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A Textbook of **NEUROLOGY**

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With 181 Illustrations and 128 Tables



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Preface

NEUROLOGY, a branch of medicine, which for many years has been traditionally allied with psychiatry, has in recent years returned more closely to the fold of internal medicine. This return is an especially fortuitous one because the newer technics used in internal medicine, particularly the application of biochemical methods to the study of disease, offer great promise of solving many of the diseases of the nervous system which have heretofore been labeled as degenerative or heredo-degenerative. For example, it has recently been demonstrated that large amounts of copper are present in the brain and other organs of patients with hepatolenticular degeneration although the copper content of the serum is below normal. This decrease in the copper content of the serum is presumably related to a deficiency of that portion of the serum, caeruloplasmin, to which copper is normally bound. This deficiency in binding, which is probably hereditary, allows ingested copper to diffuse more readily into the living brain and other organs and damage their parenchyma. It is quite probable that with the methods now available many other heredo-degenerative diseases also will be found to be due to some inherent or secondary metabolic defect.

The intricacies of neurological disease are so great that they can not be considered fully in a textbook of medicine, and this book is written as a text on neurology for medical students and physicians. In order to conserve space, the traditional sections on anatomy and examination of the nervous system have been omitted. These could at best be inadequately covered and the student is referred to special texts on these subjects. Pertinent aspects of anatomy and the neurological examination, however, are discussed when they are necessary for an understanding of specific disease entities.

Mental symptoms which accompany organic disease of the nervous system are discussed in connection with the appropriate diseases, but the psychoneuroses and the so-called functional psychoses are not considered in this volume. It is my belief that these conditions can be presented better by a physician trained in the methodology of psychiatry and that their consideration is not appropriate to a text on neurology.

An attempt has been made in the text to group diseases according to etiology. Some deviations were necessary in order to expedite the discussion of certain clinical syndromes, such as those resulting from disease of

the peripheral nerves or of the basal ganglia. In addition, it must be admitted that any classification of disease of the nervous system at the present time is inadequate and that changes will be necessary when more is known regarding etiology.

I wish to express my appreciation of the valuable assistance of many of my co-workers: To Dr. Daniel Sciarra for his aid in preparation of the text and the illustrations; to Dr. Lewis P. Rowland and Dr. Robert A. Fishman for editing the proofs and completion of the index; to Miss Virginia Fitzgerald and Mrs. Alice F. Griffin for the typing of the manuscript; and to my wife, Mabel Carmichael Merritt, for her constant assistance in the preparation of the text. My thanks are also due to my colleagues who have furnished many of the illustrations and to the publishers of the various journals and books who have permitted the reproductions of material from previous publications by me and other authors.

H. HOUSTON MERRITT

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Contents

CHAPTER 1

INFECTIONS

Infections of the Meninges	13
Acute Purulent Meningitis	13
Meningococcal Meningitis	14
Pneumococcal Meningitis	18
Staphylococcal Meningitis	20
Streptococcal Meningitis	20
Influenzal Meningitis	20
Tuberculous Meningitis	22
Yeast Meningitis	26
Sarcoidosis	28
Behcet's Syndrome	31
Aseptic Meningitis	32
Meningism	33
Subdural and Epidural Infections	34
Cerebral Subdural Empyema	34
Spinal Epidural Abscess	37
Cerebral Veins and Sinuses	40
Lateral Sinus	40
Cavernous Sinus	42
Superior Sagittal Sinus	42
Other Dural Sinuses	44
Brain Abscess	44
Virus Infections	51
Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis	55
Coxsackie Viruses	65
Herpes Zoster	66
Equine Encephalomyelitis	70
Japanese B. Encephalitis	72
St. Louis Encephalitis	73
Lymphocytic Choriomeningitis	75
Herpes Simplex Encephalitis	78
Inclusion Body Encephalitis	78
Rabies	80
Lymphogranuloma Venereum	82
Mumps Meningitis and Encephalomyelitis	83
Infectious Mononucleosis	85
Encephalitis Lethargica	86
Post-vaccinal and Post-infectious Encephalomyelitis	92
Hemorrhagic Encephalitis	95

