

AN
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

ON
Typhus Fever
and
Inflammatory Diseases

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BY

John Bailey

OF

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^mTyphus. ^mFever
and
Inflammatory diseases

It is probable, that the disease now called Typhus existed from a remote period, and though it is alluded to by Sydenham, it appears not to have been distinctly characterized, as an infectious complaint of its own kind, untill about the beginning of the eighteenth Century. Since that time various works have appeared, and thrown considerable light upon this interesting dis temper yet it must be

Confessed, that the term
typhus is still used in
medical writings but
more particularly, in
medical speeches, far
too indiscriminately. in
stead of being solely
confined to the individual,
~~disease~~ disease in question,
it is made to include a
great variety of widely
different affections; especi-
ally when in their course,
the concomitant fever puts
on a low or putrid type,
as frequently happens in
the last stages of many
inflammatory diseases of the
external and internal, it

Strikes me, that to call any species of fever typhus, which was not the contagious essence capable of producing unequivocal typhus, it is equally incorrect in logic as in language. in this essay therefore the word typhus should be limited to the peculiar disease, which is allowed to originate from a specific contagion and which, doubtless has the power of producing an affection of its own nature, individuals exposed to its influence. the term typhus is too generally associated with the opinion, that the fever

which it properly designates, is
in all its stages a disease of
real debility, from my own
observations, during the last
few years, has convinced
me that the genuine Typhus,
so far from being of an
asthenic nature, is most certain-
ly an affection of excitement
or of congestion, in its first
stages, demanding at such
times the evacuant plan. ent-
ertaining these sentiments,
the professional reader will
perhaps excuse their brief
annunciation in entering on
the subject; as they may
contribute to warm ^{him} a gainst
the undue influence of some

early associations, and thus
incline him to give a fair
hearing to the facts and
arguments about to be adduced.
Typhus is unquestionably
most prevalent in cold
temperate climates. Though
it is universally known, that
the warmth of tropical re-
gions is most conjenial to the
generation of those effluvia,
which produce the remittant
yellow fever. I have known
practical men, who were confident
that the contagion of typhus
occasionally exist in sum-
mer hot countries; in the summer
of fifty four I seen some
well marked cases. They were

all more or less marked with
congestion of the ~~xx~~ brain from
the beginning, all though
there was no death's existid a
mongue that class of patients
in my practice; during that
year, there is sum viter
that says, in England,
typhus is evidently favoured
by a low temperature, being
most prevalent in the
cold seasons of winter and
Spring, generally a bating or
disappearing, as the heat
of summer advances, and
after prevailing to a consid-
-erable degree in cold wet
autumns I have noticed in a
number of persons exposed to

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contagion of typhus, some
though rarely, are attacked
as early as the first or second
days, and others even after the
thirteenth; but perhaps the most
common periods of sickness after
exposure are, from the end
of the first, to the middle
of the third week. It has
been affirmed, that it follows
at so great a distance as to the
ninth or tenth week after
exposure, but this seems very
questionable. If an author is
persuaded, that there must be
specific contagion as the
source of every fever
resembling typhus, he will
undoubtedly go far to

to seek for it. When ~~this~~
this disease once prevails, it gen-
erally assumes different ~~different~~
forms which may, however,
be arranged under three varieti-
es, the simple, the inflamma-
-tory, and the conjestive typhus.
These three varieties may first
be concisely characterized,
and afterwards seperately
examined, in order to ill-
-ustrate the rules of treatment
fitted for each. Strictly
Speaking, of Typhus can
only be denominatid
Simple in a relative sense.
It is in reality, the least
complicatid form of the
disease, in which the

febrile excitement, or hot
stage, is completely devel-
oped, and in which there
are no decided marks of
topical inflammation.

The inflammatory Typhus
has the same open char-
acters of general excitement
as the simple; but with
there are conjoined symp-
toms of some visceral
inflammation. The congestive
typhus is distinguished by the
hot stage not being at
all, or only imperfectly
developed, and by simulta-
neous signs of venous
congestion in one or more
of the internal organs

The simple typhus has a first stage of oppression, a second of excitement, and a third of colaps.

These successive, stages, but more particularly the two last, bear a pretty exact ratio to each other, as to degree, but not as to duration. The stage of oppression is usually marked by a variety of symptoms, among which the following are most conspicous. Paleness of the face; a peculiar look of dejection and weariness; some degree of or livor in the integuments

Surrounding the eyes;
 prostration of strength;
 diminution of mental ener-
 gy, and of sensibility;
 cold creeping sensations
 on the surface, or short
 hot and chilly fits alter-
 nately; loathing of food,
 nausea or vomiting, whitish
 or clammy tongue; sense
 of weight or anxiety about
 the precordia; occasional
 sighing and hurried breat-
 hing; aching, heaviness, or
 giddiness of the head;
 coldness of the back, and
 pain of the loins; a
 quick, low, struggling
 pulse, changeable as to

changeable, as to frequency,
and even irregular as to force.

