

**On brain and nerve exhaustion : "neurasthenia", its nature and curative treatment / by Thomas Stretch Dowse.**

**Contributors**

Dowse, Thomas Stretch.  
Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

**Publication/Creation**

London : Bailliere, Tindall and Cox, 1887.

**Persistent URL**

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/k7jfkdh5>

**Provider**

Royal College of Physicians Edinburgh

**License and attribution**

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. The original may be consulted at the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. where the originals may be consulted.

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection  
183 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BE UK  
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722  
E [library@wellcomecollection.org](mailto:library@wellcomecollection.org)  
<https://wellcomecollection.org>



BRAIN & NERVE

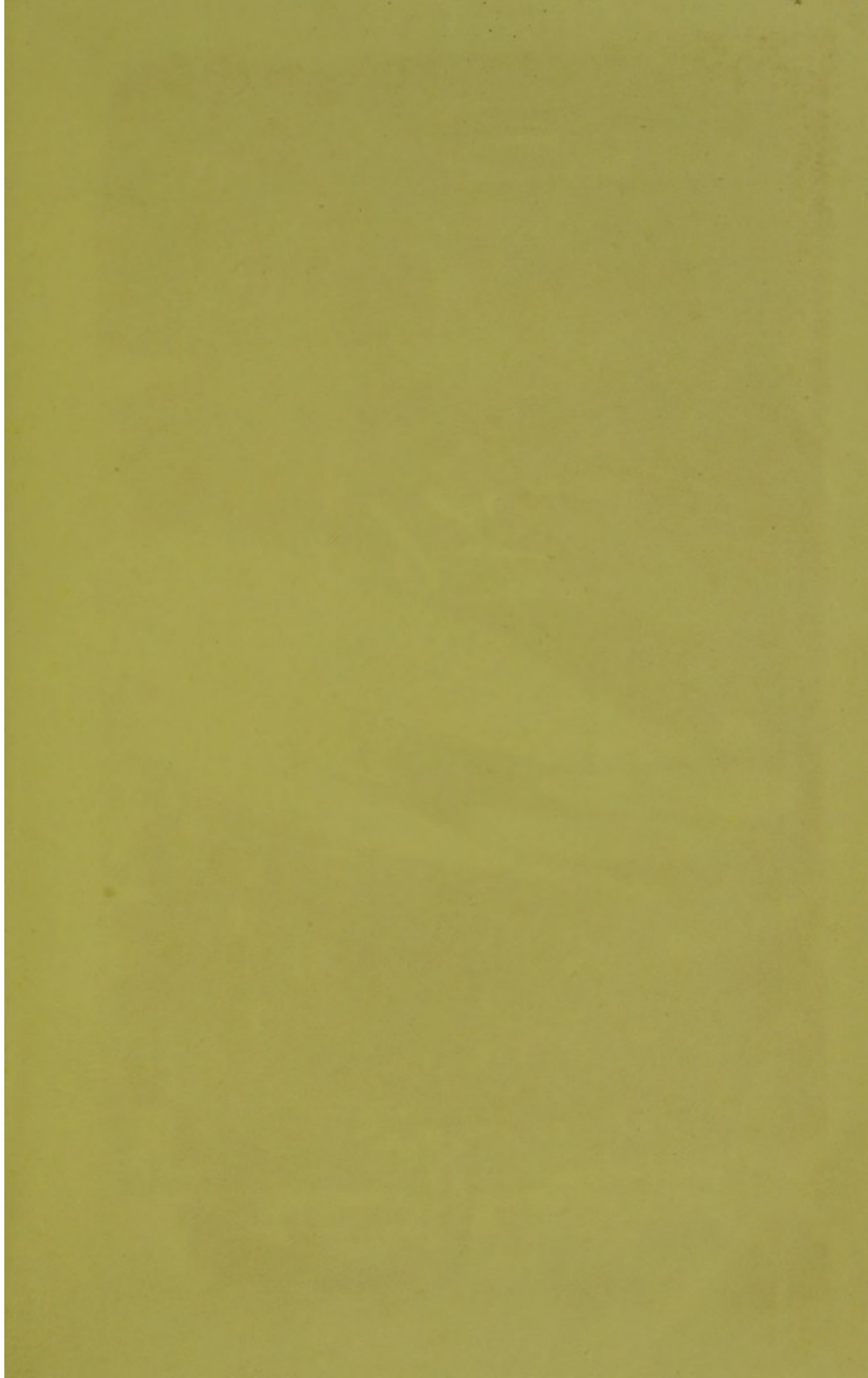
EXHAUSTION

—  
STRETCH DOWSE



Feb 5: 34

R38895



276

Cm

ON  
BRAIN AND NERVE EXHAUSTION.  
'NEURASTHENIA.'

ITS NATURE AND CURATIVE TREATMENT.

A Paper read before the Medical Society of London.

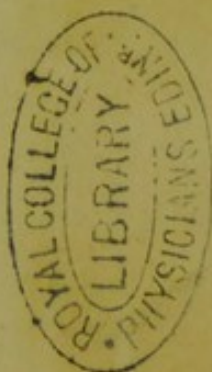
BY

THOMAS STRETCH DOWSE, M.D.,

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS IN EDINBURGH; MEMBER OF THE PATHOLOGICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND CLINICAL SOCIETIES; FELLOW OF THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON; PHYSICIAN TO THE HOSPITAL FOR EPILEPSY AND PARALYSIS, REGENT'S PARK; PHYSICIAN TO THE NORTH LONDON HOSPITAL FOR CONSUMPTION AND DISEASES OF THE CHEST; FORMERLY PHYSICIAN SUPERINTENDENT OF THE CENTRAL LONDON SICK ASYLUM; AND PHYSICIAN TO THE SKIN DEPARTMENT OF CHARING CROSS HOSPITAL.

'Excess of anything throws us off our balance. Excess of spirits one day generally means being "down in the dumps" on the next, while excess of food means indigestion and all its unpleasant associations. Excess of pleasure means a weary *blasé* existence after, and inability to derive gratification from the same sources, while true moderation and order are the secrets of a healthy and wholesome life.'

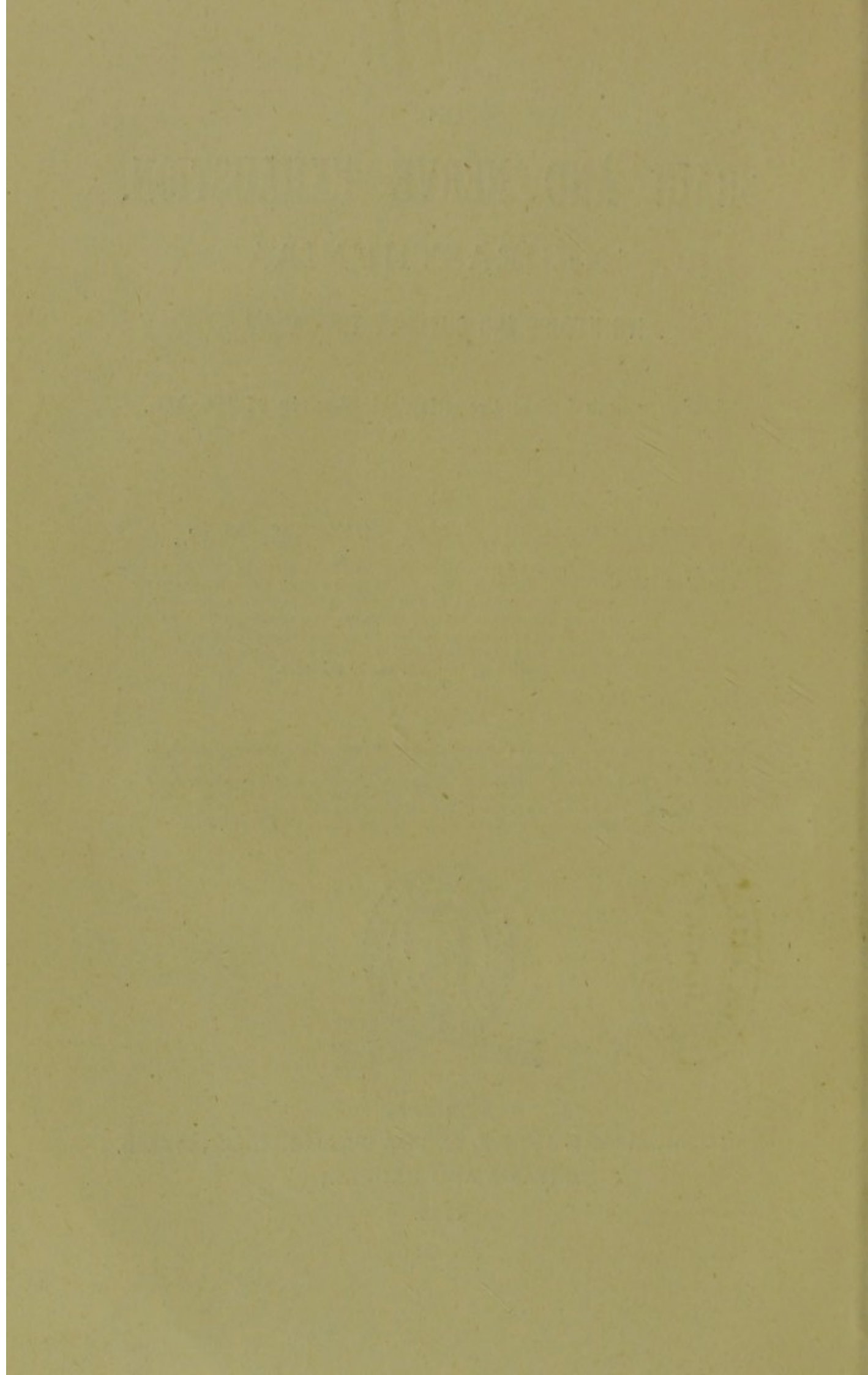
THE INVALID'S YEAR BOOK. By Sir James Colquhoun, Bart.



LONDON :

BAILLIÈRE, TINDALL, AND COX, 20, KING WILLIAM STREET, STRAND,  
[PARIS AND MADRID.]

1880.



## PREFACE.

---

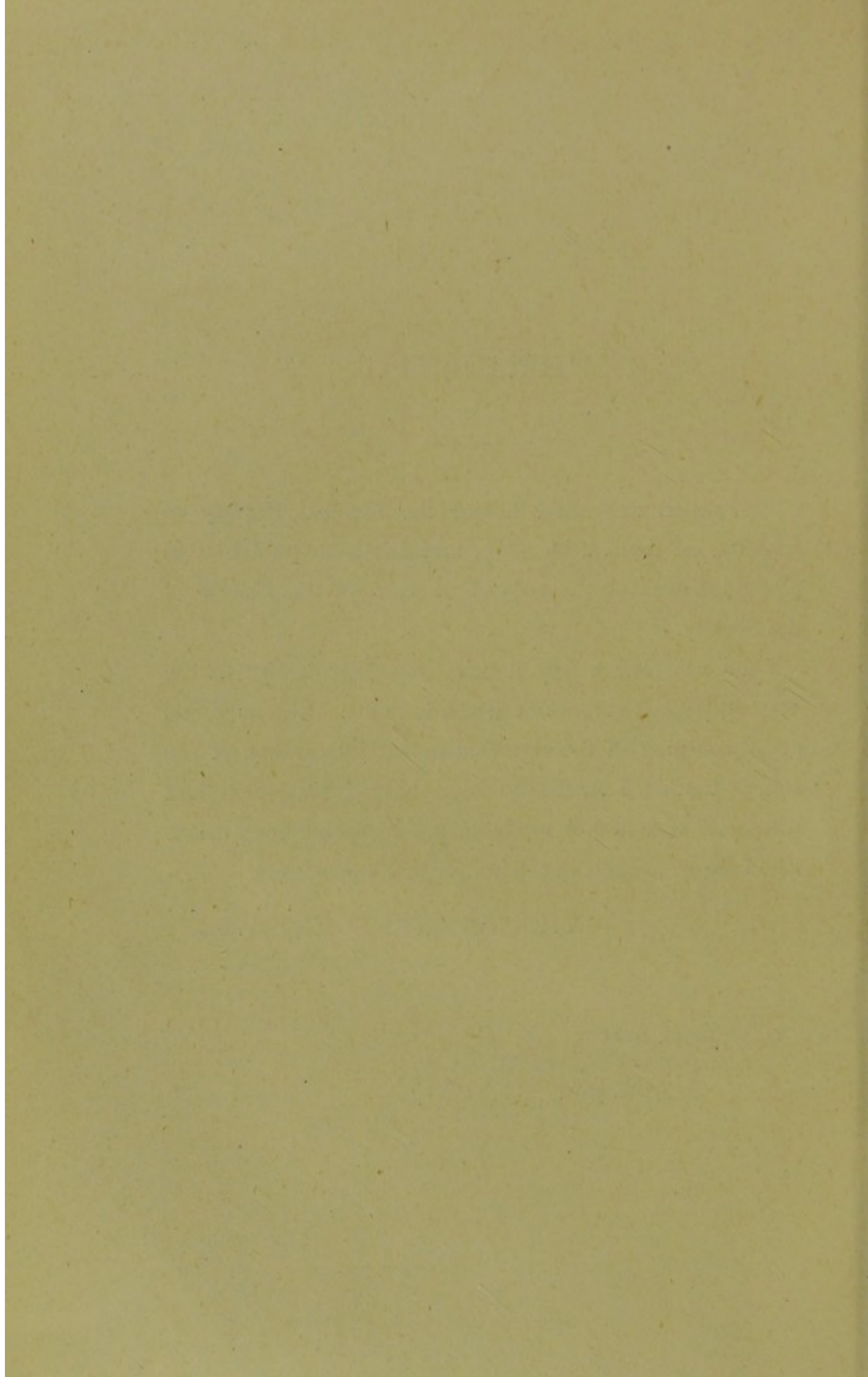
THIS paper was read before the Medical Society of London, on April 26th, 1880, and has been published in pamphlet form at the request of some of the Fellows of the Society.

I am well aware that it does but scant justice to the very important subject of which it treats. Yet, as I feel greatly assured of the significance and importance of the subject treated, I venture to hope that this little pamphlet will meet with a not unfavourable reception from those who take an interest in the matter of Neurasthenia.

THOMAS STRETCH DOWSE.

14, WELBECK STREET,  
CAVENDISH SQUARE, W.

*June, 1880.*



ON NEURASTHENIA;  
OR,  
BRAIN AND NERVE EXHAUSTION;  
Its Nature and Treatment.