Rickettsial Infections	97
Typhus Fever	97
Spotted Fever	100
Scrub Typhus	101
Syphilis	103
Asymptomatic Neurosyphilis	107
Meningeal and Vascular Neurosyphilis	109
Cerebral Meningeal Neurosyphilis	109
Diffuse Cerebral Meningeal Neurosyphilis	109
Focal Cerebral Meningeal Neurosyphilis (Gumma)	113
Cerebral Vascular Neurosyphilis	113
Meningeal and Vascular Syphilis of the Spinal Cord	116
Syphilitic Meningomyelitis	120
Spinal Vascular Syphilis	120
Gumma of the Spinal Cord	121
Syphilitic Hypertrophic Meningitis	121
Parenchymatous Neurosyphilis	123
Tabes Dorsalis	123
Dementia Paralytica	134
Congenital Neurosyphilis	145
Congenital Paretic Neurosyphilis	146
Congenital Tabetic Neurosyphilis	146
Congenital Syphilitic Epilepsy and Amentia	147
Other Microorganisms	149
Cerebral Malaria	149
Trichinosis	151
Schistosomiasis	153
Toxoplasmosis	154
Trypanosomiasis	156

CHAPTER 2

VASCULAR LESIONS

Diseases of the Cerebral Blood Vessels	159
Etiologic and Pathologic Considerations	159
Intracerebral Hemorrhage	159
Cerebral Thrombosis (Encephalomalacia)	161
Cerebral Embolism	163
Clinical Considerations	164
Common Syndromes of Cerebral Vascular Accidents	178
Hypertensive Encephalopathy	189
Intracranial Aneurysms and Primary Subarachnoid Hemorrhage	190
Vascular Diseases of the Spinal Cord	197
Affections of the Blood Vessels of the Spinal Cord	197
Myelomalacia	198
Hematomyelia	200

CHAPTER 3

TUMORS

Intracranial Tumors	202
Tumors of the Skull	222
Hyperostoses	222
Osteomas	222
Hemangiomas	223
Metastatic Tumors	223
Involvement of the Skull in Systemic Diseases	223
Other Tumors of the Skull	224
Tumors of the Meninges	224
Meningiomas	224
Other Tumors of the Meninges	231
Tumors of the Cranial Nerves	232
Gliomas of the Optic Nerve	232
Neurofibroma of the Eighth Cranial Nerve	233
Gliomas	238
Astrocytomas	239
Astroblastoma	240
Glioblastoma Multiformi	240
Medulloblastomas	240
Spongioblastoma Polare	242
Oligodendroglioma	244
Ependymoma	245
Tumors of the Ductless Glands	246
Pinealomas	246
Pituitary Tumors	247
Chromophobe Adenoma	248
Chromophile (Eosinophilic) Adenomas	250
Congenital Tumors	253
Craniopharyngiomas	253
Cholesteatomas	255
Chordomas	256
Dermoids and Teratomas	257
Cysts	257
Papillomas of the Choroid Plexus	258
Blood Vessel Tumors and Malformations	259
Sinus Pericranii	259
Meningeal Angioma	260
Sturge-Weber Disease	260
Parenchymatous Angiomas	264
Hemangioblastomas	267
Granulomas	269
Tuberculomas	269
Torulomas	271
Cysticercosis	271
Metastatic Tumors	272

Spinal Tumors	276
Tumors of the Peripheral Nerves	287
Neurofibromatosis	287

CHAPTER 4

TRAUMA

Craniocerebral Trauma	293
Types of Head Injuries	293
Complications of Head Injuries	299
Vascular Lesions	299
Extradural Hemorrhage	299
Subdural Hemorrhage	301
Subdural Hygroma	309
Intracerebral Hemorrhage	309
Cerebral Thrombosis	309
Arteriovenous Aneurysms	310
Infections	310
Extradural Abscess	310
Subdural Abscess	310
Meningitis	311
Brain Abscess	311
Rhinorrhea	311
Pneumocele	311
Leptomeningeal Cysts	312
Cranial Nerve Palsies	312
Focal Cerebral Lesions	312
Sequelæ of Head Injuries	313
Epilepsy	313
Psychoses and Mental Disturbances	314
Post-traumatic Syndrome	315
Trauma to the Spinal Cord	319
Rupture of the Intervertebral Discs	325
Injury to Cranial and Peripheral Nerves	330
Neuritis	330
Cranial Nerves	332
Olfactory Nerve and Tract	332
Optic Nerve and Tract	333
Oculomotor, Trochlear and Abducens Nerves	338
Fifth Nerve (Trigeminal)	339
Seventh Nerve (Facial)	343
Eighth Nerve (Acoustic)	347
Ninth Nerve (Glossopharyngeal)	349
Tenth Nerve (Vagus)	351
Eleventh Nerve (Spinal Accessory)	352
Twelfth Nerve (Hypoglossal)	352
Peripheral Nerves	353
Radial Nerve	353
Median Nerve	354

