

SOME MISTAKES IN DIAGNOSIS OF VASCULAR LESIONS.

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I feel that I must preface my paper with a double apology to this Association: In the first place, because the title of the paper is somewhat misleading; it was intended originally to cover more ground than it does, and to include errors of diagnosis of several varieties of vascular lesions, such as thrombosis and hemorrhage of the cerebral vessels, also of angina pectoris and rupture of the heart, but in gathering the material together I became more impressed that it would be of greater value to limit the field and to describe as accurately as possible the clinical picture of the cases mentioned. It is for this detailed account which I must also beg your pardon, but in cases which have been wrongly diagnosed, in thinking over them we must consider everything which the physical examination revealed and attempt to put our finger on the point where we went astray.

I think, however, I need offer no apology for bringing cases of mistakes in diagnosis before your notice, for I am more and more convinced that by our mistakes we learn more than by our successes. Our mistakes ought to teach us humility, and we should, the longer we practice, be more imbued with the milk of human kindness, especially towards our fellow practitioners who may have fallen over a case under their care. I always feel when I meet a man who does not remember many mistakes that he has made in his professional work, that his field has been an extremely limited one, and that his mental vision is defective, myopic, so to speak.

The cases that I shall speak of are three in number, and to them I may add a fourth, if time permits. In each of the first three cases the tension was at the same site, in each it was of the same nature, and in each case it coursed under a different clinical picture. I speak of aneurysm of the third part of the arch of the aorta and upper part of the descending thoracic aorta.

Case 1. Female, age 56, was admitted to the woman's surgical ward of the Montreal General Hospital, on May 26th, 1904, complaining of an abscess in the back and burns about the body from the application of hot water bottles.

The history of the present illness is as follows: In December, 1903, an abscess formed at the inner side of the inferior