---

THE more one studies the laws of nature, as exemplified in the mysterious and wonderful processes of life, the more one feels how inadequate is the mind of man to comprehend even the most primitive laws which govern his material being. Scarcely a year rolls round that the world is not surprised by the revelation of some new discovery, which is looked upon as the outcome of the inventive genius of man, and which shows that the forces of nature have been either so elaborated, or correlated, that a hitherto unknown factor has been produced which, in itself, throws all other novelties into the shade; and so it is in the world of scientific and practical medicine. Theories, are constantly springing up concerning the nature and treatment of disease, some simple, others elaborate and complex, which have a period of renown, and then fall into disuse and are forgotten; and so far forgotten, in fact, that at some remote period they are reintroduced as something new.

There can be no doubt, however, that the solid advance which is daily being made in the material sphere of science will aid the biologist in unravelling many vexed problems with regard to what we know concerning the special

functions of man's body, and which knowledge will have another important bearing, namely, to convince the man of science what a wide gulf must ever exist between the finite and the infinite. In the consideration of the asthenic or exhausted state of the nervous system we are naturally led to make some inquiry in reference to its cause, and we have to find out whether the vital arrest of nervous energy is general, or whether it is local or circumscribed. As an instance of general vital exhaustion of the nervous system we will take the man who dies from what is called 'General Paralysis of the Insane,' and, as an instance of local or circumscribed vital exhaustion, the man who, during an attack of diphtheria, dies from exhaustion of the nervous centres, which give motor power to the walls of the heart. However we meet with ordinary examples of nervous exhaustion every day of our lives in some form, and it is only these kinds of nervous exhaustion we shall consider somewhat fully ; although the question is far too comprehensive to be treated in a short paper of this kind in any other but a superficial way. Dr. Geo. M. Beard, of New York City, was the first physician who drew the especial attention of the profession to the signs and symptoms of this disease, and he subdivides the term *Neurasthenia* into *Cerebrasthenia* (exhaustion of the brain) and *Myelasthenia* (exhaustion of the spinal cord), Erb, in Ziemssen's, 'Cyclopedia of Medicine,' vol. xiii., devotes a short special chapter to what he calls *Neurasthenia of the Spinal Cord*. I assure you, gentlemen, that for many years I discarded the term *Neurasthenia* or nervous exhaustion, for when I was in the midst of pathological work I thought the term vague and unscientific, and I expected the scalpel and the microscope to reveal to me the cause of any arrest of nervous function. I am happy to say, that as I have grown older so have I grown wiser in this respect : and I am therefore now very glad to have recourse to a term, which is in every way most applicable to a number of nervous derangements. When we speak of

the exhaustion of a nerve, or of a nervous centre, or of the exhaustion of the brain, or of the spinal cord, or of the exhaustion of the whole nervous system, we refer to what must be understood as a diseased condition, although it is, in the strict sense of the word, merely an arrest of function and something more, the precise nature of which *something more*, however, it is oftentimes a difficult matter to determine. Healthful sleep is due to nervous exhaustion, consequent upon an arrest of function in the hemisphere of the brain; and during this temporary arrest of function, the trophic or nutritive elements are still actively employed, and the brain-cells are being recharged with nutritive pabulum in the form of bioplasm. The arrest of function alone would not restore energy to an exhausted nervous centre, and, if nutrition were not going on during sleep, the person would not wake up invigorated and refreshed. In the cases of exhaustion of the brain, caused by excessive pain, which we find associated, for instance, with cancer, or in the exhaustion of the brain which we find frequently accompanies persons suffering from consumption, we see our patients completely exhausted from want of sleep, which is also due to arrest of function in the hemispheres of the brain. Function in this instance, however, is not only not perfectly carried out, but the laws of nutrition are so inactive that the very effort at repair of the exhausted brain cells produces an irritability of function incompatible either with rest or with repair of the exhausted state. In my wards for consumption at the Central London Sick Asylum, at Highgate, I used frequently to observe to the nurse that such a patient was suffering, or apparently suffering, more from an exhausted brain, than from disease of the lungs, and the signs of that condition are well known. The eye will be bright, the countenance distrustful and anxious, the temper irritable, delusions and hallucinations not uncommon, and in some cases even self-control will be lost, insomuch that the patient may become violent.

If questioned as to his health, he will say that he is quite well, and wants to get up and go for a walk, although, in fact, he is scarcely able to move. Yet see how rapidly the whole being of this patient becomes changed if we but treat him in such a way as to effect a complete arrest of function in his cerebral centres. Let him take half-a-dram of the hydrate of chloral,\* and note the effect; if it induce sleep, we shall find that when he awakes he is a different creature. The brain-cells have been at rest, and they have been endowed with normal potential energy; they have become changed from a condition of irritability and instability to a state of normal molecular activity. He still feels his weakness and incapacity, but the brain is the least exhausted part of his body. Now let us, please, just consider what is meant by this arrest of function, this molecular inertia, which gives rise to exhaustion in the nerve-cell and the nervous centre. Physicists tell us, that, in the inorganic world, matter and energy are indissolubly associated; that we know of matter, only through the transformation of energy, and that we recognise energy, only through its affections of matter. But the especial properties, possessed by matter, will depend upon the circumstances, under which such matter is placed. We know that gold, which is usually opaque, may be made sufficiently thin to be transparent; that iron may be rendered soft and plastic by heat. These changes are called molecular changes, and may perhaps be better demonstrated by the volatilization of æther. Energy, as existing in a material form, may be illustrated by the following experiment. If we pass a strong electric current through water, the electric force or energy is used up, in decomposing the molecules of water, and in dividing these molecules into their component molecules of hydrogen and oxygen. If these gases so evolved are col-

\* The late Dr. Anstie proved that chloral excited a toning influence on the arterial web.

lected and mixed, we may by heating the mixture recover the electric energy in the sound and heat of an explosion.

The physicists say that matter and energy are more or less strongly united according to their power of resistance, which power the chemist will designate as the forces of affinity and cohesion existing between the atoms and molecules of matter. Now these varying conditions of matter can be proved to have a definite existence. We will follow this subject a little further, because my object is to lead you to the consideration of the highest attributes of energy in the inorganic world, in order that it may be the more readily comprehended how these automatic or mere dynamic changes are influenced by the existence of organized media.

In spectrum analysis it is seen that a free molecule has definite fundamental modes of vibration, which give definite wave-lengths of light just as a tuning-fork gives musical vibrations of a definite pitch, and molecules of different kinds of matter have different periods of vibration, which are distinguished by their characteristic rays. We know that heat is the agent, which, in the inorganic world, starts these vibrations and supports their existence.\* The inertia of a body is, I conclude, in direct ratio with its resisting power.

\* Maxwell, in his observations on the 'Theory of Heat,' says that the energy of a body may be defined as the capacity which it has of doing work, and is measured by the quantity of work which it can do. ('Theory of Heat,' by J. Clarke Maxwell, 1875, p. 90.) I venture to think that we, as biologists and physicians, can, after a manner, account for exhaustion of nervous energy in very much the same way that the physicist explains the energy of an atom or molecule according to its power of resistance in relation to the medium which surrounds it. Dr. Ralph Richardson, in his exceedingly valuable and instructive work on 'The Nature of Life,' ('The Nature of Life,' by Ralph Richardson, M.A., M.D., 1879, p. 13) says: 'To speak of changes of energy or force, and that force shows itself in motion, is decidedly illogical and unscientific. A force, or power, can produce no effect, unless in co-operation with some matter having a susceptibility adapted to such force, and by its reaction giving to our minds the nature of force.'

We pass on now, by way of comparison, to the organic world, and what do we find ? We find there a building up of the same elements as in the inorganic world, and these are, in like manner, composed of ultimate atoms, or molecules ; and these atoms are, in fact, as I have stated, nothing more nor less than a material form of energy, but in addition to this form of energy we have a power peculiar to itself, which Sir William Gull calls a correlation of forces. This power we know as life or vitality. Sir William Gull, in his Harveian oration at the College of Physicians, 1870, in speaking of vitality, said : ' I cannot forbear for one moment asking you to consider again this organization of our bodies in relation to the earth we inhabit, and then say if it be otherwise conceivable but as the expression of the highest correlation of these external conditions.' I shall perhaps explain my meaning more practically by calling your attention to the wonderful swimming exploits of Captain Webb, which indicate to my mind the immense conservative energy, which his nervous system is capable of storing up, and also of expending in a rhythmical and automatic manner ; but this is not all, for Captain Webb has to thank his excellent physique, and his well-organized and evenly-balanced nervous system, which give him the power, or energy, or capacity to resist fatigue in a manner quite unique. I lay special stress upon this point of resistance, or as some may term it, the power of endurance. If all men were built after the manner of Captain Webb, we should hear very little of nervous exhaustion or epilepsy. The brain, and consequently every individual cell of which the brain is composed, is a factor as well as a nidus for the conservation of energy. Molecular displacement in the nerve-cells means the exercise of disruptive energy, which leads to a failure in the power of resistance, a diminution of vitality, a lowering of tension, a decrease of tone, and an exhaustion of the nervous system ; in fact, an arrest of function and

molecular inertia.\* The energy or force with which a nerve-cell is specially endowed may be said to consist of (1) the active, floating or automatic ; (2) the complementary ; and (3) the residual, or latent energy, just as in the lungs we have the tidal, the complementary, and the residual air. The one is, in a measure, as much a form of energy as the other, and there can be little doubt that most functional troubles of the nervous system are due to the want of an equable development of stable energy ; and this results from abnormal molecular interchange inducing defective correlative integrity of individual cells, or groups of cells. How far, this nervous energy or force is essentially the vital force, is a question of conjecture, but whatever may be the precise nature of nervous energy, it is, I think, apparent, that it governs and controls all other forces, whether these forces be formative or correlative, and that it is only by the united and harmonious action of these forces that health and even life itself are preserved. I may note here, that the late Dr. Bence Jones ('Lectures on some of the Applications of Chemistry and Mechanics to Pathology and Therapeutics') held the view, that death consisted in the stoppage of the conversion of latent force into active force, caused by some arrest of action in the heart, lungs, or brain. This view of Dr. Jones's appears, to my mind, to be a correct one ; and we often note what a wonderful conservation of energy there is in the automatic nervous system, and I might almost go so far as to say in the medulla oblongata itself in some aged people, even at their period of dying, although the hand of death can be seen to be indelibly fixed upon them, yet it will take days before the nervous system becomes finally exhausted, and the last spark of vitality becomes for ever extinguished.

I find in the *British Medical Journal* for April 10, the following letter from Mr. Henson of Manchester, headed—

\* It is a general principle in physics that energy in performing work is expended and finally exhausted.

*'Persistent Vitality.'*

'SIR,—I have a case under my care at the present time, few particulars concerning which I think may be of interest. It is that of a female in her seventy-first year, who was seized with paralysis on the 20th of January last, since which date she has taken no nourishment whatever, and yet at the time of my writing she is still alive and conscious. She was of a spare habit of body before the attack, but is now positively nothing but skin and bone.

'SYDNEY HENSON.

Here we have a remarkable instance of conservation of energy, as Mr. Henson's patient had absolutely taken no nourishment for nearly three months. Well, now, gentlemen, I think we have seen that heat and energy are the result of molecular motion, that vitality is coexistent, and absolutely dependent upon motion, and that the energy dependent upon either physical or vital motion becomes expended and finally exhausted. The great problem then, which we have to solve, appears to me to be this: In what manner can we best determine that amount of conservative energy in our bodies, which shall at all times render the supply of nerve force adequate to the demand made upon it? I think we have also seen, that man's resisting power to overcome the exhausting influences, which surround him in almost every sphere of life, is due, and in proportion to, the inherent power, possessed by his nervous centres, to conserve those forces which correlatively make up vitality. In other and plainer words, the soundness of a man's constitution is in direct ratio with his inherent vital capacity to combat the natural tendency to death, and to resist the ravages of disease which undermine and destroy his conservation of energy. If we but investigate the question of latent force, or reserve of

nervous energy a little farther, we shall then frequently find, that, if a continuous demand be made upon man's reserved store of energy, no matter how strong the man may be, his vital powers and force of resistance become unavoidably enfeebled, and in some way or the other, if life itself be not shortened, he becomes prematurely old. I have had many patients under my care who suffered from changes in the brain and spinal cord, such as we meet with in progressive muscular atrophy, and the general paralysis of the insane, where the patients have been at one time of their lives notably athletic, and exceptionally strong. Now these diseases, I maintain, arise from too great a demand having been made upon the reserve forces of such patients as these. We have, however, to bear in mind that there are two reservoirs of nerve force, or conservative energy, in our bodies, which, although immediately connected, nevertheless act more or less independently of each other. I refer now to the automatic forces as distinct from volitional force. The consideration of this question leads me into a field of inquiry which is almost inexhaustible, and I must therefore lay my deductions before you in a simple practical way. My experience leads me to the conclusion that automatic muscular exertion rarely, if ever of itself, produces such a drain upon the reserve forces of the individual as to lead to any serious or vital consequences, provided the individual in question be leading in other respects a healthful and invigorating life free from any kind of debauchery, worry, or mental strain, and, moreover, provided he has a stable and well-organised nervous system to work upon. On the other hand, we meet with professional and business men, as well as men of pleasure, such as the gambler, and the *débauché*, who reach the zenith of manhood with a splendid physique, but who, probably, from circumstances, are impelled to lead a life of overstrain, and in consequence of this their reserve forces are constantly being overtaxed, brain function becomes disturbed, and rapid

exhaustion of the nervous system is frequently the inevitable sequence. I will now pass on to consider the

### Diagnosis.

The diagnosis of the neurasthenic conditions of the brain or spinal cord in acute disease I shall not here refer to, for they are well known to all practitioners of medicine ; but I will endeavour, as far as possible, to draw out a differential diagnosis between a neurasthenia of the nervous system—which for years remains a mere functional affection, and ultimately the patient recovers—and a neurasthenia of the brain and nervous system, which rapidly leads on to defective nutrition of the nervous centres, and which is usually followed by incurable organic disease—such, for instance, as we find associated with some forms of mental derangement, and many forms of paralysis. I have no hesitation in asserting it to be my firm belief that many of the incurable cases of insanity, locomotor ataxy, progressive muscular atrophy, and many other diseases of the brain and nervous system, commence as a neurasthenia of the nervous centres ; and when in this state they are quite amenable to treatment. I am extremely doubtful whether it is possible for a neurasthenia of the brain to exist quite independently of a neurasthenia of the spinal cord, although the relative condition of functional impairment may be merely one of degree. For instance, in a case of exhaustion of the spinal cord, we are sure to find some deviation from the normal in the attributes of the mind ; and in the case of cerebral exhaustion, we find a train of symptoms referable to derangement of the functions of the spinal cord. There are, however, some distinctive differences which may be noticed. I would rather first draw your attention to the symptoms of a neurasthenic or exhaustive condition of the nervous centres as a whole, and we shall then be in a better position to compare local exhaustions

with organic disease. We are quite willing to admit, and we have endeavoured to make it clear, that there are certain people in existence who come under the term nervous; and however much such people may try to make others believe that they are not nervous, yet to the skilful eye of the practical physician, the more the effort is made on the part of the patient to dissimulate, the more evident does it become that his absolutely nervous state cannot be disguised. Just as the braggart who is admitted to be a coward, so it is with the nervous who are inherently weak, but who endeavour to make themselves appear to be endowed with extraordinary courage and braveness.

