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HAY FEVER: ETIOLOGY AND SPECIFIC TREATMENT.

A Resumé of the work of Dr. Dunbar, Director of the State Hygienic Institute at
Hamburg.

By V. E. HENDERSON, M.A., M.B., TOR.

Since the London physician, John Bostock, in 1819 drew attention to the symptom-complex which he carefully described as a separate disease under the name of "summer catarrh—catarrhus aestivus," and attributed its cause to the heat of summer, the etiology of this affection has been more or less in doubt. Dr. Dunbar, a German professor, seems, however, to have at least settled this much disputed question.

Elliotson, in 1831, was the first to suggest pollen of plants as the cause, but in 1870, Hefmholz, a careful observer cast very strong doubts upon the theory. In 1873 Blackeley carried out a very careful series of experiments to show that pollen was the cause. He collected the pollen of many plants and tested them by having hay fever patients snuff them into the nose, or by placing them in the conjunctival sac, and in this way obtained symptoms of hay fever. Further he counted the number of pollen grains falling per square centimetre on a glass plate covered with a sticky film and showed that when an appreciable number of pollen grains could in this way be proved to be in the air, patients began to be affected and that the maximum fall of pollen grains coincided with the time of maximal severity of the disease. He showed, too, that pollen fell in the centres of large cities and at sea, and was wind carried for many miles. Knowing this it is strange that he did not take more pains to