Injury to Cranial and Peripheral Nerves—*Continued.*

Ulnar Nerve	355
Musculo-cutaneous Nerve	356
Axillary (Circumflex) Nerve	357
Long Thoracic Nerve	357
Brachial Cutaneous and Antebrachial Cutaneous Nerves	358
Suprascapular Nerve	358
Lesions of the Brachial Plexus	358
Radicular Syndromes	359
Secondary Trunk Syndromes	361
Ischaemic Paralysis of the Upper Limb	361
Obturator Nerve	362
Ilio-hypogastric Nerve	362
Ilio-inguinal Nerve	362
Genito-crural Nerve	362
Lateral Femoral Cutaneous (External Cutaneous) Nerve	363
Femoral (Anterior Crural) Nerve	363
Sciatic (Great Sciatic) Nerve	364
Common Peroneal (External Popliteal) Nerve	366
Tibial (Internal Popliteal) Nerve	366
Causalgia	367
Lumbar Puncture and Intraspinal Injections	370
Ionizing Radiation	371
Electrical Injuries	372

CHAPTER 5

DEVELOPMENTAL DEFECTS

Congenital Hydrocephalus	374
Spina Bifida and Cranium Bifidum	378
Spina Bifida	379
Cranium Bifidum	383
Arnold-Chiari Malformation	384
Malformations of Occipital Bone and Cervical Spine	386
Basilar Impression	386
Malformations of the Atlas and Axis	387
Fusion of the Cervical Vertebrae	387
Premature Closure of the Cranial Sutures	389
Cleidocranial Dysostosis	392
Ocular Hypertelorism	393
Cervical Rib	393
Cerebral Palsy	395

CHAPTER 6

DEGENERATIVE AND HEREDODEGENERATIVE DISEASES

Cerebrum and Cranial Nerves	399
Disorders of Lipoid Metabolism (Lipoidoses)	399
Cerebromacular Degenerations	399

Cerebrum and Cranial Nerves—*Continued.*

Niemann-Pick's Disease	403
Gargoylism	404
Cranial Xanthomatosis	404
Gaucher's Disease	406
Tuberous Sclerosis	408
Primary Degeneration of the Corpus Callosum	413
Presenile Dementia	416
Hereditary Optic Atrophy	419
Progressive Ophthalmoplegia	420
Marcus Gunn Phenomenon	421
Congenital Facial Diplegia	421
Laurence-Moon-Biedl Syndrome	422
Mongolian Idiocy	423
Basal Ganglia	425
Acute (Sydenham's) Chorea	425
Chronic Progressive Chorea	428
Paralysis Agitans (Parkinson's Syndrome)	432
Hepato-lenticular Degeneration	441
Dystonia Musculorum Deformans	445
Spasmodic Torticollis	448
Other Diseases of the Basal Ganglia	450
Juvenile Paralysis Agitans	450
Double Athetosis	450
Pigmentary Degeneration of the Globus Pallidus	452
Status Dysmyelinatus	453
Kernicterus	454
Spastic Pseudosclerosis	454
Hemiballism	455
Hemichorea	456
Cerebellum	457
Hereditary Spinal and Cerebellar Ataxia (Friedreich's Ataxia)	457
Hereditary Ataxia with Muscular Atrophy (Levy-Roussy Syndrome)	460
Hereditary Cerebellar Ataxia with Spasticity	461
Oливо-cerebellar and Oливо-ponto-cerebellar Atrophy	462
Parenchymatous Cerebellar Degeneration	463
Spinal Cord	464
Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis	464
Hereditary Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis	473
Familial Spastic Paraplegia	475
Syringomyelia and Syringobulbia	476
Neuromuscular	484
Progressive Muscular Dystrophy	485
Amyotonia Congenita	492
Infantile Muscular Atrophy	493
Myotonia Congenita	494
Myotonia Atrophica	495
Peroneal Muscular Atrophy	499
Hypertrophic Interstitial Neuritis	503