Whenever patients walk into my consulting-room in a peculiarly elastic jaunty style, and with an air of diffidence say that there is not much the matter, and when after putting several questions to such patients they suddenly collapse and complain of a whole category of evils, I then begin to conclude that they are suffering from nervous exhaustion or neurasthenia. Then what are the usual characteristics of such patients as these? Can they be described as looking pale, haggard, and careworn? Certainly not; for they may be robust, stout, plethoric, and apparently cheerful. Yet, whether they be pale and thin on the one hand, or stout and even robust on the other, we find one marked peculiarity—namely, an evident desire to know why you ask them such and such questions, and whether we are perfectly sure that they are not suffering from disease of the heart or of the lungs, which may rapidly terminate their existence.

These are the kind of patients who not unfrequently fall into the hands of quack practitioners of medicine, and the quack can for the time being make them believe anything he chooses to tell them. Notwithstanding even this gentleman, we must not forget that we are dealing with patients who are morbidly sensitive, and who require great moral and even physical help to enable them to overcome and

subordinate a condition which in many cases is tantamount to the borderland of insanity. The time at my disposal will not allow me to add cases to my paper, otherwise I could give you instances which at first sight appear somewhat incredible, and cases which have rapidly yielded to appropriate treatment. In exhaustion of the brain we find :

1. An irritability and instability of the functions of the mind. Thought, memory, and perception are not correlated, so as to give rise to the engenderment of the true co-ordination of ideas. Words will be misplaced in a sentence, and words or even sentences will be uttered or written which are totally foreign to the patient's real meaning, as in aphasia or agraphia. 'The same thing has occurred to myself, and after going round my wards at the asylum, I have become so tired, and my brain so exhausted that I have turned to the nurse when leaving her ward, and instead of saying good-morning, I have said to her, "Put out your tongue." This has been a temporary arrest of function, which food and rest have immediately rectified.'
2. There will be a marked want of steadfastness of purpose. A character which was notably strong and resolute will become, under the influence of exhaustion of the brain, weak and vacillating.
3. The ego will become intensely exaggerated, and although the patients will be, in a measure, shy, yet they seem to labour under the idea that whether they are at church, in the street, or at any place of amusement, they are the observed of all observers.
4. Application to work for any given time is altogether out of the question. Patients suffering from this disease have told me, that when in health they could add up three or four columns of figures at one time with the greatest ease, but that they were now

unable to do anything of the kind ; they soon became confused, and ultimately became so stupid that they had to give up the task altogether.

5. The memory will be markedly defective, yet at times and for a short while it may be brilliant ; but throughout the whole course of this disease we find this especial mark of feebleness and instability to be one of its most prominent features.
6. All the special senses are frequently perverted. They may be morbidly acute, or they may be morbidly inactive, and they can scarcely ever be said to be quite normal.\*
7. Headache and neuralgic pains are of frequent occurrence. The headache is not usually relieved by the recumbent posture. The head pains are usually situated at the top and back of the head ; they are rarely to be found over the forehead.
8. The patient's manner will be set down by the public, or by his or her friends, as strange. They will be either irritable, moody, or particularly cheerful and good tempered, and they are not unfrequently beset by imaginary dangers and difficulties which have no possible existence. No class of people are so anxious about the future as neurasthenics.
9. It is a sad misfortune, and yet it is a very common occurrence for persons suffering from nervous exhaustion of the brain to give way to some morbid craving, until it becomes a vicious and intractable habit. Many dipsomaniacs can assign their mania to have taken its origin from an exhausted brain, and many a man has committed suicide from the same cause.
10. In reference to sleep, we find that patients will be,

\* Some of my patients have complained of the greatest intolerance to light and sound.

as a rule, extremely wakeful. They tell us that they awake about two or three o'clock in the morning, and after this they are unable to sleep at all ; or, on the other hand—but this in my own experience is certainly the exception—there is a morbid tendency to sleep, and especially after eating. I believe that many severe cases of exhaustion of the brain are brought about by not paying sufficient attention to sleep and to rest. Excessive fatigue, overwork, worry, sensuality, mental anxiety, shock, grief, are among some of its most important causes.

11. Giddiness, specks floating before the eyes, momentary loss of consciousness, abstractedness, sudden fits of excitement and passion, ringing noises in the ears, sudden outbursts of profuse perspiration of the body generally, or of the hands and feet alone, are frequent signs and symptoms of exhaustion of the nervous system.
12. Dryness of the mouth and throat, oppression about the chest, inability to take a deep breath, palpitation of the heart, and even a feeling of creeping and formication over the skin in the left mammary region, are not unfrequent ; and so we find similar abnormalities of function in association with the vagus, spinal, and sympathetic nerves. Atonic dyspepsia, loss of appetite, or an inordinate craving for food or drink, irregular action of the bowels, as well as an arrest of the ovarian and uterine functions\*—all these conditions are unquestionably associated with the disease which we have under our consideration.

The symptoms and signs of neurasthenia of the spinal cord alone are made evident to us by weakness and failure of function in the lower parts of the body, and not unfrequently in the upper as well as the lower limbs ; but as I

\* Coldness and blueness of the extremities, and numbness.

before stated, I question very much if exhaustion of the spinal cord ever exists (excepting in some very acute cases) without an exhaustion of the brain existing at the same time, although the symptoms of an exhaustion of the brain will require great care in order to effect their elucidation ; and again I would say, that the signs and symptoms which are indicative of an exhaustion of the spinal cord require the most searching investigation on the part of the physician in order that he may if possible make himself quite sure that these signs and symptoms are not due to some commencing organic disease of the spinal cord, and that they are not alone due to mere functional derangement. A sensation of burning down the spine, with coldness, numbness, and heaviness of the extremities, accompanied with rapid exhaustion and fatigue after slight exertion, followed by stiffness in the muscles, pain, tremor, and cramps, would, if taken alone, be the best evidence to lead us to the conclusion that an ordinary exhaustion of the spinal cord did exist, and the more especially if these signs and symptoms were accompanied with a feeling of general *malaise*, sleeplessness, and extreme sensitiveness to cold ; and perhaps even a slight ataxy in locomotion may be experienced, the more especially if the will be brought forcibly to bear in the performance of some special co-ordinate movement. But I feel sure that we cannot (otherwise than in the purely hysterical state) add to the above any more serious signs and symptoms without running the risk of making a most grave and unjustifiable error in diagnosis. There are some physicians, amongst whom is Dr. Beard, of New York, who state that the lightning-like and darting pains which we find to be diagnostic of degeneration of the posterior columns of the cord, as well as muscular fibrillations which are so frequently associated with progressive muscular atrophy, are often connected with spinal exhaustion—pure and simple. For my own part my practice leads me to an entirely different conclusion,

and I would caution all those who have not had large experience in diseases of the nervous system not to follow any such doctrine as this diagnostic unless they wish to run serious risk of losing their reputation. I have at the present moment an officer under my care who returned from India about three years ago, suffering from all the symptoms of spinal exhaustion plus the electric-like pains of locomotor ataxy. He consulted one of the leading nerve doctors, who assured him he was suffering from suppressed gout. However, in a few weeks after this he found that he reeled about his club as if drunk. He then consulted a well-known gout doctor, who told him, greatly to his horror, that he was suffering from locomotor ataxy; and so it proved, for he is now bedridden, and hopelessly incurable. Then I would say, gentlemen, and I have had some experience to warrant my making the assertion, that should a patient be suffering from the symptoms of spinal exhaustion as I have described them, plus lightning-like, plunging, and darting pains, although there be no other signs of locomotor ataxy present, let your prognosis be given with the greatest caution, for I feel sure that in such cases as these sclerosis of the spinal cord is commencing.

There are some physicians who attribute the signs and symptoms of neurasthenia to a bloodless condition of the brain, or of the spinal cord. I am quite sure that this opinion is in a large number of cases incorrect, and cannot be supported by any trustworthy doctrine.

Neurasthenia of the nervous system is an entity, which is quite distinct from those affections arising from a bloodless condition of the brain and spinal cord.

## THE HEREDITY OF NERVOUS CONSTITUTIONS WHICH ARE ESPECIALLY LIABLE TO EXHAUSTION AND FATIGUE.

WERE it possible for us to take a glance at the constitution of man, as man was originally made, we should in all probability find that, in relation to mere anatomical details, there was no essential difference between him and the man existing in the nineteenth century.

We might even go farther than this, and, by the most able chemical investigation, analyse tissue after tissue without finding the slightest variation or change. We might bring the most powerful and most modern appliances to our aid, and yet as far as human research is concerned, we should be unable to reveal any ultimate difference, which could enable us to arrive at a conclusive estimate as to the reason, why we should suffer from diseases which never existed in the body of primitive man. Schlegel speaking of the unanimous testimony of ancient tradition respecting the longevity of men in the first ages of the world, says:—

‘By a simpler course of life and diet than the very artificial, unnatural, and over-refined modes we follow, there are, even at the present day, instances of longevity far beyond the ordinary duration of human life. In India it is by no means uncommon to meet with men, especially in the Brahminical caste, more than a hundred years of age, and in the enjoyment of a robust and even generative vigour of constitution. In the labouring classes of Russia,

whose mode of living is so simple, there are examples of men living to more than a hundred or a hundred and twenty, and even a hundred and fifty years of age. And although these instances form but rare exceptions, they are less uncommon there, than in other European countries. There are even remarkable cases of old men, who after the entire loss of their teeth, have gained a complete new set, as if their constitution had received a new sap of life, and a principle of second growth. What in the present physical degeneracy of mankind forms but a rare exception, may originally have been the ordinary measure of human life.\*

And it would seem natural enough by inference to conclude, that in the earliest ages it was rather the rule than the exception, that man should leave this world by no other means, than by what is universally known as decay of nature or by violence.

If it be so—and this we see no reason to doubt—it behoves us to look into and inquire in what consist those changes which, we must admit, are in the majority of instances inappreciable, but which have subjected us to premature death and disease. Is it possible that the modes of living which have raised us, so to speak, to the heights of civilization, have carried with them those aids to early degenerative changes which we meet with in everyday life, and which, it is only fair to assume, have resulted from an hereditary transmission, which has taken its origin from some cause, and at some period in the history of man, of which we are bound to confess our ignorance, but which makes itself manifest in many ways in those multifarious conditions of disease and decline which assail us on all hands? In his address to the members of the Medical Association, August 9, 1873, the late Dr. Parkes said :

‘During this time we have learnt partly to know the great class of degenerations with its two divisions, viz. :

\* Schlegel’s ‘Philosophy of History.’

Degenerations which are simply the result of age, *i. e.*, of the loss of the peculiar formative force which first builds up, then maintains, and then finally dies, and leaves behind it a tissue, worn out, effete, and useless; and degenerations which are the slow result of some excessively slight but constant failure in nutrition, fibroid, fatty and atheromatous changes and wastings, especially of muscular fibres, but also of gland-cells and mucous membrane, and nerves come in to complicate the acuter maladies, and largely to increase their mortality. It must be confessed, that while they account oftentimes for failure in treatment, the chance of degeneration being present in middle-aged patients is a source of great embarrassment in prognosis; except when attacking the kidneys and muscular tissue they are diagnosed with great difficulty, and slow degenerations of the alimentary mucous membrane, or of the nervous system, are among the most puzzling of maladies. In the means of detecting the presence, and estimating the amount of these degenerations, we have still much to learn, and no greater benefit could be conferred on the human race than a perfect analysis of these causes, and a recognition of how they may be avoided.\*

However, let this be as it may, we must not ignore the fact, that, from the earliest writers on medicine, we find certain conditions of both mind and body alien to what might be called the standard of health, and which might be rightly termed disease. Therefore, it must be taken for granted, that however rude and uncultivated were the means placed at their disposal to aid in diagnosis, and however simple may have been the primitive type of disease, still it did exist independently of mere senile change. Then it comes to be a question in what manner, and in what way, either in origin, type, or formation, these alterations have been brought about, which make the classes of disease to differ, both in character and nature,

\* Professor Parkes 'On Degeneration.'

from those incidental to our forefathers. It is, nevertheless, true that a simple pyrexia, or fever, is made manifest by the same signs and symptoms which were laid down by Galen ; yet the treatment then applicable is now rightly decried, for he supposed that diseases depended on similar qualities, and were to be counteracted by opposite medication, as, for example, we were to meet a hot disease by a cold remedy. This, we must admit, is somewhat different to the treatment now usually adopted ; and for what reason ? Because, we say, that disease is altered in type. Yet upon investigation, we are much inclined to doubt that this is really the fact. On the contrary, we are led to believe that some alteration has taken place, either by hereditary development, or through surrounding influences, which has produced a molecular alteration in the fluids or tissues of the body, resulting in a change of diathesis or constitution which makes an inflammation to differ in degree and in intensity. This leads us at once to consider, whether we are not right in talking of constitution in reference to disease, and whether the *vox populi* has not some show of reason when the family doctor is preferred, because he is said to know the constitution. It is not more than some thirty years ago, when men of the highest eminence considered it all-important in diagnosis to find out what is called the hereditary tendency or constitutional diathesis, and to base their plan of treatment upon the information elicited. But of late years this has in some degree fallen into disuse, and the so-called nutritive, or stimulant treatment has become the fashion. Dr. Alison recognised the increased necessity for stimulants, as a consequence of the changes he observed in the character of diseases. Dr. Todd on the other hand, who practised the stimulant treatment to a great extent, did so as a matter of routine, rather than admitting its necessity on account of the altered type of disease ; and it would therefore appear that Dr. Todd had an idea similar to the foregoing statements of the author in regarding the

change as being one rather of constitution than of type.\*

That the stimulant treatment has its advantages, no one can doubt, and in the main perhaps one might say, that it is correct, the more specially where we deal with those forms of disease, which have to be treated upon what is called the expectant plan. If, for instance, we have under our care a fever, which we know runs a definite course, we can, by careful and almost hourly examination, support the patient under the degenerative changes, which must necessarily arise. And in such a case as this, it will not perhaps benefit our patient much to ascertain whether or not he is, either by hereditary transmission or by acquisition, the subject of gout or scrofula. But at the same time it might be all-important, to be made acquainted with what we understand to be his peculiar constitutional habit of body.

