

of the symptom numbness. This girl's case reminds me of a class of cases of which I see many, and which have come to form for me a distinct clinical group, a neurosis.

A man (it is nearly always a man) overworked, or a student who has used his mind too steadily at the age of growth, begins to have, and it is usually in the spring-time, tingling of the hands and feet. Very often I can find no sign of anæmia or of remarkably lowered health. All the functions are in order, and the appetite and digestion are sometimes faultless, but nearly always the heart is irregular, in spells, especially at night. Then, also, there is sure to be a sense of weight or pain at the occiput. The numbness is purely subjective. It at times invades the whole skin, and the face and scalp are favourite sites. It is here felt in islands, and with it there is often a feeling as if the facial skin were drawn tight. The numbness in these cases is sometimes intense, and the prickling feeling so great as to be painful. I have heard one sufferer remark that he had once been poisoned with aconite, and that the formication was like that which he then felt.

When this "all-asleep feeling" is most vivid, there is apt to be with it a noise in the head, a faint singing, which is not usually referred to the ears, but is felt in the occipital region, with considerable irregularity of the heart's action. In the graver cases, the finger tips often burn severely, and there are at times, in the hands and feet, islets of vasal dilatation. More or less insomnia and general nervousness completes my picture, or rather my sketch.

The numbness which this curious neurosis presents, although most alarming to the patient, is really free from danger; yet, also, it is an obstinate malady, unless, at the outset, it be broken up by some complete change in habits, occupation, and residence. After a while, it is not readily relieved, or rather cured, even by travel abroad, but is apt to return, again and again. The regular life of a well-ordered water cure, with mild use of spinal douches, or shower-baths, I have seen to be of great value, but I do not know of a single water cure in America which commands the full confidence of the profession, and, unluckily, travel in Europe is not at everyone's disposal.

I am puzzled in many of these cases by the fact that the patient seems to be in a good state of physical vigour, so that tonics appear not to be indicated, and are, indeed, as a rule, useless; at least, I should say, tonic drugs are valueless; but riding on horseback, exercise a-foot, the life of the camp in summer, utter revolution in the ordinary habits—these forms of tonic are serviceable when used with discretion, and one of them, the out-door camp life, is in the power of a vast number of our people.

I have said that you would find this group of symptoms obstinate and troublesome under any treatment, but you will also find that the cases you do not cure get well as time goes on, the changes in life or habits, or the natural revolutions which time effects in all of us, being often sufficient to cure.

There is another form of numbness which may, or may not, be free from dysæsthesia. I think I mentioned it, a few weeks ago, in connection with a case of general nervousness; at all events, I have been frequently consulted for it. It belongs only to the night, and cannot be confounded with that numbness, with loss of power, which comes of sleeping with the arm bent in some awkward position, or so situated that it is subjected to pressure on one of the main nerves. Of this we see, almost every week, good examples, but the form of trouble I now desire to recall to your attention is rare.

The last case seen at this clinic was a middle-aged woman, who was in rather feeble health. Now and then she awakened with numbness of the whole side, right or left. She was not clear as to whether it affected the face or not. After an hour or more, it gradually faded away. Sometimes it attacked a single limb, but this was rare. I used to fear this symptom, and suspect that it might presage a true hemiplegia, but I have now seen it so often in people, who suffered no evil consequences, that I have ceased to dread it. It usually yields to tonics, and is one of the many nameless neuroses which are seen by busy city physicians, and which require that general fortifying of the system which is the most effectual means of dealing with such disorders as grow out of the constant strain and struggle to which modern civilized life subjects those who are involved in its vortex.