CHAPTER 7

DISEASES DUE TO TOXINS

Bacterial Toxins	505
Diphtheria	505
Tetanus	505
Botulism	507
Metallic Poisons	509
Arsenic	509
Bismuth	509
Lead	510
Manganese	512
Mercury	512
Thallium	513
Organic Compounds	514
Ethyl Alcohol	514
Methyl Alcohol	515
Barbiturates	516
Belladonna	517
Bromides	517
Hydantoins	518
Carbon Monoxide	519
Tick Paralysis	521

CHAPTER 8

METABOLIC DISEASE

Endocrine Glands	523
Pituitary	523
Hypopituitarism	523
Hyperpituitarism	526
Thyroid	528
Hypothyroidism	528
Hyperthyroidism	529
Parathyroid	531
Hypoparathyroidism	531
Hyperparathyroidism (Osteitis Fibrosa Cystica)	533
Pancreas	535
Hyperinsulinism	535
Hypoinsulinism	539
Adrenal	539
Hypofunction of Adrenal	539
Addison's Disease	539
Hyperfunction of Adrenal	540
Adrenal Virilism and Adrenogenital Syndrome	540
Pheochromocytoma	541
Diseases of the Blood	542
Primary Anemia	542
Polycythemia Vera (Erythremia, Osler-Vasquez Disease)	549
Sickle Cell Anemia	550

Diseases of the Blood—*Continued*.

Hodgkin's Disease	551
Diseases of Collagen Tissue	552
Periarteritis Nodosa	553
Temporal Arteritis	555
Lupus Erythematosus	556
Dermatomyositis	557
Diseases of Bone	560
Osteitis Deformans (Paget's Disease)	560
Leontiasis Ossea	563
Polyneuritis	563
Alcohol-vitamin Deficiency Polyneuritis	567
Triorthocresylphosphate Polyneuritis (Jake Palsy)	571
Arsenical Polyneuritis	572
Lead Polyneuritis	573
Polyneuritis Associated with Deficiency States	574
Diphtheritic Polyneuritis	578
Infectious Polyneuritis (Guillain-Barré Syndrome)	580
Polyneuritis of Pregnancy (Gestational Polyneuritis)	585
Hematoporphyrinuric Polyneuritis	586
Diabetic Polyneuritis	588
Leprosy	590

CHAPTER 9

DEMYELINATING DISEASES

Multiple Sclerosis	594
Diffuse Sclerosis	614
Schilder's Disease	614
Diffuse Sclerosis of the Merzbacher-Pelizaeus Type	620
Diffuse Sclerosis of Krabbe and Scholz	621
Acute Encephalomyelitis	622
Neuromyelitis Optica	623
Progressive Subcortical Encephalopathy	625

CHAPTER 10

DISEASES AND FUNCTIONAL DISTURBANCES OF
UNKNOWN ETIOLOGY

Migraine and Other Types of Headache	627
Convulsive Disorders	637
Epilepsy	637
Tetany	666
Myoclonus Epilepsy	668
Carotid Sinus Syncope	670
Ménière's Syndrome	672
Myasthenia Gravis	675
Narcolepsy	682
Syndrome of Hypersomnia and Bulimia (Kleine-Levin Syndrome)	686
Familial Periodic Paralysis	687
Index	689

A Textbook of Neurology

Chapter 1

INFECTIONS

INFECTIONS OF THE MENINGES

ACUTE PURULENT MENINGITIS

PATHOGENIC organisms may gain access to the ventriculo-subarachnoid space by way of the blood stream with or without involvement of other organs of the body or by direct extension from a septic focus in the cranial cavity or head. Organisms may enter through compound fractures of the skull or fractures through the nasal sinuses or mastoid. They may be introduced directly into the subarachnoid space by lumbar puncture for the withdrawal of fluid or the administration of sera, air, anesthetics and the like. The pathology, symptomatology and clinical course of patients with acute purulent meningitis are similar regardless of the causative organism. These will be described in connection with the consideration of the most common forms of meningitis. The diagnosis depends on the isolation and identification of the causative organism, and the determination of the source of the infection in the cases of secondary meningitis.