For instance, he may not be the subject directly of any hereditary taint, yet at the same time he may be deficient in that tonicity of mind and body, which is so often the result of the too frequent use of stimulants, of over-mental work, or of some other vitiating cause. Here, then, we have open to us two different constitutional conditions—the one acquired, the other hereditary; without an acquaintance with which, it is to be maintained that the physician is powerless to combat the ravages of disease. And a thorough knowledge of this condition will be found so all-important, in the treatment of those forms of disease to which this paper especially refers, that it would be useless attempting to make the subject thoroughly clear, unless we explain, with some degree of accuracy and precision, what is generally understood, from a medical point of view, by the term 'constitution.'

Dr. Aitken says, in his 'Practice of Medicine,' that it appears evident that the human body is capable, from

\* Dr. Todd, 'Clinical Medicine,' 1862.

causes known as well as unknown to us, of undergoing various alterations, as regards not only its physical, but also what has been termed its medical constitution. The following lucid account of hereditary constitutional disease, given by Sir James Paget in the discussion on cancer, at the Pathological Society, will here be read with interest :

‘ The transmission of cancer accords with the transmission of all other hereditary constitutional diseases—with gout, with syphilis, with tuberculosis, with scrofula ; for here I may mention that I think it will be well, if we study the whole matter of the pathology of cancer, not by its accordance with certain verbal definitions of our own, but in its relations with those diseases which we are all of us ready to admit to be either constitutional or local. And I assume that we are all of us quite ready to admit that gout and syphilis, and tuberculosis and scrofula, are constitutional diseases. I say, then, the transmission of cancer by inheritance accords perfectly with what we see in them, not with what we see in local diseases. The gout of the parent may appear in all the possible various textures of his offspring, never, it may be, in the great toe of one of them, but in the joint of one, in the skin of another, the bronchial tubes of another, the pulmonary texture of another. Of all the variety of diseases which we class under the general name of gout, the whole may be derived from one parent who may have gout in what we regard as its typical form. And I need not here speak of the varieties of form in which tuberculosis is propagated by inheritance, or scrofula, or any of those other which we regard as constitutional diseases ; and this fact I repeat in regard to the transmission of a disease by inheritance is so all-important in respect of what we call its origin, that I think it is to be regretted if we deviate in the least from holding that the constitutional element of the origin of cancer is one of the most important and considerable things that we have to study. . . . When after an injury there is a deviation from ordinary changes, we seldom or never entertain a question

but that the deviation is due to some constitutional defect in the person in whom it occurs. We see a wrenched knee-joint which does not recover after the ordinary fashion, which swells and remains hot, with thickening of the synovial membranes, perhaps with the formation of abscess. We are as sure as of anything in pathology that that is because the person is scrofulous. We see an injury of a bone, and it becomes the seat of tuberculous deposit. We understand that that is because the person to whom the injury has happened, is one with a constitutional tuberculosis. We see an injury done to a foot, and it becomes the seat of a gouty inflammation; of another done to joint or bone, and it becomes the seat of syphilitic disease. In all of these cases our pathology is as sure as any piece of pathology we have; it may be erroneous, but at least it is as certain as any other knowledge that we have, that deviation from the ordinary method of change after injury is because of some constitutional peculiarity in the person upon whom the injury has been inflicted.\*

It will be seen from what has just been stated, that we each individually possess a something transmitted from our parents, which can receive with all truthfulness the term hereditary constitution. By this must be understood, that diathetic habitude or cachexy, which is included under one of the four conditions—tubercle, scrofula, gout, or cancer. Yet even here it must not be forgotten, that what one understands by the term ‘delicate constitution,’ and which does not come under any special dyscrasy or ill-habit of body, can be inherited by transmission. Again, the parents, either one or both, might be of ill-habit of body from intemperate or vicious courses, and the offspring might be delicate or ill-nurtured, without any special dyscrasy. But yet, more important still, we must not forget the possibility, which amounts to a conceivable reality, that the present generation does suffer from a constitutional ill-habit of body, which

\* ‘Discussion on Cancer,’ *Lancet*, March 21st, 1876.

has never yet received a definition—the result in all probability of the com-mingling of constitutional cachexies existing in the bloods of our progenitors.

To make this clear, we will take by way of example a man of mature years, apparently healthy. All the organs, secretive and eliminative, shall be doing their normal amount of work. He shall not be suffering from any mental anxiety or external depressing agency. Yet he will come to the physician complaining of great weariness upon slight exertion—of palpitation of the heart with disordered bowels upon the slightest mental emotion—headache on rising in the morning, and a feeling of tiredness unrelieved by the night's rest. There may or may not be want of appetite as well as distaste for society, yet there is a total incapability of application to any especial object—in fact a general want of 'tone' throughout the body. Now upon the most minute and careful investigation, it is often found that the man may be sound in every sense of the word. Still, upon examination into his family history, we shall in all probability discover, that he has descended from an unhealthy stock. The hereditary taint on the father's side might have been that of gout, and on the mother's that of tubercle. And we have in the son a condition of constitution, by hereditary transmission, partaking of the characteristics of the father on the one hand, and of the mother on the other, but which in him is nothing more than what is generally understood to be a weak state of health. The more one studies what might justly be called the natural laws, which govern the transmission of diseased states from generation to generation, the less likely one is to look upon the foregoing as a mere visionary conclusion.

Then in hereditary transmission, we have to consider what evidence is afforded to us, by which we are assured, that constitutional genesis of an essentially congenital type is an established fact. A moment's consideration will without difficulty solve the problem. Granted that the ovum

becomes impregnated with the spermatic fluid, by which process of fecundation it does not lose its original condition, it yet, however, takes to itself a diseased life which in process of time differentiates into the several organs of the foetal body. That this is really the case is an undeniable fact, and it is brought about by a vital agency whose power is made manifest, but of whose modes of working we must plead ignorance.

It is surprising to find, with what method and mathematical precision, this outcome of heterologous growth is maintained and carried on, until maturity becomes complete. And it would be absurd incredulity to question the fact, that the primary sperm-cell of the male, and also the ovular cell of the female, did not each carry with them their own inherent and distinguishing constitutional characteristics. This is fully exemplified in every possible way. That 'like engenders like' is an admitted axiom, and demonstrated no less in race than in species, both in mental attributes and in bodily conformation; even more than this, we find it in mere habit and character.

Dr. Carpenter, in his work on 'Mental Physiology,' says:

'In particular, it is to be noted that while the more general characters are shared by both parents, the more special commonly belong to one only.'\*

He further says:

'A great deal of discussion has taken place as to whether the male or the female parent exerts the greater influence over the character of the offspring; and while experience does not yet justify any definite conclusion on the point, the question seems to have been entirely ignored, whether the union of two different natures may not produce—as in the combination of an acid and a base—a resultant dissimilar to either of them.

\* Carpenter's 'Mental Physiology.'

This much, however, may be confidently affirmed, that where *general constitutional taints*, that is to say *abnormal* habitudes of nutrition, have been acquired, these tend to propagate themselves hereditarily ; and that they do so with the most certainty when *both* parents partake of them. It may also be affirmed, that every repetition of such transmission tends to increase the mischief ; so that by 'breeding in and in,' the injurious external conditions remaining the same, a very slight original departure from healthy nutrition may become intensified, in successive generations, into a most serious abnormality.'

Thus it seems indisputable, that we are the subjects of hereditary physical and mental conformations. There are also hereditary conditions, which cannot be called constitutional. For instance, the father might have a clubbed foot, or a webbed hand, and this might be transmitted to the offspring. Or, whilst bearing child, the mother might be so influenced by some external object, producing such shock to the nervous system, that the visual effect is not only impressed upon the mind, but is transferred to the foetus in utero. This is an inherited abnormality in the offspring, which cannot be called constitutional.\*

The line can, and must be drawn between transmission by inheritance of mere abnormalities on the one hand, and of disease on the other ; and the latter alone can claim to be considered, as a constitutional condition.

At all events this is the accepted fact, and yet upon consideration we do not feel inclined to rest here, and the common phrase in reference to constitution must not be lost sight of. For instance, it is often said, 'What a good robust constitution so and so has.' 'Yes,' is the answer, 'and so had his father before him.' Surely this is also inherited, and quite as much so, as the constitution of so and so, who is dying of consumption, of which disease his father died before him, and the one is as equally due to a blood

\* Watson's 'Practice of Medicine,' p. 117.

state as the other. Although we do not wish to enter into a lengthened detail of hereditary psychoses, or conditions of mind, either natural or abnormal, still the idea presents itself with a practical bearing, which warrants the conclusion, that 'constitution,' whatever it may mean, is made up not merely of blood or tissue elements, but that also these must be taken in relation with those mental states and nerve forces, which play so important and vital a part in man's entity and being.

If the morbid condition which is known as gout, consumption, or cancer, exists by transmission in the blood, it is quite possible that it should, and it often does, remain quiescent throughout the lifetime of a whole generation, but it develops itself with tenfold violence in the succeeding descendants. Here we naturally ask ourselves the question: 'What agency can be at work to prevent the development of so rapidly destroying and fatal a disease as consumption—the seeds of which we feel assured exist in the constitution. It is only by a knowledge of the working of the laws, which govern the formative processes of nutrition, and maintain the standard tonicity of health, that we can explain this problem. How often does it come within our daily practice, to be called in by the parent to treat a child dying of consumption, when the parents themselves have always enjoyed robust health, but upon enquiry it is found, that one or both of the grand-parents have died comparatively young from the same disease !

Again, how often do we find persons come to us for treatment, whose condition previously has been that of perfect health, but whom we now find to be suffering from rapidly spreading tubercle, and whose children have died young, and whose family history shows conclusive evidence of consumptive taint. There are instances on record where the parents have lived to a ripe old age, though all of their children have died from cancer—not of the same, but of different localizations. Perhaps, however, with cancer, as

differing from gout and tubercle, we are right in affirming that it does not as a rule remain latent in the constitution through a generation, but rather develops itself in a most marked manner in succeeding offspring. We quote again from Sir James Paget :

‘A lady died with cancer of the stomach ; one of her daughters died with cancer of the stomach ; another died with cancer of the breast ; and, of her grandchildren, two died with cancer of the breast, two of cancer of the uterus, one of cancer of the bladder, one of cancer of the axillary glands, one of cancer of the stomach, and one of cancer of the rectus.’\*

We thus feel, that our knowledge of the nature and propagation of these morbid products is, to say the least of it, attended with some amount of obscurity ; and more than this, the manner of their transmission and seat of location, is at the same time to a certain degree matter for conjecture.

For a definite morbid material to be constitutional, it must exist not only in the blood, but in the tissues and the fluids throughout the body ; and although, as before stated, gout, cancer, and scrofula are blood diseases, it would be wrong to conclude from this, that the materies morbi existed in the blood, and in it alone. If we did so, we should be less likely to account for hereditary transmission, because both the spermatic fluid and ovum must be said to be free from blood ; still, in the primordial germ, it must be allowed, does exist that inconceivable something, which grows as tissue grows, and pervades all. Apart from any absolutely recognized dyscrasy, there is yet another constitutional condition, in which appear to be signally manifest those properties or qualities, which go to make up by hereditary descent the nervous temperament, and in which we, in the majority of instances, find that, which is commonly called

\* ‘Discussion on Cancer,’ *Lancet*, March 21st, 1876.

an 'ill-conditioned habit of body.' And here the mind does, to a certain extent, most undoubtedly participate in the diseased state, in a direct ratio with the bodily conformation or physical development.

Dr. Carpenter truly affirms, that 'breeding in and in' leads in successive generations to a most serious abnormality, as exemplified in cretinism and idiocy. Also in those ill-assorted marriages where there is great disparity of age, we see the evil results in the ill-nurtured offspring, deficient alike in mental as in physical power. I look upon the constitutional condition here, in the same light as I do upon that, which is engendered from parent to offspring, when the former have been given to the excessive use of alcoholic liquors. In each case, there is exhibited the transmission of that imperfection of nutrition, which fails to give to the germ its true formative capacity, and the result of this is exemplified in all classes of society, from the street-arab of St. Giles to the noble of St. James.

From an analysis of a very large number of cases, I am perfectly sure, we can find a cause for the majority of illnesses in that class of disease, which is especially marked out as nervous or neurotic. And I am much inclined to think, that in an ill-assorted marriage—say where the husband has passed the years of maturity, and the wife is still in the prime of womanhood—there will be the union in the offspring of an ill-balanced nervous temperament, not only physically but mentally. And here I will set aside, for the time, all consideration of what might be the especial constitutional attributes of either of the parents. Take it for granted, that at the time of marriage, they were both in what goes by the name of good health, yet there can be no doubt, when we consider the laws of senile degeneration, that the male germs, which partake of the father, will carry with them to the formation of the embryo, and thence to the child, a constitutional condition, which will develop, if not into actual disease, at least into a state of nervous weakness, as

evidenced in that want of healthy vigour so strikingly delineated in the epileptic, the hysteric, the morose, the melancholic, and the imbecile. Mr. Galton tells us that :

‘The bodily and mental condition of every man are, in part, the result of his own voluntary and bygone acts ; but experience teaches us that they are also shaped by two other agencies, for neither of which he is responsible ; the one, the constitutional peculiarities transmitted to him by inheritance, and the other, the various circumstances to which he has been perforce subjected, especially in early life.’\*

Dr. Laycock’s words, in his ‘Lectures on Diseases of Organs and Tissues as influenced by the Nervous System,’ bear directly upon this subject of ill-assorted or unadvisable marriages. He says :

‘The hereditary tendencies to diathetic diseases and degenerations defined and fixed on an anatomical basis, are more easily comprehended when we remember that it is the regulative principle, as *vis nervosa*, which in animals endowed with a nervous system, must be operative on the sperm and germ cells. Now a regulative energy manifested as the “*nisus formativus*” is the special property of these minute portions of matter, and consequently it must be by a concentration of that energy, as *vis nervosa* on the genetic glands, that the peculiar property is supplied. If, therefore, the innervation be defective in regard to these glands, the regulative or evolutional power will be defective. It is thus I explain how degenerations of structure and defects of function and form take place from deficient *vis nervosa* in the parents ; for in these sperm-cells and germ-cells as in other tissues, the law of degeneration is retrocession to a lower type. The nature and results of that defect in brain nutrition upon which hereditary insanity depends, is a striking illustration of this law of hereditary disease and

\* ‘Hereditary Improvement,’ *Fraser*, Jan., 1873.

defect ; it is the lower or animal appetites and instincts which crop out in hereditary insanity.\*

So well known, and so patent were the evil results of ill-assorted marriages, even in the time of Socrates, that Plato in his 'Ideal Republic,' after speaking of the good results to be attained by breeding together the best horses, the best dogs, birds, etc., says, that marriages should be arranged by the rulers, so that people should only marry when in the prime of life, and that the best men should marry the best women.†

In a state of perfect health, a condition, I fear, rarely or never to be found in our generation, there will be seen that complete balance or equilibrium so to speak between mind and body, that they both act and re-act upon each other with due and only due relative power, which is guided by those vital or formative laws, which tend to give man pre-eminence among the races of living creatures. It is well known, that some members of the purely psychical school consider the mind to be omniscient, and underrate, indeed almost disregard, the influence of the body upon it altogether. But this cannot be the opinion of the clinical observer of diseased states, or of those who study the physiological anatomy of the, even yet imperfectly known, nervous system.

