

denly ceased, and the heel was brought with considerable force against the nates. The whole phenomenon very much resembled the sudden closure of a pen-knife after the resistance of the back-spring has been overcome. The limb was now spasmodically fixed in the position of extreme flexion. The spasm could be at once relaxed by exerting pressure upon the crural nerve. If this were not done, and the patient were directed to extend the leg, he was able to do so slowly and with great exertion until it had slightly passed the right angle, when it was suddenly and violently brought into the position of extension.

The tendon-reflexes were greatly increased; sensation was diminished; electric contractility showed no qualitative abnormality, but was somewhat diminished in degree.

Until the middle of June the disease continued to progress; the lower limbs became paralyzed. Attacks of spasm and tremour occurred several times daily; occasionally they were spontaneous, but generally they were due to the legs being touched, or too cold; sometimes also to psychic impressions. The patient showed marked emotional disturbance, being sometimes very cheerful and happy, and at others melancholy, despairing, and excited. While in the latter condition, he attempted to divide his radial artery with a piece of broken glass, and twice stealthily obtained half a litre of brandy, which he drank neat. During the drunkenness which followed, he had the most violent spasmodic attacks.

In July the symptoms somewhat abated, and the patient could walk a little with two sticks.

In the autumn, the attacks again became more violent; occasionally slight muscular tremour was observed in the arms, and once the speech was affected during an attack. At the beginning of the winter the patient was again confined to bed; the attacks were accompanied by burning pains in the knees, and formication in the legs. In January, 1878, he was again up for a time, but became worse towards the end of the month, and after lying in bed again for some weeks, slight atrophy of the muscles of the legs was noticed. During March and April the patient was usually able to get up, and only had occasional attacks; in the beginning of

May he had his last attack; after that he daily improved; at the end of the month he could walk well with a stick, and only complained of some stiffness in his knees, and of being easily fatigued. On June 24th he was discharged completely cured, the only symptom remaining being some increase in the patella tendon-reflex.

Two days after his discharge he attempted suicide by drinking a solution containing morphia and ergotin. After the use of the stomach-pump he recovered, but had an attack of acute gastritis. He also had delirium tremens for eight days, brought on by excessive drinking after his discharge. He has since remained quite well.

The treatment of the case was chiefly symptomatic, and directed to diminish the increased reflex irritability. Bromide of potassium, extract of belladonna, warm baths, and galvanization over the spinal column, had absolutely no effect. The administration of morphia appeared to increase the number and intensity of the attacks. When the spasmodic attacks were at their worst, 30 to 60 grains of chloral, administered *per rectum*, proved useful.

From the middle of April the patient took chloride of gold and sodium, in doses of about one-third gr. (!) three times daily. Altogether, before his discharge, he had taken nearly 90 grains of the drug. The palliative effect of chloral seems to be established, and the fact of recovery having taken place during the administration of the double chloride of gold and sodium would justify a prolonged trial of this drug in future cases.

As to the pathological anatomy of the disease, it is clear that in this case there could have been no severe anatomical lesion in the nervous system, certainly no definite sclerosis in the lateral columns of the cord. The disease in the present case was developed in a man with an abnormal nervous constitution.

The prognosis does not seem to depend at all upon the mode of commencement of the disease, for in Westphal's case of recovery the affection commenced most gradually, while, in the present case, the essential symptoms of the disease were unmistakably developed within seven days of the severe wettings and cold.