Table 1. Relative Frequency of the Common Forms of Bacterial Meningitis (5,136 Cases Collected from Literature)

<i>Organism</i>	<i>No. of Cases</i>	<i>Per Cent</i>
Meningococcus	2,052	40
Tubercle bacillus	1,509	29
Pneumococcus	506	10
Streptococcus	403	8
Influenza bacillus	291	6
Miscellaneous	375	7
Total	5,136	100

Acute purulent meningitis is most commonly due to the meningococcus, the influenza bacillus, the pneumococcus or the streptococcus. These four, together with the tubercle bacillus (Table 1), account for the vast majority of the cases. The meninges may be invaded by any of the other path-

ogenic organisms including: *B. coli*; *B. typhosus*; *B. paratyphosus*; anthrax bacillus; *B. pyocyaneus*; Friedländer's bacillus; diphtheroid bacilli; micrococcus catarrhalis; the gonococcus; brucella, torula and other yeast; and streptothrix.

Meningococcal Meningitis

Meningococcal meningitis or acute cerebrospinal fever was described by Vieusseux in 1805 and the causative organism was identified by Weichselbaum in 1887. It occurs almost constantly in sporadic form and at irregular intervals in epidemic form. Epidemics are especially apt to occur when there are large shifts in population as in time of war.

Pathogenesis: The meningococci may gain access to the meninges directly from the nasopharynx through the cribriform plate or indirectly by way of the blood stream. The fact that organisms can be cultured from the blood or from cutaneous lesions before the appearance of meningitis is strong evidence that the infection takes place through the blood stream by way of the choroid plexus in many, if not all, cases. In addition, it has been shown that in early cases the ventricular fluid may be teeming with organisms before infection of the meninges is present.

Pathology: In acute fulminating cases death may occur before there are any significant pathological changes in the nervous system. In the usual case where death does not occur for several days after the onset of the disease, there is an intense inflammatory reaction in the meninges. The inflammatory reaction is especially intense in the subarachnoid spaces over the convexity of the brain and spinal cord and around the cisterns at the base of the brain and it may extend a short distance along the perivascular spaces into the substance of the brain and spinal cord. In rare cases the inflammatory reaction breaks into the parenchyma. Meningococci, both intra and extracellularly, are found in the meninges and the fluid from the ventricles and subarachnoid space. With progress of the infection the pia-arachnoid becomes thickened and adhesions may form over the convexity of the brain or at the base. Adhesions at the base may interfere with the flow of cerebrospinal fluid from the fourth ventricle and produce hydrocephalus. Inflammatory reaction and fibrosis of the meninges along the roots of the cranial nerves is thought to be the cause of the cranial nerve palsies which occasionally develop. This is not the only mechanism for such paralyses, however. Damage to the auditory nerve often occurs suddenly, and the auditory defect is usually permanent. This may be explained as the result of extension of the infection to the inner ear or to thrombosis of the nutrient artery. In addition, facial paralysis not infrequently occurs after the meningeal reaction has subsided and is best explained on another, perhaps allergic, basis. Signs and symptoms of parenchymatous damage, hemiplegia, aphasia, or cerebellar signs are infrequent and are probably due to the formation of infarcts as the result of thrombosis of inflamed arteries or veins. Damage to the spinal cord, myelitis, is explained on a similar basis. Myelitis or damage to the roots of the cauda equina are rare in the absence of intrathecal treatment with serum or chemicals and it is probable that the latter substances play an important role in the production of these complications.

With efficient treatment, and in some cases without treatment, there is subsidence of the inflammatory reaction in the meninges and no evidence of the infection may be found at autopsy in patients who die some months or years later.

Incidence: The meningococcus is the causative organism in approximately 40 per cent of all cases of meningitis. While both the sporadic and epidemic forms of the disease may attack individuals of all ages, children are predominantly affected. In many large epidemics over 75 per cent of the cases were under ten years of age. Males appear to be slightly more susceptible than females. The normal habitat of the meningococcus is the nasopharynx and the disease is spread by carriers or by individuals with the disease. The normal carrier rate in the general population in non-epidemic periods is approximately 3 to 4 per cent. This incidence increases when there is a chance for close contact of many individuals (as in military barracks), and during the winter months. The carrier rate increases in the presence of upper respiratory infections and it is not uncommon for these to precede the onset of meningitis.

