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## ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

### FILARIAE AND FILARIASIS.\*

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The subject of filariæ and filariasis is of great interest, as well as of importance to a practitioner in the tropics. In the more temperate lands it is perhaps of only passing interest as cases are rarely seen, and then only in those who have lived for some years in an endemic area.

Although of so frequent occurrence in the tropics, our knowledge of the human filariæ is still rather fragmentary, and much work still remains to be done. With the exception of one species, *F. nocturna*, the pathological significance of those inhabiting the blood and lymph channels is quite unknown.

Under the term *Filaria sanguinis hominis* are included three, possibly four or five, species of nematode worms.

1. *Filaria Bancrofti*—the embryos of which are known as *Filaria nocturna*.

2. *Filaria perstans*.

3. *Filaria Ozzardi* (provisional) Manson.

Others which have been described are known only in the adult or embryo condition. Their life history in the human being still remains to be worked out. These include *F. diurna* and *F. Demarquain*.

*Filaria Bancrofti* has a very wide distribution, being found in almost all tropical countries. In America it is found as far north as Charleston. It is found in Southern Europe, Tropical Africa, India, China and Australia.

The embryo form, *filaria nocturna*, was discovered by Demarquay at Paris in 1863, in the fluid from a case of chylous dropsy of the tunica vaginalis. Later it was found in chylous urine by Wucherer at Bahia in 1866. Lewis in India first described them in the circulating blood.

The parent filariæ are hair-like, opalescent nematodes, about three to four inches long. They are usually found male and female together. Their habitat is some part of the lymph system, either in the distal lymphatics, a lymphatic varix, or the larger vessels between the glands. If

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