

Health Department.

What is Paralysis.

So many persons die from what is called a paralytic stroke, or apoplexy almost interchangeably, that not a little fear has been awakened, and much inquiry is made for an explanation of the causes of what appears to be a most deadly disease. Using the language of an intelligent observer we shall endeavor to give some points that are of practical value.

A carpenter or other mechanic, whose business requires him to wield a hammer, finds some morning that he is unable to raise his hammer again, or perhaps while at work the man suddenly feels his arm become numb and weak; it falls to his side, and he is no longer able to work. The physician to whom the man applies says it is "a brachial monoplegia from muscle tire," which means simply that the man has overwrought his hammer arm and it needs rest. To these cases the very appropriate name of "artisan's palsy" is given. Again, a poor-blooded, nervously constructed person, most often a woman, meets with a great shock or has to endure an unusual mental or physical effort, and perhaps without warning loses the use of some part of the body, often of the vocal apparatus, and is unable to speak above a whisper. The doctor calls it "hysterical paral. sis," or "hysterical aphonia," loss of voice. Now just how this comes about, we fancy it would puzzle the most learned specialist to say. Concerning this condition, however, as well as the one before mentioned, this much is known, viz., that by appropriate treatment they recover, which is very good evidence that no part of the nervous apparatus is broken. The faith cures reported from time to time are probably, for the most part, cases of this kind.

It sometimes happens that an intoxicated person will fall asleep with the head resting upon the arm or with the arm hanging over a chair back. When he wakes the arm is numb and is paralyzed—another case of "brachial monoplegia."

Pressure upon the trunks of the nerves which supply the disabled member has affected those nerves so that they are unable to perform their usual duty. The nerves which go out from the brain spinal cord to the extremities are quite comparable to the wires which are stretched from place to place for electric communications, and pressure upon the one section of those nerves produces results very like those which follow an interference with the electric wire. The case just given illustrates very well a large number of cases of palsy from pressure, from pressure upon the brain or spinal cord, or the nerves which have their exit therefrom, will produce a palsy whose extent will depend upon the extent of the pressure, and whose duration will depend upon the chances for removing pressure. Pressure upon the nerves which supply one side of the face produces a very characteristic paralysis, and one that causes very many laughable mistakes on the part of tyros and non-professional people by their attempt to detect the affected side. Pressure upon the brain or spinal cord may be due to the presence of tumors, to fractures of the skull, or to the upper bones of which the backbone is formed, and to blood clots within the skull or spinal canal. Patients who recover from diphtheria, scarlet fever, and some other acute sicknesses, are frequently paralyzed in some part. These cases generally recover by proper treatment, and it is quite probable that many cases would recover spontaneously if left alone.

People who work in lead are liable to a peculiar form of paralysis, which is first seen, as a rule, in the muscles of the forearm, on account of which the patient is unable to extend the hand upon the arm. At times the whole muscular system is involved. Change of occupation and the use of remedies which will assist the elimination of the mineral from the system is the proper course for such patients. Analogous forms of paralysis are caused by arsenic and quicksilver, probably by their action upon the nerve structure of the spinal cord. Woorara, the Indian arrow-poison, will also produce paralysis if introduced into the system in sufficient quantities. The paralyzing effect of large doses of alcohol are well known.

Certain conditions of the circulatory apparatus predispose to extensive and often incurable paralysis. Here it is that most cases of apoplexy occur. The arteries are

elastic tubes. By age, hard work, care and the prolonged use of alcoholic drinks, these tubes lose their elasticity and become brittle. By some event which excites the flow of an unusual quantity of blood to the brain one of these now inelastic tubes is broken, the poured-out blood settles in the ventricles and there form clots whose presence causes speedy paralysis.

Owing to certain systematic conditions fibrin, a substance normally suspended in the blood, sometimes lodges upon the flood-gates or valves of the heart. Presently a part of this matter is dislodged and washed away into the blood; perchance it reaches an artery in the brain which will not permit it to pass. Then we have an "embolism" which cuts off the blood supply from a part of the brain, one of the immediate symptoms of which is palsy of the part of the body which receives its nerve supply from that portion of the brain. These paralyzes are usually extensive, and are not readily distinguishable from those just mentioned.

Finally, change in the structure of the brain or spinal cord produce paralysis, more or less localized varying in extent with the extent of nerve structure involved. Such paralyzes are especially obstinate in those of advanced years, and usually produce disability in the legs.

The study of this subject has led to the determination of certain brain centres as possessing special muscular control, so that many kinds of paralysis can be traced to disease or loss of function in definite parts of the encephalon.

An Extended Experience.

Writes a well-known chemist, permits us to say that Putnam's Painless Corn Extractor never fails. It makes so sore spots in the flesh, and consequently is painless. Don't you forget to get Putnam's Corn Extractor, now for sale by medicine dealers everywhere.



SOAP-BUBBLES!

BY JOHN INGLE, TORONTO.

What a happy holiday,
Brother Jack and Will at play;
Blowing bubbles light as air,
Chasing them o'er stool and chair!
As they blow, each ruddy cheek,
Happiness and joy bespeak;
Each the other tries to chaff—
Hard to blow when forced to laugh!

Little "pussy" likes the fun,
Swift across the floor to run,
When they break across her eyes,
Gets "her back up" in surprise!
Tasting soap in mouth and nose,
Sniffing to a corner goes;
Till another tempts her out
Once again to run about!

Mamma hears the noisy din,
Slyly at the door peeps in;
But she loves to see them play,
Happy in their joy away!
Swift a thought across her mind
Utterance finds in words so kind:
Ah! my boys, a moral see
From the bubbles light and free:

Empty bubbles, light as air,
For a moment bright and fair;
Some ascend like stars to heaven,
Some to swift destruction driven.
If thou would'st escape each snare,
Guard thy life with constant prayer;
God will wait thee to the skies,
Float thee into Paradise!

Married Life.

I think it is as much the husband's duty to make home what it ought to be as the wife's. Are not their shoulders as broad as ours? We all have our duty to perform. I think sometimes if husbands thought more about making their homes happy, instead of the wives having it all to do, some would be different from what they are now. Woman's work sometimes is the same week in and week out; then in it to be wondered at that she does not always have a smile on her face, when she stays at home month after month? Why doesn't her husband say, I must go up town, and it will do you good to get out; we will all go and take a sleigh ride? I imagine he says to himself it will take fifteen or twenty minutes to get the horse and wagon ready! and it is so much trouble to take my wife and children, they are used to staying at home, and it's not necessary for them to go, I'll go afoot.

How Engines are Killed.

"What stuff is this about killing engines? They're not alive. Mr. Dozenberry, what do you mean by killing them?"
"Simply depriving them of fire and water, my dear."
"Oh! Then you could be killed very easily."
"How, my love?"
"By simply depriving you of whisky and water—especially whisky."

Important.

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