

APPOPLEXY.

BY A WELL-KNOWN MEDICAL AUTHOR.

CONTENTS:—The Rationale—Exciting Causes—Predisposing Causes—Special Causes—Theory of Congestion—Mental Effect—Practical Considerations—Diet—Sleep—Treatment.

SPECIAL CAUSES.

While physiological habits of every kind are among the remote causes of apoplexy, as tending to its production directly or indirectly, there are certain morbid influences and habits of life which have a special tendency in this direction.

All physicians are aware of the intimate relation between the constipation of the bowels and "aching" in the head; and most persons know that "bilious" conditions of the stomach occasion violent determinations of blood to the brain.

The conditions or "diatheses" termed "plethors" and "biliousness" require a little explanation in order to render their influence as special causes of apoplexy, intelligible.

In the plethoric diathesis all of the excretory organs are nearly equally defective in action; hence the blood is befouled with the retained matters which should have passed off in the form of sweat, bile, urine, feces, and carbonic acid gas.

Very fat, plethoric, or corpulent persons often fall from the table while partaking of an ordinary meal of victuals, and cease to breathe.

As the term congestion occupies the salient point in this article, and constitutes the key to the rationale, proper treatment, and prevention of apoplexy, it may be well to consider it briefly in a more general sense.

Whenever the circulation is unbalanced, congestion occurs somewhere. Some organ or part will have too much blood, and other organs and parts too little.

termination of blood to the whole surface; the skin is hot, dry, scald, and purple. In all other forms of acute disease, and in all chronic diseases, congestion occurs in the internal organs.

Bear in mind that it is the relative rather than the positive quantity of blood in the different parts and organs of the body that we are to consider, in contemplating the nature and effects of congestion.

The majority of persons in civilized society suffer continually, more or less, of internal congestions; not amounting to recognizable disease, but producing more or less debility, indispension or whatever term may be applied to imperfect functional duty.

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It is not within the purpose of this article to discuss the numerous remedies and plans for treating apoplexy that are recommended by physicians and to be found in medical books.

But it is preventive measures to which I wish especially to call attention. And here dietetic reform is the most important consideration.

Nothing is more destructive to the brain-structure, and nothing more conducive to apoplexy, than the consumption of imperfect sleep. Late meals, like indigestible and noxious viands,

induce nightmare, horrid dreams, starting, snoring, etc., all of which are evidences of cerebral congestion and premonitory symptoms of apoplexy.

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The brain-structure can only be nourished during sleep. Every thought, every feeling, every mental act or emotion is attended with a loss of brain-material; and this can only be re-supplied and properly assimilated when the brain-organs are in a state of complete repose.

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