

His writings covered a wide range of subjects including medicine, psychiatry, language, the moral faculty, the abolition of capital punishment, maple sugar, medicine among the American Indians, the restriction of smoking and spirit drinking, dental focal infection, dreams and their possible significance. He saw the interrelationships between medical, moral and philosophical subjects and tended to take very positive and vociferous positions on the public, medical and ethical problems of his times. In fact he was constantly engaged in both professional and political controversy and quickly championed righteous as well as some unpopular and hopeless causes.

Benjamin Rush was born of English Quaker ancestry on December 24, 1745 in Byberry Township near Philadelphia. His father was a gunsmith and farmer who died when Benjamin was aged only six. His mother ran a grocery shop and was able to send the boy to a country school in Maryland from which he entered the College of New Jersey (later to be called Princeton) and graduated at the age of seventeen. He was apprenticed to John Redman, a leading Philadelphia physician. During this period he learned to compound medicines, visited the sick, helped as a nurse and read Boerhaave's lectures on pathology and physiology and Sydenham's books on clinical medicine. In 1768 he took his medical degree in Edinburgh and spent the following year in hospitals in London and Paris. Here he was most fortunate in contacts with William Hunter, John Fothergill and George Fordyce. Benjamin Franklin took a special interest in Rush and introduced him to Samuel Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Oliver Goldsmith. All these men stimulated the young physician to a sense of broad humanitarian responsibility.

On his return to Philadelphia in 1769 he began his own practice of medicine and soon was lecturing at the Philadelphia medical colleges. In 1796 he was appointed to the Chair of the Theory and Practice of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. He lived a full and active life and died in Philadelphia on April 19, 1813 after a brief illness, with typhus fever. He was the best-known American physician of Revolutionary times.

SAMUEL BERNARD WORTIS, M.D.

(Facsimile of 1812 title page)

MEDICAL INQUIRIES

AND

OBSERVATIONS,

UPON

THE DISEASES OF THE MIND.

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CHAPTER II.

OF the *remote* and *exciting* causes of intellectual derangement.

I have combined both these classes of causes, inasmuch as they most commonly act in concert, or in a natural succession to each other. In enumerating them, I shall include such as act alike in producing partial and universal madness.

They have been divided, 1, into such as act, *directly* upon the body; and, 2, such as act *indirectly* upon the body, through the medium of the mind.

To the first head, ^{ing} belongs, 1, all those causes which act *directly* upon the brain. These are, 1, malconformation and læsions of the brain. Between the latter, and the existence of madness, there is sometimes an interval of several years. A young man died in the Pennsylvania Hospital in the year 1809, who became deranged at twenty-

one, in consequence of a contusion on his head by a fall from a horse in the fifteenth year of his age. A Mr. I—— died of madness in the same place, from an injury done to his brain by being thrown out of his chair, between two and three years before he discovered any signs of derangement. It is remarkable that injuries show themselves more slowly in the brain than in other parts of the body. Dr. Lettsom mentions a case, in the Memoirs of the London Medical Society, of a disease in the brain, induced by a fall from a horse, which did not discover itself until two and twenty years after its occurrence.

2. Certain local disorders, induced by enlargement of bone, tumors, abscesses, and water in the brain.

3. Certain diseases of the brain, particularly apoplexy, palsy, epilepsy, vertigo, and headache. It occurs but rarely from the last of those causes.

4. Insolation. Two cases of madness from this cause occurred under my care between July 1807, and February 1808.

5. Certain odours. There is a place in Scotland where madness is sometimes induced by

the fumes of lead. Patients who are affected with it bite their hands, and tear their flesh upon the other parts of their bodies. It is called by the country people *mill-reck*. Dr. Prost describes a furious grade of madness in Peru, brought on by a mineral exhalation, but he does not mention the metal from which it is derived. From among many other facts that might be mentioned, to show the connection of odours with a morbid state of the mind, I shall mention one more. An ingenious dyer, in this city, informed me that he often observed the men who were employed in dying blue, of which colour indigo is the basis, to become peevish, and low spirited, and never even to hum a tune, while engaged at their work.

There are certain causes which induce madness, by acting upon the brain in common with the *whole* body. These are, 1, gout, dropsy, consumption, pregnancy, and fevers of all kinds.

2. Inanition from profuse evacuations, or from a defect of nourishment. Famine induces it in part from the latter cause.

3. The sudden abstraction of the stimulus of distension. When madness follows parturi-

tion, it is most commonly derived from this cause.

4. The excessive use of ardent spirits. During the time Dr. Nicholas Waters acted as resident physician and apothecary of the Pennsylvania Hospital, he instituted an inquiry at my request, into the proportion of maniacs from this cause, who were confined in the Hospital. They amounted to one-third of the whole number.

5. Inordinate sexual desires and gratifications. Several cases of madness from this cause have come under my notice.

6. Onanism. Four cases of madness occurred, in my practice, from this cause, between the years 1804 and 1807. It is induced more frequently by this cause in young men, than is commonly supposed by parents and physicians. The morbid effects of intemperance in a sexual intercourse with women are feeble, and of a transient nature, compared with the train of physical and moral evils which this solitary vice fixes upon the body and mind.

7. The transfusion of blood from one animal into the blood-vessels of another. This practice