REPORT OF A CASE OF FRACTURE OF THE BASE OF THE
SKULL FOLLOWED BY MENINGITIS AND ORGANIC
HEMIPLEGIA, ASSOCIATED WITH COMA AND CAT-
ALEPSY LASTING EIGHTEEN MONTHS.

BY ARTHUR CONKLIN BRUSH, M.D.,
NEUROLOGIST TO THE KINGS COUNTY, BROOKLYN EYE AND EAR, AND
WILLIAMSBURG HOSPITALS.

This patient was nineteen years of age, born in Scotland and resided there for eighteen years. He is an only child, his mother is living and in good health, and his father died during his infancy of typhoid fever. As far as can be ascertained there is no neurotic taint in his ancestry. Previous to Oct. 26, 1896, he had always enjoyed good health, and was a strong and vigorous young man of good mental ability and exemplary habits. On that date he was assaulted by three men, thrown violently backward to the pavement, and kicked about the body and limbs. During the next three days he remained in a weak condition, crying and trembling, and gradually growing more dazed and stupid, while during the same period blood escaped from the mouth; and at the end of that period he passed into the condition in which he was when I first saw him in consultation with Dr. W. L. Rickard. I found the patient in bed. He had the color and development of a healthy and vigorous young man. There was a swollen and tender spot over the occiput. The head was turned to the left, but free voluntary movements occurred at times. The eyeballs were directed forward and moved freely. The right forearm was flexed across the chest with the fingers of the right hand extended and the thumb flexed across the palm. The right lower limb was straight and the left flexed so that the foot rested on the opposite calf. Occasionally, and especially when he was disturbed, very violent movements would occur in the limbs of the left side; and at the same time he would shout, "They are strangling me, they are killing me, they are murdering me;" but he did not give any evidence of being conscious of his surroundings. At times he would place his left hand to his head and contract his brows. There was a constant fine tremor of the arms, most marked on the left side. No voluntary movements occurred on the right side, and the limbs and chest of that side were rendered immovable by tonic spasm of the muscles. All the

reflexes were absent. Sensation was somewhat increased over the right side of the body and in the right limbs.

The spine was rigid from tonic spasm of its muscles, and there was tenderness on pressure over the cervical and first two dorsal spines. The pupils were contracted, unequal and irresponsive to light. The pulse, respiration and temperature were normal, but the heart's action was extremely violent. The urine and feces were passed involuntarily.

Until December 14, 1896, he remained about the same, at times quiet, at other times muttering to himself or grinding his teeth, and he had the same violent outbreaks. The tremor disappeared from his arms, the pupils became dilated, the eyeballs directed upward and to the left. Several attacks of projectile vomiting occurred, and he developed an anesthesia of the left half of the body and face and hyperesthesia of the right. His pulse, temperature and respiration gradually rose above the normal. On December 14 a profuse watery discharge came from the left ear, he was restless and noisy, the pupils were contracted, he had a number of brief convulsions on the left side, and there was a soft ecchymotic swelling, extending in a crescentic manner from the left mastoid over the occiput. Three days later he had four general epileptic convulsions. He remained in this condition until December 26, 1896, except that he gradually lost flesh and color, and developed a small bed sore over the sacrum. The pulse became more rapid and his fever higher. He was now pronouncedly comatose, and repeated general convulsions occurred. On December 26 signs of fluid were discovered in his left chest. The right arm and leg were now found to be markedly cataleptic and remained in any position they were placed until the patient showed signs of exhaustion. Until August 20, 1897, he remained in about the same condition, except that his heart became much dilated; general cyanosis became evident; he had several attacks of cardiac syncope; fluid was removed from the left chest several times, and the spine became movable and cataleptic. After that date no more violent outbreaks occurred, and on March 17, 1898, the limbs of the left side were found to be in a state of tonic spasm so that they returned at once to their habitual position when disturbed.

On May 2, 1898, the date of a civil action for damages against the City of New York, his condition was as follows: Coma was profound, the head was turned to the left and moved with difficulty, the eyes were closed, the eyeballs were directed upward and to the left, the pupils were dilated and irresponsive to light, and no voluntary movements of the limbs on the right side occurred, and these limbs and the

spine were cataleptic. The left hand habitually rested on the forehead and the left foot on the right calf. The left limbs were rigid and returned at once to their former position when disturbed. Coarse tremors occurred at times on the left side. There was marked atrophy of the muscles of the left chest and of the front of the right thigh. There was hyperesthesia of the right half of the body and face and anesthesia on the left. The surface temperature was one degree less on the right side of the body than on the left. The temperature was 100. The pulse varied from 120 to 150 and the respirations from 40 to 60. The heart was very much dilated. The upper part of the dorsal spine was curved forward and to the left. The skin was cyanotic and cold. The urine and feces were passed involuntarily. During all this time the patient had been nourished by the tube.

During the latter part of May, 1898, it was noticed that vigorous irritation produced a momentary direction of the eyes forward, contraction of the brows, and grinding of the teeth. The cataleptic condition and spasm now slowly disappeared, leaving a flaccid paralysis of the right side of the body and neck with absence of reflexes. Sensation also became normal.

On August 12, 1898 a powerful faradic current was applied by means of the wire brush and after a few minutes in which there were violent movements of the left limbs, he began to utter inarticulate cries and then commenced to shout: "Let me go and take me out." He was now found to be completely blind in the left eye, and with only a faint perception of light in the right, and totally deaf in the left ear and nearly so in the right. He then said that he had been for hundreds of years in a place too horrible to describe, and where he had been constantly tormented by the employees of the Bureau of Incumbrances. He has never given any evidences of any knowledge of the facts which transpired during his sickness. Since that time he has developed an atrophic right hemiplegia, with flexor contracture and loss of deep reflexes. The spine still remained curved. He is totally blind from a double optic atrophy; and can only hear by means of the ear trumpet placed in the left ear. The heart is dilated and the left lung bound down by adhesions. At times he is excited and confused while at other times he is dazed and stupid.