These symptoms are accom-
-panied with feelings of
general uneasiness, somewhat
resembling those which
are experienced after a
journey, or any other great
fatigue. The Stage above
described sometimes comes
on, and reveals itself
with rapidity but gener-
-ally, it is more insidious
in its approaches, and
occupies, from first to last,
a period of two or three
days; when, after various
Irregular demonstrations &
of reaction, it is suc-

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— ceded by the second
stage, or that of excitement,
in which there is a com-
— plete development of the
fever. In subjects who
possess constitutional vigour,
the tone and velocity of
the circulation are now
preternaturally increased,
and the puls accordingly
becomes comparatively
expansive, thrilly, and
somewhat resisting; at
least it is widely different
from the variable, confin-
— ed, inelastic puls of the
former stage, and from
the uniform free, and
smoothly flowing one

of health. The cheeks are flushed with a dusky redness; the eyes heavy; and the lips parched. The respiration is quick; the skin all most invariably dry, the heat universally diffused, and steadily above the common point; the tongue foul; the thirst urgent; the uneasiness in the head increased; the sensorium in a highly susceptible state—every symptom, in fine, denoting an excess of excitement. This second stage of the simple typhus naturally holds a tolerably even tenor for some

of health. The cheeks are flushed with a dusky redness; the eyes heavy; and the lips parched. The respiration is quick; the skin all most invariably dry, the heat universally diffused, and steadily above the common point; the tongue foul; the thirst urgent; the uneasiness in the head increased; the sensorium in a highly susceptible state—every symptom, in fine, denoting an excess of excitement. This second stage of the simple typhus naturally holds a tolerably even tenor for some

time. As it proceeds,
 however, the brain, at
 intervals, is usually
 disturbed with reverie,
 or slight delirium, coming
 on towards evening, when
 there is an exacerbation of
 the fever, and receding
 towards morning, when
 there is a remission; but
 the prostration of strength,
 which is at all times very
 evident, is generally greatest
 in the periods of the exacer-
 bations and the tongue is
 then drier. During the
 predominance of the exci-
 - tement, the bowels for the
 most part have a

tendency to constipation. The
 excretions as well as secre-
 tions also undergo gradual and
 material changes, which are
 evinced by the dark and
 offensive nature of the feces,
 and by the peculiar odour
 of the breath and whole
 body, and by the
 morbid appearance exhibit'd
 on the tongue, in the fluids
 formed from the liver, from
 the kidneys, and from
 other organs of secretions.
 After six or seven days,
 sooner or later according
 to its mildness or severity,
 the stage of the excitement
 gradually gives place to

that of colapse, ~~which~~ is
 first announced by signs
 of depression in the voluntary
 powers; by a certain degree
 of relaxation in the skin;
 by a more variable and less
 concentrated state of the
 temperature; and by a
 notable diminution in the
 force of the circulation,
 the pulse being of less
 volume, softer, and undulating,
 in the mildest cases, the
 approach of stage of colapse
 may be viewed as an indi-
 cation of convalescence. Al-
 though the patient may
 complain of much general
 weakness, and sometimes of

Soreness in the flesh, ~~with~~
with flying pains or cramps
in the extremities, yet the
tongue will be found softer
and clearer, the thirst dimin-
ished, the pulse slower,
the breathing deeper and
less frequent, and the skin
of a natural warmth
as well as moisture. Besides
the patient will pass muc-
-h better nites, the func-
tions of the stomach will
be restored, to a certain
degree, with an evident
improvement in the
appearance of the face,
and in general with a
laxitious sediment in the

urine. Whereas, in the
more marked instances of
this sort of typhus, the
supervention the stage
of colapse considerably
augments the danger.
The prostration of streng-
th then becomes far greater;
the pulse is commonly quicker,
and all ways much weaker;
the tongue fowler,
darker, and, drier; the voice
fainter, and the articulation
less distinct; the respira-
-tion shorter, feebler, and
more anxious. The sensorial
functions, too are more dis-
-ordered, and the countenance
is more dejected, sunk and

inanimate. Added to these symptoms, the skin feels looser, and appears more shrivelled, while the temperature is no where so intense as in the stages of excitement, but variable in course of the day, even on the central parts: and there is an increase of general restlessness, a more perceptible and peculiar fever about the body, and often an irritating species of cough which comes, as it were, in convulsive fits. In this ~~in this~~ state the patient is disposed to lie upon his back. As the peril increases, he not only labours

under subtus tendinum,
 visual deceptions, lo muttering
 delirium, and difficulty of
 deglutition, but has also a
 tendency to slide downwards
 in bed, and to draw up the
 feet frequently towards

