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SOME FACTS AND FANCIES CONCERNING INFLUENZA.

By G. D. TURNBELL, M. D., Musquodoboit.

Read before Nova Scotia Medical Society,
July, 1894.

Among the acute infectious diseases Influenza or La Grippe claims a prominent place. Its history extends back into the remotest periods of which any records of epidemic diseases exist: while as to distribution, probably no country on the globe can claim total exemption. That its early history is shrouded in uncertainty we are well aware: still from the meagre descriptions of maladies which occurred as epidemics we have every reason to suppose that to the ancients it was not entirely unknown.

Probably the earliest recorded outbreak of what we presume was La

Grippe occurred in 415 B. C., where according to the record of Siculus, nearly the whole Athenian army was prostrated by a coughing sickness. Then as age after age passed away, vague descriptions of a disease characterized by cough and fever have been from time to time recorded. In 827 A. D. a cough affection spread over Europe followed some fifty years later by a similar epidemic, which, starting in Italy is said to have spread rapidly over the neighboring European States. Again a coughing illness affected the people of France and Germany in 976, while the whole of Europe suffered from a similar complaint in 1173.

Parkes describes traditions of six epidemics resembling our Grippe, during the fourteenth, and seven during the fifteenth centuries. In one of the latter, commerce was partially paralyzed, due to its severity and high mortality.

It is not however till the sixteenth century that records become very re-