

unreasonable to suppose that the same exciting cause which gave rise to the one class of cases operated materially in the production of the other.

The main points of interest and importance connected with the history of this epidemic are as follows;—

1. The sudden and unaccountable origin of the disease.
2. Its rapid diffusion over the whole town, immediately following its induction.
3. Its introduction into many families in spite of all the appropriate preventive measures employed.
4. The remarkable relation observed between the evident changes in the atmospheric constitution and the variable condition of the disease in respect both to its limitation or extension and to the typical form it assumed.

5. The occasional prevalence of severe inflammatory affections of the throat in adults during the scarlatinal epidemic among the children.

And 6. The limited sphere of the epidemic influence which acted solely within the boundaries of this particular district, although constant intercommunication existed with the several villages and towns surrounding it.

The summary of evidence given regarding this epidemic serves to show pretty clearly the operation of atmospheric agency in the diffusion, if not the production of scarlet fever, and the exercise of its influence on the variable progress as well as the different forms of the disease.

The histories of many epidemics of scarlet fever have led some to entertain the belief that it originally sprang from a malaria or specific miasm, generated from local or accidental circumstances in the atmosphere itself. It cannot be denied that the atmosphere in certain localities may become contaminated with the exhalations proceeding from vegetable or animal matter in a state of decomposition or decay, and thus prove a source of disease. The origin of ague, or intermittent fever in malaria, as its exciting cause, is a manifest instance of this. But there is no proof whatever of scarlet fever, or any other exanthema, originating or diffusing itself in this way. On the other hand, when we analyze the respective histories of various disorders (with which scarlet fever is in this respect associated), the symptoms in each being specifically the same at all times, it seems reasonable to attribute their origin to specific exciting causes, which are primarily generated in the atmosphere at the period of their occurrence, and rapidly diffused through its medium. It is upon this supposition alone that we can at present with any amount of satisfaction account for the epidemic occurrence of many diseases, such, for instance, as catarrhs, epidemics, whooping cough, and occasionally small-pox and measles.