmodic attacks, but the bystanders frequently relieved patients by more vigorous measures—such as thumping and trampling upon the individuals' abdomens. While dancing, the victims never saw or heard, being insensible to external