

## **Note on the 'fatigue fever' of M. Peter / by J.F. Knott.**

### **Contributors**

Knott, John, 1853-1921.  
Bryant, Thomas, 1828-1914  
Royal College of Surgeons of England

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London NW1 2BE UK  
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722  
E [library@wellcomecollection.org](mailto:library@wellcomecollection.org)  
<https://wellcomecollection.org>



FATIGUE FEVER

J. E. KNOTT, A.B., M.D.  
M.K.Q.C.P.

LECTURER IN STATE MEDICINE  
FELLOW OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL SOCIETY

Being a Supplement to  
"THE FEVER OF THE EAST"

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NOTE

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“FATIGUE FEVER” OF M. PETER.

BY

J. F. KNOTT, A.B., M.B., & CH.B. (UNIV. DUBL.);  
M.K.Q.C.P.I., M.R.I.A.;

DIPLOMATE IN STATE MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN;  
FELLOW OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MEDICINE IN IRELAND;  
ETC., ETC.

[BEING A SUPPLEMENT TO THE AUTHOR'S PAPER ON  
“THE FEVER OF OVER-EXERTION.”]

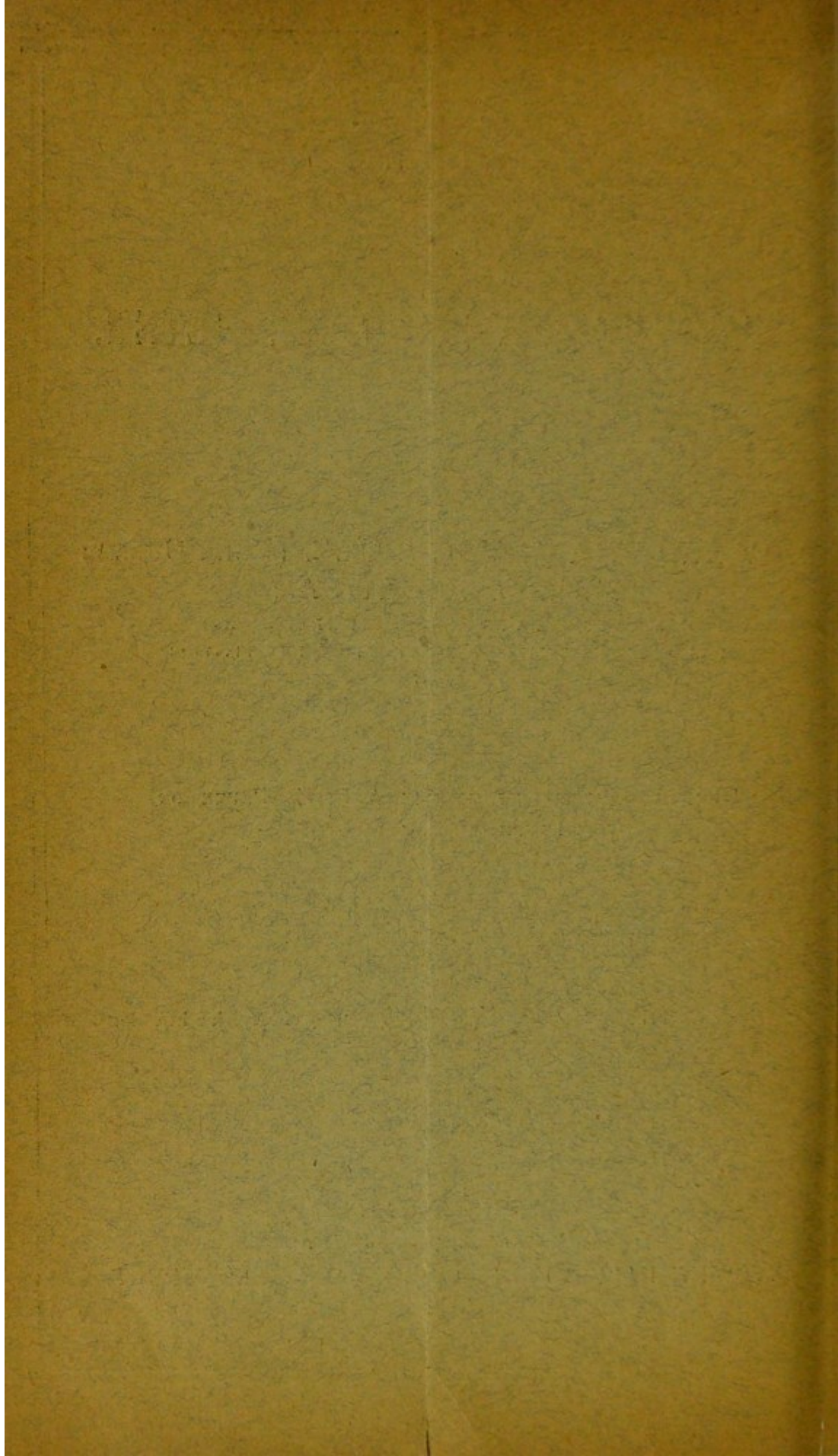
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NOTES

