Outlines of the study of Kellgrenism / by Frederick A. Floyer.

OUTLINES

OF THE

STUDY OF KELLGRENISM,

BY

FREDERICK A. FLOYER,

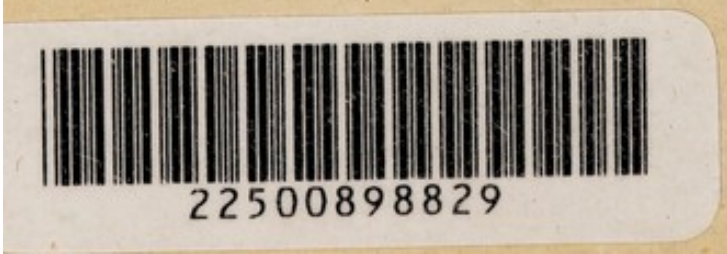
Bachelor of Arts and of Medicine, Camb. Univ.;
Memb. Royal College of Surgeons, England;
Licentiate, Society of Apothecaries, London.

I. & II.

LONDON:
GRIFFITH, FARRAN, OKEDEN & WELSH,
St. Paul's Churchyard.

1888.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.



KELLGRENISM.

ALTHOUGH but a student myself in working out the whole rationale of Mr. Kellgren's system of manual treatment of disease, I think it well, both for the benefit of those who avail themselves of his work, and for the guidance of others who may wish to investigate further the science of his treatment, to state the essentials of his system and to point out what appear to me to be the most suitable directions in which further investigations may be made.

The Swedish system of medical exercises, which is bound up with the manual treatment of Mr. Kellgren, has already a literature, but although any hand-book of his treatment would be manifestly incomplete without a proper description of these exercises, and of his modifications and additions to them, I shall not refer to the subject in detail in this paper.

These muscular exercises are devised with a view of stimulating the circulation of the blood through the limbs and organs, and of preventing venous and lymphatic stagnation. While the body is being brought into a healthy condition in this way, various special manipulations on the nerves, muscles and organs are practised according to the requirements of the patient.

The treatment being essentially manual I will refer in the first place to what may be learnt by manipulation, viz.: Difference of physical resistance, *e.g.*, in the muscles of the abdomen; variations from the normal position or in the physical condition of certain organs, &c. The seat of pain is detected, and the presence or absence of sensation along nerves, according as they are in a state of healthy or unhealthy conductivity.

Of higher importance in the diagnosis of disease, especially in lung cases, is the practical recognition of the fact that the fingers can appreciate vibrations over a larger gamut, even than the auditory nerve, especially vibrations less than 40 per second, which, to the ear, are difficult of comprehension. If,

therefore, the fingers be applied to a chest wall all the variations from the normal movements and the accompanying vibrations which are transmitted to the chest wall can be detected and properly interpreted by a trained hand. This is the method of diagnosis used by Mr. Kellgren, especially in intrathoracic conditions, and to such perfection can the ability to detect small variations in the vibrations be brought, that the results obtained are equal to, and often more reliable than those arrived at by auscultation.

There is no reason why the stethoscope should not be employed, but anyone equally skilled in either method will probably prefer to use his fingers.

A still more important means of diagnosis and relief is possessed by the fingers, and it is by the exercise of this that a morbid influence in the course of a nerve or group of nerves can be detected with certainty.

It may be assumed in view of the results obtained by this treatment that the electrical conditions of a nerve or group of nerves, in the course of which there is a morbid influence, are altered, and that resistance to a current is increased.

It may be deduced, therefore, that if the morbid influence were overcome that the resistance to a current would be removed.

There is every reason to believe that the degree of morbid influence may be estimated according to an accepted law of electricity, viz: That the amount of electricity which can pass a given point is equal to the electromotive force divided by the "resistance"; also that the same law holds good if "morbid influence" be substituted for "resistance."

At any rate, if the fingers of one hand are placed on one side of a morbid part or influence, and the fingers of the other hand on the other side, and vibrations be made on and across the nerves, the operator will presently feel sensations exactly comparable to those experienced on the application

of a faradaic current to the tips of the fingers.* It may reasonably be inferred, therefore, that in some way electricity is excited and experiences the resistance of the morbid influence. If this friction and vibration is continued, especially if applied directly over the nerves or ganglia, the sensations of electrical resistance will be increased until the resistance is overcome, when the pricking or painful sensations disappear from the fingers, and the pain from the patient.