If what we understand by mind, namely feeling, will, and thought, is immediately connected with and forms part of our physical state, it must be with that portion of the nervous system, which is called brain. And more than this—we know full well, that the brain substance can be divided not only into white and grey matter, but into centres, where motor force is generated, and into divisions, wherein are located foci for the generation of the separate intellectual faculties. We are willing to admit, that in the cells of the

\* 'Lectures on Diseases,' *Medical Times and Gazette*, March 28th, 1871.

† 'Republic,' Book v.

cerebral hemispheres rests that nidus, or tabula rasa if you will, wherein dwells our living consciousness. As physiologists, we know that if we will an act and perform it, the performance is secondary to and subsequent upon the willing. Hence it is only fair, upon purely materialistic grounds, to infer that the cells, in which we choose to say our ideas are generated, are connected with those other cells to which the ideas are propagated, and from whence emanates the motor force, which wills the performance of a voluntary act.

In Professor Max Müller's second lecture on Mr. Darwin's 'Philosophy of Language,' delivered at the Royal Institution, March, 1873, we find the following :

'The new philosophy, priding itself, as all philosophies have done, on its positive character, professed to despise the endless argumentations of the schools, and to appeal for evidence to matter of fact only. Our mind, whether consisting of material impressions or intellectual concepts, was now to be submitted to the dissecting-knife and the microscope. We were shown the nervous tubes, afferent and efferent, through which the shocks from without pass on to the sensitive and motive cells ; the commissural tubes holding these cells together were laid bare before us ; the exact place in the brain was pointed out where the messages from without were delivered, and it seemed as if nothing were wanting but a more powerful lens to enable us to see with our own eyes, how in the workshop of the brain, as in a photographic apparatus, the pictures of the senses and the ideas of the intellect were being turned out in endless variety.'

I do not think that any microscopist, with the most determined materialistic views, could ever conceive so futile an idea as that, which Mr. Max Müller seeks to convey to us, in the ironical passage just quoted. Yet as clinical observers of psychological changes, we do not feel inclined to give way to the metaphysicist altogether—the more

especially, when we have almost daily evidence in diseased parts of the brain, of pathological changes producing psychological effects. Alterations, in both mind and body, can be traced to disease of those parts of the brain substance, which, as before stated, refer, the one to mind, the other to volition.

In a practical manner this can be readily demonstrated. A man suddenly loses both motion and sensation, in all parts of the body from the shoulders or neck downwards, yet his intellect and reasoning power remain clear, although he is unable to move himself in the least degree. Here we diagnose an effusion of blood to be pressing upon those parts of the brain which originate motor force, but the hemispherical or intellectual brain is unaffected.

He wills to move, but is unable. Yet he will reason upon the most abstruse subjects with perfect clearness and sense. In this case, the physical or bodily power is lost, the mental or psychic power is retained.

2. A man will fall, as though he were dead—void of consciousness, sensation, and motion. ‘Apoplexy.’

Here we know, that blood has been effused into the hemispheres of the brain, breaking up these cells which convey the mental force to the cells which originate the physical force. In this case, both voluntary power of the body as well as of the mind is lost.

3. A man will be seized with confusion of ideas, thickness of speech, misplacement of words, total loss of memory, and with partial loss of sensation and motion all over the body.

We shall soon see, in this case, a more or less profound lethargy, with uni- or bi-lateral convulsive seizures; and here we diagnose an effusion of blood upon, and over, that part of the hemispheres of the brain, wherein, as was said before, are located the foci of the separate intellectual faculties. There is however no disintegration of brain substance, but merely a molecular disturbance from pressure; and although this pro-

duces paresis, both psychical and physical, yet we are led to believe, that it is only the peripheral cells of the cerebral hemispheres, which are really implicated, and that the deeper parts are affected only by the influence of contiguity.

In the second case, let it be remembered, there is a breaking up of the psychical elements of the brain, with profound coma. Now we will analyze both the mental state, and bodily condition, of Case No. 3. He appears quite unconscious of surrounding objects—the special senses of sight and hearing are, as far as can be judged, lost. The finger may be placed in close contiguity to the eyeball without his perceiving it ; yet when it touches the eye, not only will the lid close, but he will voluntarily endeavour to move his head from the position it occupies—showing evidently that the mind is in subjective, if not in objective, action. If the brow be tickled, he will raise the arm to remove the offending cause ; and if the leg be pinched, he will, by a voluntary effort, try to move it out of the way. Yet his perceptive powers are absent—the mind is lost to the outer world, except through the medium of touch ; but the actions before referred to are performed by a voluntary effort, and consequently not the result of an automatic or of a reflex act.

I have often felt the deepest interest in knowing whether or not, under such conditions as those just stated, the patients really suffer from pain, and if they are conscious of their condition. In Case No. 2, I feel sure that such could not be so, but in Case No. 3 I think it is. These cases show quite clearly, although roughly, that this especial nerve matter of the hemispheres of the brain is the source, from which emanate those essential manifestations known collectively as mind, with all its attributes.

I have seen an ill-nurtured brain in phthisis, as before noted, producing temporary acute mania, without inflammation of its substance or its coverings. In such a case as this, the effect was the result of some perturbed action in

the nervous schema cells, due to inhibition of their proper nutritive pabulum. It is now a pretty generally received doctrine, that there can be no abnormal condition of mind *per se*. It must arise from some molecular derangement of the brain-cells, from poisonous material floating in the blood, or from an altered condition in the arterial current either in quantity or quality. But I am much inclined to believe that, independent of the mutual relationship existing functionally between mind and body, we ought to take into consideration what seems to be a fact of no small importance—namely, the generation and accumulation of what might be termed psychic force, as distinct from nerve force, and which, in my opinion, acts upon and in co-relation with it.

I have known men whose intellects were in common parlance obtuse enough, but under the influence of wine the brain would become stimulated into new life, and their previously dormant intellectual faculties shine forth in lustrous and resplendent ideas.

The great interest, that attaches itself to the connecting link between the material and the immaterial, the psychical and the physical, the volitional and automatic, is of such magnitude, and fraught with so much profound philosophical research from the early ages of reasoning, that the more its investigation is carried on, the greater appears to be the extent of illimitable space which is opened before us.

Modern writers of a somewhat careless and indifferent mode of reasoning (I mean in a purely philosophical direction) have attributed, and with truth, this state of things to a want of candour on the part of the purely metaphysical school—a want of concession to undoubted physical truths—and an utter disregard of the rapid advance, which has of late years been made into the structure of the nervous system, and the seats of propagation, and mode of conduction of nerve force. Here the clinical worker, in the field of diseased nerve-states will most assuredly in the course of

time, by patient and profound investigation, be able to bring forward such evidence, as will materially shape the views of the purely psychical school. But, honestly speaking, this will be no invasion of true psychical philosophy, and for that reason :—I hold, and it cannot be fairly denied, that man's entity is made up, not of body and mind or spirit alone, but of body, mind, and a psychos absolutely distinct from either. And I think that, as physicians, we shall do well, to leave in the hands of the pure metaphysicist the relation that mind has to soul, while we take up the ruder and, if you will, grosser elements which connect mind with body. And, surely, we can have no better demonstration of the latter than in the play and expression of the various so-called emotions. Therefore I hold, that the materialist has a fair field, in studying the connection of mind in relation to body, while the metaphysician may plant, if he choose, his standard in the realms of the unknowable, and study the co-relation of mind and soul. For it must be understood that man's entity, after all, consists of, in the words of St. Paul, 'Body, soul, and spirit.'

'When man,' says Schlegel, 'is considered relatively to his external existence in the sensible world and Nature, to which by his body he belongs, and forms a constituent part, then the three elements of which, as regarded from this point of view, his whole being or essence appears to consist, are body, soul, and spirit. There is little or no harmony between the higher and spiritual principle of the inner man and the outer world, to which properly his sensuous faculty belongs. . . . No doubt the external frame of the human body, with its wonderful organization, presents in the prime of its development the corporeal image of a more exalted beauty. . . . But, on the other hand, it is exposed and subject to innumerable injuries, sufferings, disease, and corruptions. . . . Added, then, to the other two elements of man's being, spirit and soul, the organic body forms the third constituent, in which,

however, is contained the ground and occasion of conflict and strife.\*

After considering some obscure affections of the nervous system, with an examination into those especial causes, which of themselves, without any inherited ill-habit of body, produce a diseased nervous condition with concurrent degeneracy of the intellectual faculties, this chapter will be concluded.

It is impossible to enter into a consideration of this part of our subject, without reconsidering for a moment the ego and non-ego—the volitional and automatic ; and, although I am an advocate for the truth of transmitted hereditary constitutional cachexies, yet I cannot, from my experience, come to a similar conclusion with regard to the habits, or what might be termed mental idiosyncrasies, and intellectual qualifications—excepting as they are connected with the condition of constitution ; and there can be no question, that temperament, so called, is mainly influenced by the state of bodily health. Transmitted hereditary constitutional cachexies I consider to be the rule, but a transmitted hereditary mental idiosyncrasy, or intellectual qualification, is exceptional. If we take the various professions—divinity, law, physic, engineering, etc.—we shall find it to be an unusual circumstance for the son to attain to the particular individual acquirements of the father, or even to care for the profession to which the father belonged.

I have said that temperament is subjective to constitution ; and it is in many instances not only influenced, but governed by it. In the business of the every-day life of the physician, and especially of the family doctor, this is repeatedly exemplified.

Hence it will be seen, that I am sufficiently materialistic to come to the conclusion that our acquired habits, hereditary

\* Schlegel, 'Philosophy of Life,' Lecture II.

or otherwise, are in a great measure due to constitutional government. This is not volitional. We know how functional derangement produces certain definite conditions of temperament—or rather we are as sure as of anything that certain constitutions are prone to functional derangements of certain glandular organs, both secretive and eliminative, which alter the actual constituent normal condition of the blood; and this is made manifest, either in an objective manner, as in gout for instance, or in a subjective, as in an altered condition of temperament; in some amounting to mania—to epilepsy in others—and again, to a depression of spirits or hypochondriasis in others, just according to whatever happens to be the individual temperament or special personal characteristics. In fact, it comes to be a question how far a man is really responsible for an inherited tendency of body. We hear it said that ‘So-and-so is a confirmed drunkard, or spendthrift, or thief, or miser, or vagabond’—or, on the other hand, an exemplary character—‘pious, devoted, loving, unselfish, charitable, even-tempered—nothing ever puts him out.’ Some maintain that the latter are attributes especial to a healthy organization, whilst the former are for the most part attendant on a diseased constitution inducing especial depraved mental characteristics.

It must be remembered that the action of mind upon body, and body upon mind, is co-existent. And if I maintain, that the healthy mind or individual character can be, and is influenced by constitutional causes, on the other hand I am quite inclined to hold that a previously healthy body, evincing no especial tendency to any functional derangement can, by excessive mental strain, be so acted upon as to become functionally diseased; then the enfeebled and disorganized body reacts upon the previously diseased mind, leading to the worst form of obscure, and even of readily recognised, nervous diseases. There are accredited conditions of the nervous system which can undoubtedly

be said to be acquired ; but inasmuch as we are differently constituted, both mentally and physically, and as in one person the balance of the psychical and physical forces is less stable than in another person, I think that we cannot fairly be held responsible for acquired tendencies. Though all persons are *blameable* for *acquired bad* tendencies, yet, from circumstances, one person may be less blameable than another.

## BRAIN.—EXHAUSTION FROM OVERWORK AND WORRY.

THIS subject demands some slight consideration apart from the neurasthenia, which we have just had under our notice.\* Exhaustions from overwork, from undue excitement, and from worry may be considered as essentially attributes of the present age, and they are more prevalent now, than they were at any other period in the world's history. Life at high-pressure is the prominent feature of the nineteenth century, and we cannot be surprised when we find that the so-called nervous diseases and exhaustions, dipsomania and insanity, are increasing beyond all proportion to the rapid increase of the population.

The man or woman, suffering from nervous exhaustion, is to my mind the most unfortunate individual in creation, for such persons scarcely know in what direction to turn for help, succour, and relief. It is a condition which is not sufficiently understood and studied even by medical men, and the public, who ought to know something, really know next to nothing, about it. A man, woman, or child with an exhausted brain is, on the one hand, either stupid, wooden, sullen or morose ; or, on the other hand, impetuous, passionate, irritable and insubordinate.

Such persons are invariably nervous, in every sense of the

\* It is a subject which has been dealt with very practically by Dr. Routh, in his excellent little book, entitled 'Overwork and Premature Mental Decay.'

word, and may possibly have inherited a thoroughly nervous constitution. The whole world seems unkind to these people. They are accused of neglecting their duties if they are public men, and, in private life, they are frequently blamed by those nearest and dearest to them, and so their affliction becomes exaggerated, and ends not unfrequently in confirmed melancholia.