OF THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BY

JOHN H. COOPER, LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF HISTORY

IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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## NOTE

ON THE

### "FATIGUE FEVER" OF M. PETER.\*

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AT a recent meeting of the Medical Section of the Royal Academy of Medicine, I brought under the notice of its members my views on THE ETIOLOGY OF THE FORM OF FEVER PRODUCED BY EXCESSIVE MUSCULAR EXERTION.

I thought it might be desirable to supplement this communication by a few remarks on the "*fatigue fever*," to which M. Peter has been of recent years calling the attention of the French Academy—in connection with the much-abused system of over-pressure in schools. As a part of the excessive struggle in the race for life that we see taking place in nearly all directions in this age of transition, the active competition induced by our present system of education often tells severely upon the constitutions of the members of the rising generation, more especially, of course, upon those who are not gifted by nature with great powers of endurance. From the observations made by M. Peter I would be disposed to think that the more serious symptoms which he describes are more frequently developed among the young people of the susceptible French nation than with most others; he himself appears to have observed it oftener among female students than among those of the opposite sex. The train of symptoms induced by excessive brain-work are due to a condition to which he applies the term *courbature cérébrale*; and which is, as he, I think, quite

\* "A Note on the 'Fatigue Fever' of M. Peter," read in the Medical Section of the Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland, May 17th, 1889.

accurately suggests, exactly comparable to the analogous condition of muscular exhaustion produced by excessive physical exertion. Of the cerebral symptoms so induced he makes three groups:—The first characterised by persistent headache, recurring—even after long intervals of subsidence—when the patient recommences the abandoned study; the second characterised by the concurrence of fever and epistaxis, with an aggravated form of headache; while the third group proceeds to the development of the typical series of symptoms usually described under the name of typhoid fever. It is the second of these groups that specially interests us on the present occasion; it is the same condition, according to this writer, that he described in the year 1869 under the name of *autotyphusation*, and is directly due to the presence in the circulation of an excess of the products of cerebral waste. The symptoms at the commencement are exactly similar to those of typhoid fever, with the exception of the typical temperature curve of the latter, which, in the case of fatigue fever, is replaced by a very sudden rise, within the first or second day of illness, to  $39^{\circ}$  or  $39.5^{\circ}$  C. ( $102.2^{\circ}$ — $103.1^{\circ}$  F.). This *fatigue fever* is particularly prone to show itself at the time of examinations, and has been mistaken for typhoid fever. I have had no personal experience of it: the obtrusive symptoms with which I have usually to deal, during a considerable experience of students, including epigastric anxiety, diarrhœa, and polyuria; and, as a rule, these only. I have in my own person suffered from the fever of physical over-exertion, but I never succeeded in inducing that symptomatic of *courbature cérébrale*, although I think I have tried every way in which it could conveniently be brought about.

I had prepared the above note, which illness prevented me from communicating last session, and would have allowed it to pass into oblivion, had I not on two several recent occasions conversed with distinguished Fellows of the Royal Academy of Medicine, who gave me to understand that my description of the "fever of over-exertion" was the "fatigue fever" of M. Peter done up in an English dress. All the leading "Fellows" that spoke of it appeared, they said, to think so. For themselves, they had not

read my paper through, and had not seen M. Peter's at all, and with modest candour made no pretension to the understanding of either one or the other. They had only made up their minds on a single particular—that one description was derived from the other. I naturally learned with deep regret that so many eminent commercial members of my profession had but *one* idea on the subject of the “fever of over-exertion,” and that a *wrong* one, and thought it might be permitted me, in the interest of truth and fair play, to bring the subject before the Medical Section a second time. Those of my hearers who read and think of such matters will have no difficulty in seeing what degree of similarity connects the two descriptions, and whether anything in one has been derived from the other. The larger number—who neither read nor think—will, I hope, abide by their decision, as I am prepared to do.