It will be clear, therefore, that with an experienced worker we have a certain means of diagnosis of the presence and whereabouts of a morbid influence and an invaluable power for the relief of suffering.

This sense of electrical resistance will not be felt on a healthly person. It is difficult to obtain it when the body clothed with silk, wool, or any non-conductor, but linen offers no obstacle.

If this work is done upon a nerve which can be pressed against a bone, such as those in the scalp, it will be found that after a few frictions the nerve will be felt like a hard fibre or cord under the finger. This feeling, as of a string under the skin, will disappear when the electrical resistance is overcome. Whether what is felt is the nerve itself or the contraction of the accompanying artery I am unable to say, or, in fact, to offer any explanation at present.

This sense of electrical resistance is excited either by a functional or a pathological morbid influence. For instance, a headache may be removed by this manipulation in a very few minutes, but the exciting cause may only be found if of pathological origin, by examining the various organs, and by

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* This sensation may be experienced by anyone who will take the trouble to practise. If once felt, it will neither be mistaken or forgotten, and unless the operator can accustom himself to this work, he cannot be said to be capable of practising Mr. Kellgren's system in its entirety.

making use of any or all of the digital acquirements spoken of in doing so.

The diagnosis is also assisted by questioning the patient, &c.

Accompanying this nerve work any of the following phenomena are observable. Of these I am also unable at present to find any complete explanation. In mild cases of illness a quantity of gas is set free in the body which finds its way to the stomach, from which it is eructated. This takes place both in the patient and the operator, and varies in amount with the severity and the nature of the illness. In proportion as this gas escapes from the patient, relief is felt.

In more severe cases of illness it happens that less gas escapes, but that vomiting is induced, apparently from retained morbid gaseous products. This vomiting is wholly independent of any food which may be in the stomach, and what is thrown off varies with the nature of the disease. In cases where there is a great accumulation of morbid products, such as in abscesses, &c., there comes to the operator, previous to any vomiting, a swelling of the fingers and of the fore-arm, which becomes intensely painful. On manipulating this swelling, much eructation takes place, and the swelling and pain disappear. If it is not made to disappear, an abscess may form in the operator's body.

In spite of the exceedingly painful character of much of this nerve work, there is a kind of magnetic connection between the fingers of the operator and the patient which renders it difficult for the former to leave off working until the resistance is overcome.

Speaking of the nature of this work as electrical, it should be said that the extraordinary effects produced can only be obtained by personal work, and not with the electricity of any chemical battery or electrical machine.

At the same time the work can only be done under the observance of the laws which regulate the conduct of electric currents.*

It would appear that pain is the result of some stoppage of the natural nerve currents, and that if electricity from a battery be applied, the confusion is on the whole increased. This may account for the fact that the treatment of disease by ordinary electricity is tedious and unsatisfactory.

It would appear that in this work use is made of the vitality or electricity (words if not synonymous, at any rate reciprocal) which already exists in the bodies of the patient and operator, and that the disordered state of the currents is in the one remedied by those of the other. Certain it is that a good operator must possess good vital powers and a liking for the work.

a. That much work produces exhaustion, and in some cases pain to the operator, proportionate to that which is relieved in the patient.

b. That the best results are obtained with those whose primitive vitality is good, as in children, and in those whose system has not been drugged.

c. That some good results can be obtained so long as there is any vitality at all to work on.

The fundamental physiological theory on which Mr. Kellgren's work is based is as follows—

The first effect which the exciting cause of disease has upon the body, is to alter the peculiar relations of the elements of the blood to the gases which are absorbed by them, As the blood is estimated by experimental physiologists to contain not less than half its bulk of different gases, it is intelligible that any alteration in the conditions which

* Experiments might be of considerable interest made with testing and insulating apparatus, etc., in order to investigate the electrical conditions of the operator and patient before and after work had been done.

control the state of loose combinations which these gases have with the solid elements of the blood would bring about considerable physical change. If these relations are disturbed a certain quantity of gas is thrown out from its normal state of combination and seeks to escape. This gas which is thrown out becomes a morbid product and has to be expelled in one form or another, and until it is expelled, or possibly re-absorbed, illness supervenes, local or general according to the nature of the exciting cause.

