

**THE DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASES OF
THE SPINAL CORD: AN ADDRESS
DELIVERED TO THE MEDICAL
SOCIETY OF WOLVERHAMPTON,
OCTOBER 9TH, 1879**

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The Diagnosis of Diseases of the Spinal Cord: An Address Delivered to the Medical Society of Wolverhampton, October 9th, 1879 by W. R. Gowers

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DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASES
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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED TO THE MEDICAL SOCIETY
OF WOLVERHAMPTON, OCTOBER 9TH, 1879

BY
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(WITH ADDITIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS)



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P R E F A C E.

THE following pages contain an address, delivered in October, 1879, to the members of the Medical Society of Wolverhampton, at whose request it is now published in a separate form. It appeared, as delivered, in the "Medical Times and Gazette" for November and December. In revising it, numerous additions have been made, in order to render the outline of the subject more complete. These additions have increased the length of the lecture, but I have thought it better to leave its form unaltered, beyond a division into sections for more convenient reference. Some illustrations have been added, which may assist the reader who is not familiar with the normal and pathological anatomy of the spinal cord. For one of these—Fig. 3, an illustration which I supplied to the eighth edition of Quain's "Anatomy"—I am indebted to the courtesy of Messrs. Longmans.

QUEEN ANNE STREET,
April, 1880.

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THE
DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASES OF THE SPINAL CORD.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—In complying with the request with which you have honoured me, to inaugurate, with an address, another session of work of your Society, I have thought it better to select a subject of practical importance rather than of merely theoretical interest. I therefore propose to ask your attention, for a short time this evening, to the subject of the Symptoms and Diagnosis of Diseases of the Spinal Cord, having reference especially to those points in which modern investigation has added to the knowledge which is current in the profession. In order to make a description of these points useful, it is necessary to include them in a general outline of the subject, in which they may take their proper place. In such an outline it will be necessary, for the sake of clearness, to describe briefly some facts which are probably familiar. Others, which must be mentioned, may seem recondite and tedious. For both of these, therefore, I must beg your indulgence.

I trust it will not be felt that I am asking your attention to an unpractical subject. A tendency is sometimes observable, among many members of the profession, to undervalue diagnosis. Our business is to cure disease, so far as we are able, and a fear has been expressed lest our study of exactness in diagnosis should be at the expense of precision in treatment. "It matters little," it has been said, "whether your diagnosis of a diseased condition is minutely exact, if