the body. The foregoing
 description is intended to
 apply to the simple
 typhus, as it runs
 an unimpeded course;
 but between its slightest
 and its most marked forms,
 there are intermediate ones,
 whenever ~~xxx~~ it extensively
 prevails. Some of the worst
 cases of it which I ever
 saw, existed in subjects

who had been kept in a warm
 close atmosphere; and some of
 the mildest, in those who
 had inhabited cool, airy apart-
 ments. At the same time,
 however, I cannot help
 suspecting, that in almost
 every fatal instance of
 the simple typhus,
 there is really a degree
 of lesion in the structure
 of some vital organ. In
 the present state of our
 knowledge, there are per-
 haps many morbid changes,
 which elude the inquiry
 of the anatomist. ~~and~~ The
 cold stage of the former
~~is~~ is somewhat analogous

to the Stage of oppression,
while the hot and

Sweating Stages also
are resemblances of those
of excitement and collapse
in in the latter; and
the analogy, too, is the
closer when we consider,
that the pure intermittent
is an example of simple
fever, uncombined with
any inflammatory affec-
tion of the viscera. It
is unnecessary for me to
say, that in the more
marked examples of
the simple typhus,
the circulation is evidently
disordered from the beginning

of the stage of oppression: when the reaction has once taken place, the pulse continues to rise, unless timely controlled; ~~through~~ through nearly the whole of the second stage; and the preternatural acceleration of the blood can only be said to subside on the approach of the last stage. It cannot but be supposed, that this long continuance ^{of} the fever, though it may leave no visible traces behind it, must make considerable impressions on certain

Organs of delicate structure;
 Such as the brain for
 example, through which
 currents of blood must have
 repeatedly flowed with more
 velocity and in greater
 quantities than natural.

But in the mildest
 instances of this variety,
 it must be admitted,
 that no kind of organic
 lesion is produced, and
 they consequently end
 favourable; and in this
 they likewise resemble
 the simplest intermittent,
 in which the morbid
 excitement of the circul-
 ation does not give rise to

greater local irregularities
or accumulations of blood,
than can be finally removed
by the energies of the con-
stitution alone, or by very
gentle expedients of art.
Almost all the larger
viscera can sustain a certain
degree and duration of vascu-
lar distention, with out
their structure being there-
by at all impaired, or
even their functions very
greatly disorderd. The
character of the simple
typhus, it will be
perceived, vary according
to the time of its
continuance; and as

Some of those variations demand correspondent changes in the mode of treatment, it is hoped that the attempt which has been made to point out the pathognomonic signs of each of the leading stages, will ~~not~~ be found correct. And by having dwelt principally upon the last, contributed to support the dangerous doctrine, that typhus is always a disease of real debility. There is, so wide a difference between apparent and real debility, that the practitioner,

who would successfully conduct the treatment of febrile disorders, must attentively distinguish the one from the other. In the first stage of the simple typhus, the debility is merely apparent, and chiefly dependent upon the preternatural accumulations of blood in the veins about the head, heart, liver, and other internal parts while there is less circulating upon the surface of the body, than in a natural state. In the second stage, the debility is still only

apparent, being then the consequence of over-excitement of the heart and arteries; but in the third and last stage, beyond all dispute, the debility is real, as it is then connected with a general collopse, which sooner or later succeeds to a state of febrile excitement, as certainly as exhaustion follows a fit of intoxication. So great indeed, in a practical point of view, is the importance of attending to the state of the circulation in its febrile complaints,

that guarding against what
 are called determinations
 of blood to the different
 viscera, and removing
 preternatural accumulations,
 whether congestive or infla-
 mmatory, when they actu-
 ally take place, will be
 found to constitute one
 of the grand secrets of
 successful treatment.

It seems an acknowledge
 law of the animal economy,
 that when any part of
 the body is once put
 into a state of Irritation,
 there is a greater flow of
 blood than natural in
 that direction. This law

Should always be remembered in typhus and similar fevers, which necessarily gives rise to more than one local irritation at the same time.

If opportunely attended to, simple irritation may generally be soon removed, but if neglected in its origin, it may tend to produce not only an increased afflux of blood, but an actual inflammation in some part.

There is an opinion very prevalent in this country, that any fever originating from a common cause, such as cold, heat, intemperance, or the

like, may become contagious in its progress. This opinion has probably acquired all its force from the prejudice of education; for it has happened in physic, as in other departments of human knowledge, that men believe certain things merely because ^{have been} they taught to believe them; and it is too humiliating, in general, to acknowledge that as an error which has been long cherished as a truth. This feeling has greatly tended to impede the progress of my own mind, but I could wish, above all things, to weed out every vestige of prejudice or pride, that I might have no discolouring or distorting medium between me and nature; but that, on the contrary, I might be enabled to see things as they really are, and to investigate them in the spirit of sincerity.

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John Bailey