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TRAUMATIC TETANUS AND ITS
TREATMENT.

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Tetanus is, without doubt, one of the most fatal diseases known, and one which is very properly a dread to the surgeon; but, although it is so very fatal, we have fortunately an offset in the fact that it is not very common, hundreds of surgical cases progressing to a cure without so much as even a symptom of tetanus showing itself. In a practice of over thirty years, the last fifteen of which have been in a great measure devoted to surgery, I have not come in contact with more than five cases of this terrible disease. It is not, therefore, that I can speak from an extended experience, or that I can advance an accumulation of new facts respecting tetanus, that I have attempted this paper; but it is because, having tried many remedies in the cases which have come under my care, and watched the effects of the means used very closely, that I feel that I am in a position to say which I have found most useful, and which I would use again and recommend to others in the present state of our knowledge regarding this disease, and its treatment.

We shall therefore proceed *secundum artem*, with the consideration of tetanus, and leave any empirical methods of treatment to be noticed at the close of this paper.

Tetanus is briefly defined to be a disease in which there are tonic contractions of the voluntary muscles, irregular in time and varied in intensity, subject to exacerbation and remissions, and in the early stages to complete intermissions. Very often, early in the disease, the jaws become fixed by contraction of their muscles, and the condition of trismus is present; or the contractions seize upon the back muscles, producing opisthotonos; or the anterior muscles of the neck and trunk become affected, and emprosthotonos results; or finally the muscles of either side may contract, causing pleurosthotonos. The frequency of these different conditions arises in the order in which they are named.

There is always present more or less contraction of muscles during the course of tetanus; but there are paroxysms, in which the spasms increase, the pains become more severe, the thoracic and abdominal viscera more interfered with, and the body curvature greater, which are marked characteristics of this disease.

Systematic writers have divided tetanus into two kinds, viz., spontaneous or idiopathic, and traumatic. The first kind is said to be more common in tropical climates and amongst the dark races than among whites, and in temperate climates. Its cause is obscure. Constipation, with loaded bowels, exposure to wet and cold when the body is heated, exhaustion from long fatigue or watching, and several other causes, are given to account for it, such as unhealthy surroundings, and latterly, bacteria, etc. There is a possibility that the food and water in hot