It may be expelled by any of the excreting organs or surfaces, either making its appearance as gas or in the form of condensation, and mingled with other excretions. The aim of the treatment is to aid in bringing about the expulsion of this gas. The exceedingly prompt curative results in acute diseases are due to the recognition of, and practice in accordance with this theory.

Take for instance an ordinary chill as understood and treated by Mr. Kellgren. The exciting cause say is exposure or wet feet. This causes the blood nearest the part affected to throw out more or less of the gas from the normal state of combination. Then follows a latent period during which no particular manifestation appears, but a feeling of indisposition. During this period the morbid products are endeavouring to discharge themselves by the excretory organs, and if they are able to do so, no further illness takes place. If there is too much work thrown upon the excretory organs, however, they resist. Then follow shiverings caused by the contraction of the skin and a general stoppage of healthy excretory action. The result is that the blood is not only increased greatly in bulk owing to retention of fluids, but it is also full of waste matters and morbid gaseous products. The heart having more work to do in propelling a larger quantity of fluid beats correspondingly faster and the pulse rate is increased. The temperature is raised by oxida-

tion of waste products and other causes. The outcome of all this is that we have a patient in a state of fever, and if this is not checked we get further developments.

The treatment adopted here is directed to assist the various organs to carry off the waste products by manual friction and by nerve work as described above.

The results obtained are prompt and definite, varying with the length of time the illness has existed, the age and vitality of the patient, and the presence or absence of drugs in the system.

So also with inflammation of the lungs. Here is a condition which may be compared to a compressed and sodden portion of sponge, and it is obvious that if the sodden portion recover its elasticity the fluid can pass away. In inflammation of the lungs therefore the respiratory muscles are made to work freely and the congestion and consequent inflammation disappear.

Having thus alluded to the nature of Mr. Kellgren's work and its action in acute cases, I will touch on the question of hygiene and minor but important matters of health.

As regards clothing, all that tends to interfere with the free respiration of the skin, or to retain the insensible or sensible perspiration is unhealthy. Light and loose underclothing should be worn, and flannel or wool should not be worn so as to absorb and retain what is exhaled. If warm clothing is required, it should be in the form of thick outer garments, which are worn lightly on the figure. If this is practised, the body becomes inured to changes of weather and cold catching is practically abolished. The use of smelling bottles, hot water bottles, respirators, throat mufflers, &c., are detrimental. If once adopted the condition for which they appear to be required is fostered and not cured.

As regards diet, the dictates and experiences of nature are

held to be far better guides than any other. If in doubt about any of these matters, it should be borne in mind that any practice which in any way takes the place of, or attempts to arrest the workings of nature is deleterious.

A good deal of Mr. Kellgren's work can be, and usually is, learnt by his patients, who are thus provided with a substitute for the domestic medicine usually resorted to.

The above constitutes a short report of the nature of Kellgrenism. I hope to elaborate it in due time, but I have found the study of Mr. Kellgren's work so profoundly philosophical, and at the same time in many ways so difficult of comprehension at first, that at present I can do little more than state facts already known to those who have been treated by him. The study will be of the greatest interest to the purely scientific man, or to anyone who considers that something radically different is required for the prevention and cure of illness than anything we have at present. But should any other medical man attempt this study, he must bear in mind that the treatment of disease by drugs is wholly and essentially different, and in opposition to Kellgrenism, and that any union of the two systems is absolutely impossible. Beyond the assistance which his acquaintance with Anatomy and Physiology may afford him, the only value any medical man gains in this work, from his previous training and experience is to better appreciate the enormous value of Kellgrenism in the permanent relief of disease against which he has no real power.

49, Eaton Square, London,

February, 1888.

KELLGRENISM.

II.

ON PAIN, DRUGS, INFECTION AND VACCINATION.

Pain, and its ally, discomfort, are the weapons with which Nature resents any violation of her requirements, and the logic of Nature is shown in the variety of ways in which these weapons are used for her protection. Pain may either be actual or reflected; if actual, it is the result of the immediate presence and contact of morbid products or hurtful influences. If it is reflected, the primary object of this reflection is self-protection, such as when pain is felt in the stomach on account of some other organ being deficient or overcharged, the object being to indicate that more food cannot be dealt with. This plan of protection cannot always be traced when an illness is advanced or complicated, as there are then so many deleterious agencies at work, and reacting upon each other.

