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MULTIPLE NEURITIS.

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This paper is based entirely on a series of 52 cases in the indoor and outdoor departments of the Montreal General Hospital during the past twelve years.

Definition.—Multiple Neuritis may be defined as a general inflammation of the spinal nerves, affecting particularly those going to the limbs, and occasionally those going to the head and trunk. It is associated with muscular paresis or paralysis, sensory disturbances, subjective and objective, trophic changes, and diminution of reflexes.

Pathology.—The pathological findings indicate a more or less diffuse congestion or inflammation, which may be parenchymatous, interstitial, or more usually parenchymatous and interstitial, not only of the axone but of the nutritive centre as well, although the latter is hard to demonstrate. In other words there is inflammation of the lower sensory and motor neurones.

Etiology.—Relatively three times as frequent in men as in women, it is distinctly a disease of adult life, midway between adolescence and old age, the onset with men being usually ten years later than women. Alcohol is perhaps the most frequent individual cause accounting for 40 per cent., one-third of whom are women. Next in frequency lead poisoning with 13 per cent., followed by diphtheria with 11.5 per cent. Typhoid and influenza each accounted for two cases, diabetes for one. There was one due to some toxic material taken in a glass of whiskey, which had made several other partakers vomit immediately afterwards. Some of the remainder might possibly be accounted for by great exposure, very hard work, and a few more possibly to alcohol also. Occupation except in those working in lead may have been a factor only in so far that the great majority of the male victims followed laborious trades. In previous illness, rheumatism was the most common element, being