

Medicine

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Brill's Disease. (*Med. Rec.*) (*Abst. Interstate Med. Jour.*)

To Dr. N. E. Brill, of New York, belongs the great credit of having isolated from the mass of confusing fevers seen in a large general hospital, a group with uniform and definite findings. This group had been studied by Brill for many years before he felt justified in describing the disease as an undoubted clinical entity; and, in the literature which followed the publication of his articles, the disease became known by his name. As there still seems to be some discussion as to the nature of the malady, we shall keep the name, "Brill's disease."

The definition of the disease is quoted verbatim from Brill's report: "An acute infectious disease of unknown origin and unknown pathology, characterized by a short incubation period (four to five days), a period of continuous fever, accompanied by intense headache, apathy and prostration, a profuse and extensive erythematous maculo-papular eruption, all of about two weeks' duration, whereupon the fever abruptly ceases either by crisis within a few hours, or by rapid lysis within three days, when all symptoms disappear."

Headache is intense, conjunctivæ are congested. About the sixth day a characteristic rash appears. At first found over the abdomen and back, it quickly spreads to the thorax and to the arms and thighs, and occasionally to the neck, forearms, hands, legs and feet. The rash is dull red, very slightly raised, does not disappear on pressure, does not appear in crops, is profuse and is distinctly erythematous. The pulse is not high—86 to 100 per minute, is soft, full, of low tension and often dicrotic. The temperature reaches its fastigium on the second or third day, remains constantly high till just before the crisis, when a precritical rise may occur. Constipation is a marked feature of the disease. The spleen is frequently, but not always, enlarged. Associated with intense headache are extreme apathy and a facial expression of great pain. On the twelfth to the fourteenth day the symptoms disappear, the temperature drops, and the patient feels perfectly well.