It must be borne in mind that the basis in this system of the treatment of all stagnation, with its attendant congestion and inflammation, is movement. A mass of morbid products which is the invariable accompaniment of any inflammation may be compared to a disorderly crowd. If its members are allowed to concentrate, it increases and becomes powerful; but if, on the other hand, it is dispersed, and its components kept moving on, no mischief can take place. To put a poultice over an inflamed area, although it may ease the

tension, is equivalent to erecting a large shelter for a disorderly crowd.

Just as the essential accompaniments of life and vitality are movement, so the invariable precursors of local or general death are inertness and stagnation.

Take for instance a sprained joint. Here is a collection of morbid products thrown out into the tissues around two surfaces which are constantly in motion while healthy. If these are allowed to remain, a stiffness of the joint is brought about, partly by their accumulation, and partly from the contraction of the muscles surrounding it. But if these products are gently manipulated away, and the joint put through proper exercises, the condition constituting the sprain disappears in a very short time, and perfect recovery ensues.*

If, however, the inert condition be encouraged by rest and splints we have a painful joint lasting, perhaps, for several weeks, with a probability of some permanent stiffness.

Pain would appear to be the result of a disturbance of the proper conductivity of the nerves, and of a disorganization of the ordinary nerve currents. This condition may be brought about by mental as well as by physical influences.

By this treatment it is sought to remove the pain which is the expression of this disorganization, as well as to remove the exciting cause by any or all of the means referred to in my last paper. It may not be out of place, here, to contrast the manner in which these ends are sought by the administration of drugs.

A large proportion of the drugs in use have little or no effect, except when taken as an article of faith; but, there are some, especially the sedatives, which cause a grave

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* In doing this, great care must be taken to stretch the muscles which surround the joint, in order to separate slightly the opposing surfaces, otherwise only a useless and painful rubbing takes place.

interference with the efforts of nature to reassert herself; not that nature is always able to do so if left to itself, but it has that tendency, even when there is a progressive exciting cause of disease. The action of drugs, however, is wholly antagonistic either to the efforts of nature, or to the work of the Kellgren system, and may be illustrated as follows:

If the complicated workings and connections of a telegraph company were disturbed by some exciting cause, of what service would it be simply to deaden or alter the inherent conductivity of the wires?

Supposing this to be done, it may be considered analagous to the deadening or perversion of the natural vitality which takes place on the administration of a drug, and thus a good result appears to follow. When, however, the influence of the drug has worn off the same exciting cause reasserts itself, and the practice of drugging brings about one or more sequences as below:

a. If the dulled or perverted vitality fully reasserts itself, the disease is the same as before the administration, plus the accumulation of evil which has been proceeding while the system has been drugged.

b. In the course of an illness it frequently happens that recovery takes place in spite of the influence of drugs, but after a much longer time than if the body had been left free.

c. In a vast number of cases the efforts of the primitive vitality to recover itself from the influence of drugs is prevented by repeated drugging, and the patient gradually dies as a consequence.

It is held, therefore, that the effect of all potent drugs is in all cases to prolong the illness or cause the death of the patient. To refer more in detail to the action of groups of drugs.

All purgatives excite the movements of the bowels, either directly, or in most cases indirectly, by inducing an over-secretion from glands. After this effort there is a tendency to reaction and constipation, and unless the primitive vitality recover itself, a constant requirement is created.

The action of sedatives has been alluded to when speaking of the deadening action of drugs, that of morphia being the most permanently deleterious. The action of tonics has also been alluded to in speaking of the perversion of the primitive vitality. Concerning such drugs as iron and phosphorous, which are thought to act as foods, because of the iron which is found to exist in the blood, and of phosphorous, which is found in the brain, this view is taken.

Nature herself selects from the foods she requires, in the form of animal or vegetable substances, such particles of mineral as the different tissues may require; but wholly resents any attempts to force directly upon it a plethora of such things in their mineral form. Further than this, nature has its own tendency to diet herself in a varied manner from time to time, just as there is an instinct in the dog to eat grass at times.