Symptomatology: The onset of meningococcal meningitis, similar to that of other forms of meningitis, is accompanied by chills and fever, headache, nausea and vomiting, pain in the back, stiffness of the neck, and prostration. The occurrence of herpes simplex, conjunctivitis and a petechial or hemorrhagic skin rash is common with meningococcus infections. At the onset, the patient is irritable and in children there is frequently a characteristic sharp shrill cry (meningeal cry). With progress of the disease, the sensorium becomes clouded and stupor or coma may develop. Occasionally the onset may be accompanied by deep coma. Convulsive seizures are not infrequently an early symptom, but focal neurological signs are uncommon. Acute fulminating cases with severe prostration and an extensive cutaneous rash (Waterhouse-Friderichsen syndrome) are considered more fully later.

Signs: The patient appears acutely ill, and may be confused, stuporous or semi-comatose. The temperature is elevated from 101° to 103° F., but occasionally it may be normal at the onset. The pulse is usually rapid and the respiratory rate is increased. Blood pressure is normal except in acute fulminating cases when there may be a severe degree of hypotension. There is rigidity of the neck with positive Kernig and Brudzinski signs. The reflexes are often depressed but occasionally they may be increased. Cranial nerve palsies and focal neurological signs are uncommon. These complications usually do not develop until several days after the onset of the infection. The optic discs are normal, but choking may develop if the meningitis persists for more than a week.

Laboratory Data: The white blood cells in the peripheral blood are increased with counts usually in the range of 10,000 to 30,000 per cu. mm., but they occasionally may be within normal limits or higher than 40,000 per cu. mm. The urine may contain albumin, casts and red blood cells. Meningococci can be cultured from the nasopharynx in practically all cases, from the blood in over one-half of the cases in the early stages, and from the skin lesions when these are present.

The cerebrospinal fluid is under increased pressure, usually between 200 and 500 mm. of water. The fluid is cloudy or purulent and contains a large number of cells, predominantly polymorphonuclear leukocytes. The cell count in the fluid is usually between 2,000 and 10,000 per cu. mm. Occasionally it may be less than 1,000 and infrequently is more than 20,000 per cu. mm. The protein content is increased. The sugar content is decreased, usually between 5 and 30 mg. per 100 cc. The chloride content is moderately or greatly decreased. The colloidal tests may show any type of abnormality. Organisms can be seen intra and extra-cellularly in stained smears of the fluid and they can be cultured on the appropriate media in over 90 per cent of the cases.

Complications and Sequelæ: The complications and sequelæ of meningococcic meningitis include those which are commonly associated with an inflammatory process in the meninges and its blood vessels (convulsions, cranial nerve palsies, focal cerebral lesions, damage to the spinal cord or nerve roots, hydrocephalus), and those which are due to involvement of other portions of the body by meningococci. The latter include panophthalmitis and other types of ocular infection, arthritis, purpura, pericarditis, endocarditis, myocarditis with cardiac enlargement and electrocardiographic changes, pleurisy, orchitis, epididymitis, albuminuria or hematuria, and adrenal hemorrhage. In addition there may be complications arising as the result of intercurrent infection of the upper respiratory tract, middle ear and lungs. Any of the above complications may leave permanent sequelæ but the most common sequelæ are those which are due to injury to the nervous system. These include deafness, ocular palsies, blindness, changes in mentality, convulsions and hydrocephalus.

With the methods of treatment available at the present time, complications and sequelæ of the meningeal infection are rare and the complications due to the involvement of other parts of the body by the meningococci or other intercurrent infections are more readily controlled. In a recent study by Farmer of 300 sulfonamide treated cases, neurological complications were present in less than 9 per cent and a permanent residual in less than 2 per cent. Sixth nerve palsy developed early in the course of the disease in 3 per cent and completely disappeared within a few weeks. Seventh nerve palsy occurred as a late complication in 3 per cent of the cases. It usually developed between the fifth and fourteenth day, at a time when the cerebrospinal fluid was relatively cell-free. Recovery from the facial paralysis, either unilateral or bilateral, was usually complete within a few months. Eighth nerve palsy, usually bilateral, was present in 2 per cent and was followed by permanent deafness. Focal neurological signs—convulsions, hemiplegia and aphasia—were present in only one per cent, and in all of these the signs and symptoms were transient.

Waterhouse-Friderichsen Syndrome: Waterhouse-Friderichsen syndrome, adrenal hemorrhage associated with purpura, is most commonly associated with meningococcic septicemia, but it may occur in the course of other infectious diseases. The incidence of this complication of meningococcic infection is usually very low but in some epidemics it may be as high