The man who from brain exhaustion becomes vacillating, or doggedly obstinate, irritable and morbidly sensitive, and who shuns the society either of his club, or of his associates in pleasure or business, may be, and frequently is, judged most severely and wrongfully by them, and is often set down as ill-bred, ill-tempered, or proud; and he suddenly finds, that he is being cut by those whom he considered to be his friends, and misunderstandings inevitably arise. He retires from society more and more every day of his life, until, in a way, he becomes recluse and reticent even concerning his own suffering. When asked what is ailing him, the answer will invariably be: 'Oh, nothing; I am merely tired: let me be alone.' And if further questioned, bursts out into a fit of temper, and the questioner, if sensible, retires at once; or takes up the argument, when a downright quarrel is the result. All persons, who suffer from exhaustion of the brain, are remarkably suspicious of everyone about them; there seems to be a vague idea floating through their minds, that everyone is anxious to cheat or injure them; that wives, or, it may be, husbands, cease to have that affection and regard for them, which they formerly had—that they cease to take that interest in their comfort and their welfare which they formerly did; and these perverted ideas seem to grow, as the brain exhaustion increases, and there can be no doubt, that cause and effect, and effect and cause, both work together in the production of that unstable and irritable state of the brain-cells, which tends to a state of health of the most serious and lamentable kind. I have had men brought to me by their rela-

tives, sometimes by their wives, who have been considered sharp, shrewd, hard-headed, and talented men, either in the business or the profession to which they have belonged, with a history identical with that I have just endeavoured to pourtray. (It must be remembered that lazy, idle, and indifferent men do not, as a rule, suffer from the disease of which we are writing.) Their friends say, that they are so altered in character, that no one would in this respect take them to be the same persons ; and when we put a series of questions to them, we find that some excessive mental strain, induced by too close application to study or business, or, what is perhaps more frequently the case, some perpetual anxiety (worry), is usually the exciting cause ; and nothing more than this mere change of disposition will be noticed for some time, or it may be for weeks, or even months. Yet these changes in character (unless precautionary measures be taken) will continue to grow. The patient's sleep becomes greatly disturbed ; headaches, loss of appetite, rapid fatigue upon exertion, and complete incapacity for business, are the result, as also the whole train of symptoms which have been described. Professional men, and especially clergymen, seem to be more prone to these attacks of brain exhaustion than others, and it is not an easy matter to assign any especial reason for this. It is quite certain, however, and I believe it is a generally admitted fact, that the performance of constant routine work, without adequate change, exercises, although perhaps inexplicably, an undue tension upon the nervous system and the nervous centres, which, in the course of time, leads to instability and exhaustion.

Brain exhaustion from over-study, and so-called cramming the brain, is, perhaps, one of the greatest social evils of modern times, and is simply a blot upon advancing civilization. It is opposed to all biological laws—social, moral, hygienic, ethical, physical, and rational. If every brain were endowed (for we speak of it as an endowment)

with the same powers of thought, memory, and perception, and if the volitional attributes of the mind, as apart from the mere automatic, were as purposive and co-relative in the one individuality as in the other, then we might perhaps be justified in coming to the conclusion that minds are minds, and brains are brains, and that the brain merely requires physical cultivation, in order to render it capable of doing a given amount of work in a given time, just after the manner of a steam-engine, which consumes a certain amount of coal, and thereby generates a known equivalent of force.

But this is by no means the case with the human brain, and cultivation can never make it so. Yet a careful and early training of the automatic processes of the brain is one of the most, if not the most of the essential factors towards laying down that solid foundation, upon which the future structure of the mind must necessarily depend.

This early and automatic training of the brain cannot be commenced too soon, for the reason, that it is merely a healthy stimulus, favouring the germination of the purely embryonic mental development, which we know to be co-existent with the perception, and which period of life is so aptly described by Dr. Morell, in his 'Philosophy of Religion.' He says, that, at this period in the child, 'A sight or a sound which at first produced simply an involuntary start, now awakens a smile, or a look of recognition. The mind is evidently struggling *out of itself*; it begins to throw itself into the objects around it, and to live in the world of outward realities.'

There is scarcely a man who has ever lived, and had mind superior to that of his fellow-man, whose brain has not received the automatic training to which I now more particularly allude. The brain of a child (and I am now referring to the mass, and purposely excluding individualities of genius) is quite incapable of receiving, or, at all events, ought not to be exercised to receive, more than is conveyed

to it automatically through the perceptive faculties, and this even for some time after reason has become developed. Reason is the highest development of perceptive correlation; instinct is Nature's capacity to reason. The faculty to reason, and the instinctive faculty of reasoning, are, however, so closely allied, that it is merely a matter of brain development, which renders the power and will to reason a faculty superior to, and distinct from, the reasoning faculty. There would be just as much wisdom, in putting an ordinarily developed boy, to run a mile race with one of known physical strength and endurance, as to expect some lads, or even children, to compete honourably in the competitive examinations, according to the present educational system. Mental development depends much more upon the automatic processes of the mind than is usually supposed, and the perfectibility of the mind, as far as we can admit the use of the term, is dependent upon, to speak plainly, the adjustment of the volitional faculty of reasoning to the intuitive faculty of automatic receptivity. There are many men, women, and children who possess the former, but who are utterly destitute of the latter. They have, in fact, the will, and the earnest desire to cultivate their mental faculties. But, in other words, they have not the brain capacity, or the inherent latent activity of the brain-cells, or, what I venture to designate, the intuitive faculty of automatic receptivity. In speaking of the molecular force of a brain-cell, I divide this force into three parts: 1st, the active; 2nd, the complementary; and 3rd, the latent force.

Now in reference to the constitution of mind, what I call the intuitive faculty of automatic receptivity, may be governed by the 1st, or active division of brain force. Secondly, what I would call superficial reasoning, which may be relegated to the class of intuitive selection, may be governed by the 2nd, or complementary division of brain force. Thirdly, what I would call reasoning by volition, is

governed not only by the 2nd division of brain force, but requires to abstract considerable energy from the 3rd, or latent division of brain force. If there be no rational foundation for my theory, it may still be found useful to elucidate some of the phases of brain exhaustion from overwork, with which we are becoming so familiar. We must not forget, that any undue taxation which may be made upon the latent brain force, immediately produces a mutability and instability of the normal molecular action, and correlative integrity of the active and compensatory forces. Hence we find not only sympathetic depression and exhaustion of the mental processes themselves, but also an arrest of latent nerve energy throughout the whole course of the sympathetic system of nerves, which of course leads to arrest of function (elimination) in most of the secreting glands, faulty nutrition, disease, and possibly premature death. At all events, I have no hesitation in saying this : that it is a most grievous mistake on the part of parents and teachers, to endeavour to make children's brains receive what they are utterly incapable of receiving, without such an effort and such an amount of enforced volition, that, should they accomplish the task which has been set them, the expenditure of latent nerve force has been so enormous, and the brain becomes so enfeebled, that it is extremely questionable whether it ever regains even its former equilibrium. I very frequently hear men say, 'Well, I shall go in for such an examination upon the chance of passing, although I do not take very kindly to the subjects.' I condemn this as a bad principle to go upon. A boy or lad has the capacity to pass a certain examination, or he has not. If he has not, he had better leave it alone altogether. But his parents and teachers will say, 'How do we know, before he tries?' Of course if the lad is physically strong, and of fair brain power, there can be no objection whatever to his trying. Yet there are many cases, and some such have in fact been brought to me by their friends for my

advice, when after considering the course of study which has been requisite, and the nature of the examination to be passed, I have unhesitatingly given it as my opinion, that it would be as easy to put a quart into a pint pot, as for the lads to pass the examinations which were proposed. In a few cases my advice has not been taken, and my opinion of their brain power has been found correct—too late, alas! when they have signally failed to pass their examinations. If a boy or girl we will say, by way of example, between the ages of twelve and fourteen years, shows an especial and inherent aptitude for any business or profession, it is the duty of the parent to assist the child as far as it is possible, in cultivating and developing this something, which we are inclined to call an intuitive brain faculty; and the more I reason concerning this intuitive—or perhaps I may fairly say instinctive—brain faculty, so much the more am I convinced of the absolute value and importance of my statement. This faculty is the outcome of an unconscious cerebration, and shows that the intuitive mental processes are developing in a given and definite direction. It is the cultivation of this endowment which, taken at the tide, leads on to fortune, greatness, and renown. But, unfortunately, these mental instincts are not always, as a rule, generated in conformity with the physical organization and development of the body.

I have, however, watched the growth of these two conditions of mind and body very closely, and the result of a large number of observations leads me to the conclusion, that there is a common relationship between this mental endowment, and the physical organization of the body which is associated with it. But I maintain that parents are often very short-sighted in these matters, and one cannot say that they are always to blame for errors of judgment in this respect; and possibly their determination, that their boy shall be a soldier or a sailor, when his physical development is not equal to such a vocation, or a doctor, barrister,

or clergyman, when his mind is not capable of grasping the subjects for examination, only shows that they have decided to gratify a personal wish, without giving the subject due consideration in all its bearings.

Life is not so long that it may be trifled with, and the nature of the highest class of examinations for almost every profession nowadays, is of such an extended nature, that very few boys can afford to lose time in advanced youth, which should be spent in training their brains in the class of literature, which is most likely to be of value to them in that profession or business, which must form the occupation of their lives. If parents and teachers only considered these points with more care, and when in doubt, if they consulted some physician who was capable of giving them good sound advice, based no less on the brain power than on the bodily development and the constitution of children, I have no doubt whatever, that not only would premature death in some cases be averted, but many a boy would become an ornament to society, and hand down his name to posterity on the banner of his country's fame; but I am sorry to say, that training has by inadvertence led many into the paths of vice, to the drunkard's goal, or to a lunatic asylum. With a few words more about worry, I shall conclude this chapter. It is a very common saying, and certainly no less true than common, 'that worry kills.' I have seen worry kill as surely and as positively as a consumption kills; yet to produce such disastrous effects, it must meet with a soil in which it can produce its destroying and decaying influences, and such a soil is always associated with the nervous temperament, the signs and symptoms of which have been given in detail on pp. 40 and 41. Now worry may act directly upon the brain and nervous centres in two ways—namely, by producing an excess of blood in the brain on the one hand, or a deficiency of blood in the brain on the other hand. By way of example, I quote the following case of Sir Astley Cooper's, showing how mental

excitement produces a determination of blood to the brain. He says :

‘ A young gentleman was brought to me from the north of England, who had lost a portion of his skull just above the eyebrow. On examining the head, I distinctly saw the pulsations of the brain, which were regular and slow ; but soon after he was agitated by some opposition to his wishes, and directly the pulsations of the brain were increased and became more violent, and more blood rushed to the brain.’

M. Broussais gives the following interesting case, showing how the brain becomes congested through emotional influences. This I copy from Dr. Hammond’s very interesting and excellent work on ‘ Cerebral Hyperæmia.’

M. Thavernier, a captain in the French army, forty-two years of age, moderately stout but well-formed, received in the middle of the Palais Royal, ninety days before his death, a letter containing bad news. Whilst perusing it, he remained motionless as if thunderstruck, and the left side of his face became paralyzed and drawn to the opposite side. He was taken to Val de Grace and attended to. At this time he had complete paralysis of the arm, thigh, and leg of the right side, and was unable to speak. After using various remedies for more than two months he began to improve, and became so much better as to be able to stand up and to speak, although with difficulty. In this state of improvement M. Thavernier received another letter, said to be from his wife. He read it, and instantly there occurred loss of speech, general immobility, abolition of sense, and complete apoplexy. He died in three days after the attack, and on examining the head there was found engorgement of blood in the sinuses, and several abscesses were observed in the substance of the brain, and other marks of organic disease. M. Broussais considered this case to be one of chronic inflammation of the brain, induced by a moral cause.’

The following case is of interest, as bearing upon the point, and showing that 'worry, shock, and mental strain are succeeded by, and associated with congestion of the brain.'

'Robert Williams, a railway guard, was sent to me at the Hospital for Paralysis and Epilepsy in Regent's Park, by a well-known ophthalmic surgeon, for intense depression, almost amounting to melancholia. The gentleman who sent the patient to me, had examined the eyes repeatedly with the ophthalmoscope, and had found the vessels intensely congested, and, in all probability, the same engorged condition of the vessels existed throughout the entire brain. The patient was a tall, well-developed muscular man in the prime of life, and he gave me the following history relative to his illness: He had always enjoyed robust health until the 1st of December, 1870, when he heard the distressing news, that his favourite child, a little boy, of whom he was dotingly fond, was run over and killed. When he first heard the news he felt the shock, but not acutely, yet, in about a fortnight, he became gradually and imperceptibly aware, that he had been subjected to an inevitable loss. He became particularly cold, and could not get himself warm even by exercise. He suffered from a constant aching pain over the forehead, and occasionally felt rather giddy; he became so dejected, that he was almost unable to do anything, his sleep was disturbed, and he would lie awake for half the night thinking of his child. He felt that he was suffering from something, which haunted him day and night, and which made his life a burden to him. He tried to rouse himself to shake off this depression, but the more he tried the worse he became, until he felt that he was scarcely able to do anything at all. This case is of value, in showing how the health of both mind and body, in a strong man, can be shattered by shock, worry and anxiety. He improved during the short time he was under my treatment, and I sent him away to the country to have a complete change of air and scene for a month.'

I merely quote this case, as I could many others, to show what a wonderful influence, overstrain and shock and worry, have, in breaking down the soundest and most robust constitutions, and in reducing the loftiest and most noble-minded men to effeminacy and second childhood. Again, there is nothing that finds out the *weak point* in a constitution, with equal surety and certainty, as do worry and overmental strain. We frequently hear people say. 'Yes! It is this dreadful weather, that is giving me the gout, or bronchitis, or rheumatism, or making me feel so unaccountably ill ;' but they frequently overlook the fact—and a very important fact it is too—that worry, mental anxiety, domestic trouble and brain exhaustion so undermine the natural and healthy tone of the body, and so weaken the vitality of individuals, that they are immediately influenced by changes from without, as well as by changes from within the body. If the constitutional degenerative tendency of the individual be towards consumption, worry will tend to its rapid development, and so, in like manner, will worry tend to the development of cancer, kidney, and heart disease and gout.

#### Treatment.

Dr. Beard speaks truly, when he says: 'I have seen cases by the dozen that had taken quinine and iron, judiciously and faithfully given, and who were still uncured and unrelieved.'