If it were true that the blood, impoverished at any time from want of iron, &c., could appropriate these minerals in an artificial manner, an immediate cure would be brought about by a single dose or injection. As a matter of fact, we find that when any good appears to result from tonics, it is when the vitality of the patient has had time to recover itself after an illness, in spite of the indigestion which is frequently caused by them, either by an artificial appetite being created, or by their mechanical presence. Regarding such substances as cod liver oil, if there is a desire for them on the part of the patient, they are likely to be as beneficial as any other food; but otherwise they can do no good.

The exact nature of infection and contagion is wrapped in an obscurity which gives rise to such an amount of alarm and uncertainty, that it may be well at an early period of these outlines to state the views held by those who work according to this system.

Without attempting to give any exact definition of infection or contagion, or of the diseases resulting therefrom, it will be well to describe the manner in which the complaints usually considered infectious are brought about.

An exciting cause in the form of a germ is given off from a certain originating source, such as a drain. This germ can have no effect upon a perfectly healthy person. But upon anyone whose system affords a basis for development, it will settle, sometimes in the throat, where it may cause diphtheria. In others it may find a home in the bowel, and give rise to typhoid fever, or it may give rise to scarlet fever.

It is not held that the same germ will give rise to different diseases according to whether it finds a basis for development in the throat or bowel, but that a germ has stages of evolution similar to those of a caterpillar, and that at each stage it is capable of producing a different disease.

The disease when declared cannot be communicated from the sick person to a healthy one.

When, as frequently happens, that in a household one person will take the disease after another it is held that all have been exposed to the exciting cause, but that each person has different powers of resistance, according to their constitution and physical condition.

It also happens that one who has been attending various cases, or employed in arduous nursing, eventually takes the disease, apparently from a patient. This will only happen when the vitality is lowered and becomes susceptible to the influence of the exciting cause, to which the attendant was exposed at the same time as the patient. It sometimes

happens also that a nurse or attendant whose vitality is exhausted by unventilated sick rooms, will take a kind of low fever or blood poisoning, which is not the result of the action of a specific germ.

The influence of fear greatly predisposes a person to take a disease, by lowering a vitality which otherwise would have resisted the development of the germ.

If a person is in a condition to take an infectious disease, *i.e.*, to afford a basis for the development of germs, no precautionary measures are of the slightest value, on account of the multiplicity of the former, if they exist at all. The existence of such diseases as consumption and cancer are held to be due to the presence of a germ similar in nature but requiring a different basis for development to others. If this basis or weakness is at any period of life developed there is a liability for the germ to develop, but if not the disease cannot originate.

Consumption and cancer are of course no more catching from one to another than any of the so called infectious germs, but are precisely on the same basis in that in each there is an exciting germ which can only develop in certain surroundings and not otherwise.

The above views will be found consistent with all the phenomena of the diseases they refer to.

With regard to vaccination it is hardly necessary to point out that it is difficult to conceive a greater outrage upon nature than to deliberately transmit a morbid product from a diseased cow, either taken directly, or from a similarly diseased child, into the body of a healthy person. It is considered to introduce into the body a predisposition to disease and to complaints which otherwise would not have existed. The evils have been demonstrated over and over again since the country has been recovering from the panic which existed with reference to the old smallpox, which,

with other scourges, has been dying out in proportion to the improved hygienic and sanitary condition of the people.

Instead of these, however, we have, following vaccination, which is probably to a great extent responsible, a condition in which all the natural developments of a child are turned into diseases. Thus, the natural operation of teething often ends fatally. Moreover, measles, whooping-cough, with their attendant drugs, besides the incessant perturbations of nature which take place under the name of domestic medicine, are looked upon as essential to infant development.

This paper constitutes a statement of the views on the subjects to which they refer which are held by those who practise Kellgrenism; and it should be remembered that where a theory is put forward it is not simply as a possibility, but that it is put forward in relation to definite facts, and as the best explanation of these facts which can at present be given; and although the value of any theory is unimportant when compared with the establishment of facts, it is useful as a connecting link between the latter and as a guide by which to work.

This and other papers which may appear from time to time are written for the assistance of those who avail themselves of Mr. Kellgren's treatment, and for others who may wish to do so.

There will, also, be published some further criticism of that treatment of disease which is based upon the administration of drugs; and upon the acquisitions of pathological science; and of the position which the advocates of that treatment hold.

KELLGREN INSTITUTION,
49, EATON SQUARE,
March, 1888.

ALABASTER, PASSMORE, & SONS, FANN STREET,
LONDON, E.C.