

Most important in regard to its etiology is the comparative recent demonstration of its infectious nature. Gowers, writing in 1886, does not appear to even suspect the fact. Strümpel in Germany, and Pierre Marie in France, suggest the possibility of its infectious origin. Swedish observers, Medin, Rissler and Wickham must receive credit more than others in establishing its infectivity. Caverly also of America has done much to compel general acceptance of the infectious nature of the disease. It is true that the micro-organism to which the disease is due has not yet been isolated, although several European observers have made lumbar puncture in the course of the disease, and have claimed to have demonstrated a special meningococcus as an infective agent. Their findings, however, have been unfavorably criticised, and do not receive general acceptance.

The ground upon which rests the acceptance of its infectivity may be briefly stated:

1. Its long recognized seasonal occurrence. It was observed that in the great New York epidemic of 1907 by far the greater number of cases were seen in July, August and September. In October there was a marked subsidence of the disease. In this epidemic it was said that more cases of anterior poliomyelitis were admitted to some of the New York hospitals in three months than had been admitted in fifteen years previously.

2. Its marked occurrence in epidemics in recent years, notably the valley of the Ottawa about three years ago, in Norway in 1906, and in New York and New Jersey in 1907. The writer also has been informed of less extensive epidemics which occurred in Nova Scotia and in Alberta.

3. The occurrence of several cases in the same household. In the Ottawa valley epidemic there were several instances of three children in the same house being affected. Like facts were noted in the other epidemics.

4. Wickham in Sweden traced the disease clearly from one hamlet to another, and showed that persons who themselves escaped were the intermediaries through whom the infection was conveyed. There seems little doubt that the disease is mildly infectious. No steps, however, have been taken to isolate the patients, nor has the epidemic spread in any of the larger schools or other institutions.

#### PATHOLOGY.

The disease is commonly described as an acute anterior poliomyelitis. It is certain, however, that the inflammatory process is by no means confined to the cells of the anterior gray matter of the cord. Its clinical variations and the extent of the morbid process show that it may involve the whole of the gray