There is, in fact, no routine plan of treatment for these cases. Each case must be studied closely and carefully by itself. I must say that this has been my own experience, and in the proof of the non-value of treatment by iron, I think we have good reason for coming to the conclusion, that these exhaustions are rarely, if ever, due to a bloodless condition of the spinal cord, for, in the cases of anaemia of the spinal cord, we find that large doses of iron have the most charmingly beneficial results. All practi-

tioners of medicine, who have had these cases under their care must frequently have been perplexed, at finding how utterly inefficient have been the usual nerve remedies, for the cure of these cases of nervous exhaustion. There are some practitioners, who indiscriminately use the galvanic and Faradic currents to the head and to the spine, without the slightest good effect whatever; and as far as my own experience serves me, this mode of treatment has been utterly useless in nine cases out of ten; but, perhaps, in the tenth case it may prove useful, so that we cannot afford to utterly discard any means, which may possibly turn out to be curative in a not easily curable malady. The Faradic current may be applied as an aid to treatment, in conjunction with the other remedies which we are about to notice. The electrodes should consist of tin plates, as recommended by M. de Watteville. The plates should be covered with flannel, and moistened with water, before their application. I usually apply the positive plate to the nape of the neck, or over the cervical sympathetic centres, and the negative plate to the hypogastrium, keeping the current continuously in action for fifteen or twenty minutes. There is this much to be said for electricity, that it never fails to give great relief during its application, and, it may be, for some hours after; but the good effects soon wear off, and certainly, in many of my cases, the patients have felt worse after than before its application. My experience has been precisely similar concerning the use of the electric bath, and, in no single instance, have I found this mode of applying the galvanic current to be of the slightest value in these cases. Yet, as I said before, I should be extremely sorry to discard electricity as an aid to treatment, the more especially as it has been spoken very highly of by those who are in every way fully capable of judging of its merits.

The drugs which may be of value, in the curative treatment of nervous exhaustion, may be chosen from those, which experience has selected from a long list in the

'Materia Medica.' The chief of all these is opium. The pure, watery extract of opium, in doses of a quarter of a grain three or four times a day, in certain cases acts like a charm; it excites and stimulates for a short time the brain-cells, and then leaves them in a state of tranquillity, which is best adapted to their nutrition and repair. It must be continued for some weeks, and it may be months, and it may be necessary to increase the dose, but a good result is sure to follow its careful administration. I say that there are cases of pure neurasthenia simulating premonitory consumption and a thousand other ailments, but which the practised physician can pick out, and say most decisively that opium will unfailingly cure. I must admit, however, that there are cases of nervous exhaustion, which opium does not seem to affect. Among the other drugs which are at our command we find the following, and I give them in the order of their value, namely, arsenic, phosphorus, strychnine, the salts of bromine and iodine, the salts of zinc and iron, quinine, chloral, chloroform, ergot, maltine, grape sugar, cod-liver oil, atropine, sulphur, nitrate of silver, bichloride of mercury, and terchloride of gold.

When opium fails, in the course of three or four weeks, to produce any marked and decided effects, we ought then to have recourse to increasing doses of arsenic, phosphorus, and strychnine. I have gradually increased the dose of Fowler's solution of arsenic to ten drops, three or four times a day, and the same with the solution of strychnine, before the patients have found themselves actually benefited. In the curative treatment of nervous diseases generally, it will always be found necessary to persist in the continued use of a drug, until some decided effects have been realised, and to gradually and cautiously increase the dose of each drug we employ. If you once submit to the caprices, and try to gratify the wishes of nervous patients, you will be changing their prescription at every

visit. Now, this mode of procedure is especially harmful, both in regard to the drugs you are employing, and to the patients you are treating. One great part of the treatment of neurasthenics is, to make them feel quite sure, that you have the most implicit confidence in the measures which you are adopting for their cure. And it is not unfrequently the case, that many drugs are discarded as valueless, merely because they are not given in the proper dose, and for a sufficiently long period of time ; hence it is, that we find our patients resort to mesmerists and unqualified practitioners. The majority of nervous people want building up, for they are invariably below par, and the great success of our treatment will, undoubtedly, mainly depend upon how this process of building up is carried out. The physician has to bear in mind the two cardinal points, in the treatment of nervous affections, namely, *rest and nutrition*; still, it must be remembered, that nervous patients are not, as a rule, liable to acute inflammation, yet they are peculiarly subject to bloodless and congested states of the mucous membrane or of the skin, or, in fact, of any part of the body, so that we have to consider, in what way we can best equalize the action of the vaso-motor nerve-centres, and the current of the blood generally. The remedies, which will be found best adapted to effect this object, are digitalis, ergotine, and the bromide and iodide of potassium. These drugs may be given in small doses, and in combination with any other tonic medicines which we wish to employ. It is also at all times necessary, to keep the blood alkaline, to support secretion, and to secure the due elimination of waste products by the skin, the bowels, and the kidneys.

We will now consider, how rest and nutrition may be best brought about. First, with regard to rest. This must be both bodily and mental, and the exciting cause of either mental or bodily fatigue must be sought for (and in some cases it has to be sought for with consummate tact, as it is not always apparent), and, if possible, removed. I say if

possible, because the physician finds that, in a large number of instances, the removal of the existing cause is not unfrequently attended with the greatest difficulty. The cause of mental anxiety and worry, which are so productive of brain disease and nervous exhaustion, is so often bound up with the mainspring of a man's existence, either from a business or domestic point of view, that I have, over and over again, experienced considerable trouble in bringing about its removal. Patients say to me : 'I only wish it were possible for me to carry out your wishes; but don't you think, if I do so and so I shall get better. I really don't see how it is possible, that I can do as you wish.' My answer is invariably this : 'Do the best you can to carry out my treatment, and let us be in agreement as far as we can.' In all the cases, which we are now considering, it is infinitely better that the conduct of the physician should be tentative, rather than arbitrary. A fixity and firmness of purpose is at all times imperative, but Abernethian roughness cannot be productive of anything but harm, in the treatment of diseases of the nervous system. If the exciting cause has been dealt a death-blow by moral means, and by moral means alone, we invariably find, that great good has been accomplished, and an important step has been taken towards effecting a cure. Then in reference to treatment, we come to the consideration of another cause of neurasthenia, which is, as a rule, secondary to the exciting cause, namely, restlessness, and want of sleep. If sleeplessness should be of itself the primary or exciting cause of nervous exhaustion, then we have to consider our diagnosis with all the more care, for the reason, that we have, in all probability, something more to deal with than a mere arrest of function. 'It always becomes a matter for anxiety to me, when patients say that they pass restless nights, and that they are unable to account for it.' But in the case of nervous exhaustion and brain

fatigue, the sleeplessness is invariably secondary to the mental anxiety; but there can be no doubt, that the one reacts upon the other, and brings about a state of restlessness and discomfort which is truly deplorable, and, as a fact, it will be found absolutely necessary to induce sleep by one means or another. In many of these cases, it will be found to be quite unnecessary, to have recourse to opium, morphia, or chloral. I have frequently induced sleep in patients, by means of a draught of stout, or of mulled claret, or of port-wine negus, when sedatives have been tried in vain. Many ridiculous and untrustworthy statements have been made, concerning the action of the hydrate of chloral. It has been broadly stated, that this drug possesses the especial property of breaking up the newly-formed blood corpuscles, and so interfering materially with the nutrition of the brain. I have no wish to dispute this statement; but the ill effects produced by the hydrate of chloral, as in like manner by opium, or even by an especial form of diet, are of degree only. I have given the hydrate of chloral, for weeks together, with the most beneficial results, and, in some cases of sleeplessness, a few doses have effected a cure. I maintain, that all drugs are either curative, or poisonous; but a dose, which will cure in one case, will be productive of great mischief in another, even in the same disease. If people only knew of the sad results and degenerations, both of mind and body, which arise from the indiscriminate use of medicines, especially such medicines as opium, chloral, and the like, they would hesitate and shrink from their use, unless they felt sure that they were being carefully and properly administered.

There is a state of sleeplessness in nervous people, which becomes a mere restless habit on the part of the brain. They tell you, that they awake at a given hour in the morning—it may be three, four, or five o'clock—and that they cannot get any sleep until, perhaps, it is time to get up. They also say, that they have taken bromide and

sedatives when they have gone to bed, but that they have derived no material benefit from their use.

I have cured many such cases as these, by causing the patients to take a full dose of the hydrate of chloral, forty grains, two or three times a week when they awake, at whatever hour, during the night. This proceeding seems to checkmate the ill habit into which the brain has fallen, and by so doing, a good sleep is almost always secured after a few doses of chloral have been taken in this manner. A good night's rest is one of the most important points to be secured, in the treatment of brain fatigue. Although it is so vitally important, that we should pay particular attention to ensure good, sound, and healthful sleep, still we must be mindful, how necessary it is to secure ordinary bodily repose apart from sleep altogether. Restlessness is one of the essential attributes of the neurasthenic, and moral volitional self-restraint must be carefully exercised. Exercise of body, carried to actual fatigue when in health, is an aid to a night's good rest and sound sleep ; but the very reverse of this is the case in nervous exhaustion, for too great exercise produces excessive fatigue of body, and irritability of brain then exists in like proportion, and sleep is completely out of the question.

We now come to the consideration of another point in the treatment of neurasthenia ; and that is, as to how far travel, change of scene, change of air and so on, are good for this class of cases. I certainly have seen many patients (perhaps the majority of cases that I have seen) who have not only been unrelieved by travel, but who have been, in many respects, much worse for the journeys they have undertaken. I quite agree with Dr. Beard's remarks upon this question of travelling. He says :

‘ I have constantly under my care cases of both forms of neurasthenia, who have spent months and years abroad under advice of physicians, not only without benefit, but in

some instances have been positively injured. Cases of myalesthenia especially, are very liable to be made worse by the fatigue of travel, by the discomfort of absence from home, by the laborious and oftentimes wearisome and exhausting tasks of sight seeing. Many are worn out in the picture galleries and in mountain climbing, and must return home to rest and recover from the effects.'

However, we must bear in mind that change of air and scene and diet, if not carried to excess or to fatigue, is one of the most important aids to the cure of neurasthenia which we have at our command. I condemn entirely the present system, which is rather fashionable just now on the Continent, of herding together in a large building some four or six hundred invalids, however, like all other fashions, it will soon exhaust itself. These institutions are generally the offspring of men, who have an eye to business, and there are quite sufficient of the credulous, both amongst doctors and patients, to support their existence, and their greatest charm is novelty. A lengthened sea voyage is *par excellence* the best chance of cure, in a confirmed and protracted case of neurasthenia; but I have never seen any patient, who has derived much benefit from a sojourn at the seaside. I do not wish it to be understood, by my remarks concerning these large continental hotels, that I in any way undervalue the advantages, to be derived from the invigorating and toning influence of the splendid mountain air, which one finds, for instance, in the Upper Engadine. The characteristic qualities, of the climate of the Upper Engadine, are due to its very pure, clear and at the same time dry atmosphere. Dr. J. Pernisch, of the Tarasp Schultz, speaks very truly of the valley of the Inn, in the following words :

'The different component parts of the climate in this region, produce in their unison a strong excitement of the organism, a great facilitation of the vital functions and of

the change of substance, a better formation of blood and nourishment, an improvement of the digestion and assimilation, and thereby strengthen and invigorate the functions of the nervous system.'

I need scarcely say that Cannes, Mentone, Nice, and other fashionable resorts in the south of Europe, are quite unsuited to the treatment of neurasthenics, and, in fact, to organic disease of the nervous system at almost every season of the year. I can most truly say, from my large experience at the Central Sick Asylum at Highgate, that the effects of a pure, dry, bracing air, no matter how cold it may be, has a most marvellously beneficial effect upon patients suffering from nervous disease. I am attending at the present time a physician, suffering from paralysis of the lower limbs and severe exhaustion of the nervous system. He has been a great traveller, but he declares, that the air of Margate contains more ozone, and is more bracing than any place he has ever tried. Upon one occasion, whilst living in London, he was suffering greatly amongst other things from catarrh of the bladder, with all its attendant troubles and inconveniences; and he told me, that he had not been at Margate for more than a week, when in this respect he quite recovered.

We will now consider one of the most important points in the treatment of nervous disease, and that refers to diet. The question, therefore, of food must be studied by us somewhat carefully. Articles of food are usually divided into two great classes, namely: 1. Heat and force producers; 2. Flesh-formers, or non-nitrogenized compounds and nitrogenized compounds.

#### HEAT-PRODUCING COMPOUNDS.

Sugar	}	composed of	{	Carbon
Starch				Hydrogen
Gum				Oxygen
Lignin				
Oils and Fats				

## FLESH-FORMING COMPOUNDS.

Albumen	}	composed of	Carbon
Gluten			Hydrogen
Fibrin			Nitrogen
Casein			Oxygen
Legumin			Sulphur
			Phosphorus

The various parts of the human body, such as the brain, nerves, muscles, fat, bones, etc., are found by chemical analysis to consist of oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, phosphorus, sulphur, chlorine, fluorine, silicon, calcium, potassium, sodium, magnesium, iron, manganese, and copper ; and we have all these elements presented to us in a compound form, in the following tabulated articles of diet, and the table shows pretty accurately the relative amount of flesh-formers and heat-producers, and the amount of heat-producing elements they contain for every ten parts of flesh-formers.

	Flesh-forming.	Heat-producing.
Milk	10	40
Beans	10	22
Fat mutton	10	27
Fat pork	10	30
Beef	10	17
Hare	10	2
Veal	10	1
Wheaten flour	10	44
Oatmeal	10	50
Barley	10	57
Potatoes	10	115
Rice	10	123

But as physicians and physiologists, we must not be carried away, and place too implicit a confidence in these statistics. It is no doubt a very easy matter, to make an exact computation of the amount of heat and force, which is generated from a lump of coal to drive a steam engine,

and if we merely take this, as an example of the latent energy residing in a lump of coal, so far well and good; and we may even go farther, and say, that if a man eats rice, he will have more heat and force-producing power generated in his nervous centres, than he would if he took an equivalent of beef or beans. But in dealing with an appropriate dietary for the man in health, as well as for the man in sickness, it would be absurd to follow as a rule the fact, that in consequence of fat pork yielding thirty parts of heat-producing elements to ten of flesh-forming elements, that it should, on this account, be given to patients in preference to beef. The physician, if he uses the care and skill which are required of him, will take into consideration many other matters, and matters of great importance, in reference to dietary—such as the climate, the season of the year, and more particularly the nervous constitution of the patient. Again, the physician who treats the dyspepsia of the neurasthenic in the same way that he would the gouty and the purely dyspeptic, will, judging from my own experience, fail in doing the patient any good. The truth of this observation is fully borne out in a large number of epileptic nervous people. These patients frequently consult me, complaining of the most severe forms of flatulent dyspepsia, so that they say, they cannot take food without the most distressing symptoms of dyspepsia resulting. They are suddenly, and without any apparent warning, distended with wind, so that they can scarcely breathe, and this flatulent uncomfortable condition usually subsides, as suddenly as it makes its appearance. This is unquestionably a nervous dyspepsia, and all the pepsine, and ordinary dyspeptic remedies, will be of no avail in relieving the patient; but a full dose of chloroform, opium, and bromide of potassium, will frequently prove of immediate benefit. I have had patients consult me on account of flatulent dyspepsia, which is frequently the result of over-anxiety and worry, who have been under the care

of other physicians, and who have been dieted, with the most scrupulous and punctilious zeal, without their getting in the least way better; I have fed such patients every hour in the day, without paying any heed to the kind of food taken, and in a week they have been perfectly cured. The end justifies the means adopted, in nine cases out of ten of nervous dyspepsia; and in such cases, I am led to the conclusion, that it matters little what kind of animal or farinaceous food be given, so that it be pure in quality, and given to the patient every one or two hours during the day. In nervous dyspepsia, vegetables should be rarely given. The diet for the nervous and neurasthenic, should as a rule be chosen from the following:

*Soups.*—White, barley, à la julienne, macaroni, milk, rice, sago, semolina, vermicelli, calf's-head, oyster.

*Fish.*—Eels, flounders, mullet, oysters, soles, brill, whiting, smelts, fresh cod.

*Meat.*—Mutton in any form, beef, lamb, calf's-head, sheep's-head, ox-tails, sweetbread, bacon.

*Poultry and Game.*—Fowl, pigeons, turkey, pheasant, partridge, etc.

*Vegetables.*—Asparagus, spinach, seakale, French beans, brocoli, beetroot, stewed celery, Spanish onions, tomatoes, watercress, lettuce.

*Wines.*—Amontillado, Manzanilla, Latour Carnet, Chateau Lafitte.

*Eggs.*—Boiled, poached, raw, yolk, white of.

*Sweets.*—Farinaceous milk puddings, milk, fruit, and most kinds of jellies.

I do not wish it to be inferred, that no other diet should be taken but that here stated, because everyone must be acquainted with the fact, that as cases differ in type and degree, so will they require exceptional forms of diet. I have (and I feel quite sure upon this point) cured many cases of nervous exhaustion, in the main by diet. For

instance, in those patients where the circulation is slow and the extremities cold, great benefit will be found by the administration of sugar, commencing with one ounce of white sugar, and increasing this quantity until the patient takes as much as six or eight ounces three times a day. Milk is a very valuable article of diet, and it may be taken in the form of Dr. Jagielski's Koumiss. Milk is much more digestible if it be kept in a warm place until it becomes faintly sour, and it is in this condition that I frequently recommend my patients to take it. Milk is the most perfect food, in itself, that we can find in nature. It is of course the natural food for the young, and many mothers are really responsible for the defective organization of their children, through feeding them improperly and injudiciously. Children and young people, judging from the amount of work which their brains are expected to perform in these days, should be fed very much better than they really are fed, even at many of the better-class schools ; and if care be not taken, this want of deficient feeding will soon make itself evident in brain exhaustion and weak physical development. Can anything be more absurdly ridiculous, than to expect the amount of brain power, which I presume (judging from the curriculum) is expected, from these half-fed and improperly-fed children of London, who are compelled by law to attend these Board Schools, and to cram, as it is called, their brains full of knowledge to pass examinations ? Why, the result will be, that one-half of them will die prematurely, from nervous exhaustion either in the form of scrofula or consumption. Every child before the age of ten should partake of four meals a day, and drink at least a pint of milk in the twenty-four hours. The dietary should be mixed, and it should vary according to the season of the year : fresh vegetables and fruit, both cooked and uncooked, should always be given in due proportion. The building-up of a child's brain and constitution, generally before the age of fifteen years, is of the

most serious and vital importance, and I may safely say, that, in no other period of life, is it in any degree so important as in this. It is quite true, that some children require much more careful feeding than others, but there are very few young people, whose health does not begin to suffer, if they do not take at least four good meals during the day. With my own boys, if their health begins to fail, and they suddenly change colour and rapidly become tired, I alter the condition of things, in a few days, by feeding them freely with eggs and good strong beef-tea. I need scarcely say, that wines and fermented liquors should never be given to children. Fish, and especially shell-fish, certainly seems to possess the material which is necessary to reinvigorate the nervous centres in many forms of brain exhaustion, and oysters may be mentioned as possessing this power to a great degree; and it is very possible, that the amount of phosphorus contained in shell-fish may, in a measure, account for their value in this respect. Dr. Routh speaks highly of the value of phosphorus in his work 'On Overwork and Premature Mental Decay.'

I sometimes prescribe, and with great advantage, cod-liver oil for my younger patients, who are suffering from brain exhaustion, or what is still better, the hydrated olein. This preparation is not only the cod-liver oil, whose particles have been separated by water, but it is emulsified and rendered more digestible by the addition of alkaline salts. We have before alluded to the fact, that everything must be done to remove the cause of brain exhaustion, and in young children this is of the utmost importance; and it is frequently accomplished by a complete change of life, and this must be carried out at an early period of the disease. Cases of brain exhaustion, in young boys of a highly sensitive nature, have come under my notice, and this upon investigation, was found to be due, not to overwork, but to a system of bullying, on the part of the elder boys

towards some of the younger, and which constantly worried them, as they were in constant dread of some unjustifiable thrashing. There is another point of some importance for our consideration, and that is this : How far are we justified in advising our nervous patients to take alcohol ? It must be remembered, that we are dealing with a class of people, whose resisting power is of the lowest order—who are liable at any moment to give way to any idea, which is uppermost in their vacillating minds—and to gratify every passion, without the power to exercise self-restraint, as we have seen to be the peculiar characteristics of brain exhaustion ; and we can readily understand, how tempting a glass of champagne or brandy must be to the man, who does not feel himself, until he has taken some kind of stimulant. It is very fortunate, that the excessive use of alcohol cannot be borne by many neurasthenics ; it either gives them intense headache, or increases some of their morbid symptoms. There are others, however, who have been advised, either by their medical attendant or by their friends, to take wine or spirits, and they have suddenly become habitual drunkards. For my own part, I am inclined to the belief, that dipsomania is more frequently the result, rather than the cause, of nervous exhaustion.

Dr. Beard, of New York, in a pamphlet, on ‘Nervous Exhaustion as a cause of Inebriety,’ makes the following statement, which so thoroughly accords with my own experience, that I give it verbatim :

‘It is a fact which my professional experience satisfactorily confirms, that alcoholic liquors have not only a relieving but a curative effect in the different forms of nervous exhaustion. After all other remedies have failed or lost their powers, alcoholic liquors will sometimes produce satisfactory sleep, relieve depression and debility, bringing about those agreeable results without any apparent evil accompaniments, except danger of this one terrible evil, inebriety, but when inebriety is contracted, then any number

of physical evils may follow, the liver and brain may be diseased, and life shortened. Physicians and patients both observe this delightful action of alcohol in the treatment of neurasthenia, and without proper caution on the part of one or the other, one is tempted to use very strong liquors in excessive amounts just as they would use the quinine or the bromides. Then again, there are some—and these cases are very interesting indeed—who, so to speak, leap with a single bound into inebriety; without any advice of their physician, without consideration, and of themselves without reflection, they rush to alcohol for relief, and become inebriated at once with all its symptoms, just as one breaks out with chills and fevers.'

I frequently feel very desirous to advise my patients, who are suffering from nervous exhaustion, to take stimulants either to relieve them of melancholy, to assist digestion, to quicken their circulation, or to procure sleep; but experience has taught me, that such a proceeding may be attended with the most dangerous consequences. I am happy to say, that I have less hesitation now, than I formerly had, of recommending my neurasthenic patients to take stimulants, because practice and observation have proved to me pretty conclusively, in what cases I may recommend stimulants with the greatest advantage, and in what cases its administration may be followed by a craving for drink. That many cases of neurasthenia are not only relieved, but absolutely cured, by the judicious administration of wine, is an unquestionable fact.

*Exercise.*—A due amount of muscular exercise is essential, and in fact absolutely necessary to the neurasthenic; but it must be taken with extreme caution. The man suffering from nervous exhaustion will say, that one day he feels able to do anything or walk any distance, and on the following day he is not equal to anything, and the least exertion rapidly exhausts him. Now this condition of things is

quite true, of commencing exhaustion of the spinal cord ; but if, on the other hand, the exhaustion has been allowed to continue for some months or even years, we then find a different state of things to exist, and, more particularly so, if the brain participates in the exhaustion. Now what is experienced, when we have a protracted exhaustion of the whole of the nervous system ? It is this : The patient seems more or less unconscious of his weakness, and, until he makes the effort to walk or to run, or in fact to accomplish anything, which requires a certain amount of effort, he imagines that he has sufficient power to fulfil anything which he may try to accomplish ; but he suddenly breaks down, and finds that he is unable to do what, in his own weakened mind, he thought that he could do without any difficulty. Far different and more hopeful, however, is the case, when we find that the patient imagines, that he is *unable* to accomplish anything that he may try to do, but which, when he tries, he can do with the greatest possible ease. Yet these are merely phases of the same disease, and differ only in reference to the degree of the disease, which we are now considering, namely—nervous exhaustion. We have, therefore, to consider what should be the kind of exercise taken, and at what hour of the day it should be taken, and how much exercise should be taken. It would be unwise, to ask a neurasthenic to put on his hat and take a seven miles' blow, at the same time cheering him up, and saying, 'It will do you good, old fellow.' The advice of such a friend might be given with the best intention, but it would inevitably, if acted upon, be attended with the most serious consequences, namely—undue *fatigue*, which we have particularly to guard against. In health, *fatigue* is the natural consequence of some accomplished muscular or mental work, which calls upon the store of our latent forces, and in health this store is readily and easily replenished.

In nervous exhaustion, however, *fatigue* means that such a demand has been made upon the already inefficient reserve

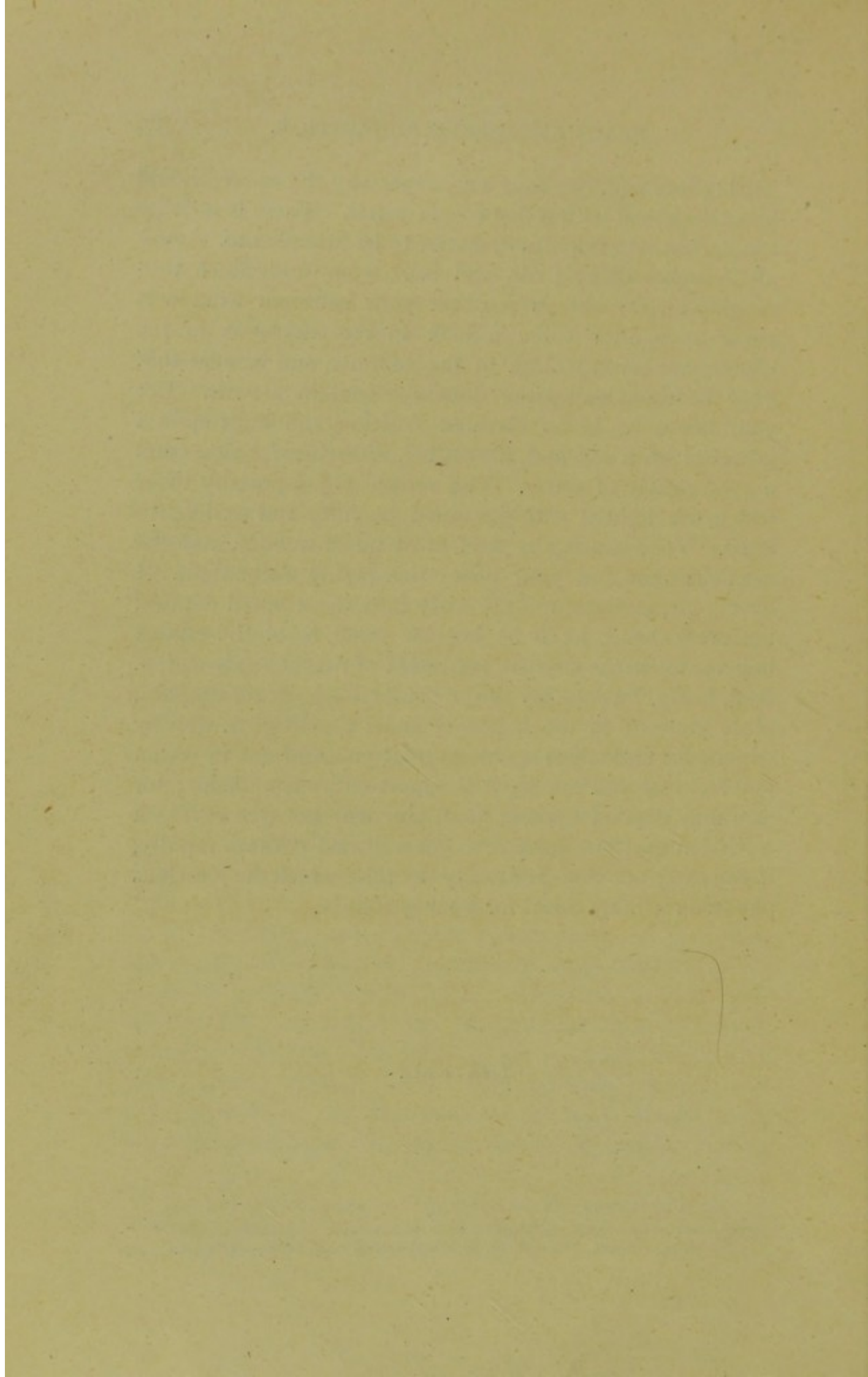
forces that they cannot be well repaired, and nervous exhaustion is thus increased. I have seen patients who suffered from nervous exhaustion, and who, from the bad advice which had been given to them by their friends, had what they called *tried to exert themselves*, and with this result; they perspired profusely; their limbs were in a state of tremor and agitation; they suddenly became so tired and stiff that they could scarcely put one limb before the other; or even raise a glass to their mouths; and yet they were unable to rest, or remain in one posture, on account of the irritability which this *fatigue* engendered; and when they tried to go to sleep, the frequent startings in the lower limbs would rouse them, and prevent them from going to sleep at all. This advice I would give to the neurasthenic;—don't rise until eight o'clock in the morning; take your bath just tepid; after this envelop yourself in a sheet which has been wrung out of cold water, and recline with it around you, until it is of the temperature of your body; and then remove it, and rub your body carefully and thoroughly with a rough coarse towel until it be dry and warm. After this, dress quickly and take a breakfast of fish, or of either a well-cooked chop or rump steak. Avoid taking too much fluid; a breakfast-cup filled with half coffee and half milk will be quite sufficient; dry toast at breakfast is to be preferred to bread; above all things, do not eat hurriedly—let your food be well masticated, before it is swallowed. For half an hour, after breakfast, read the paper, or, attend to any little correspondence which may be necessary, but avoid being too deeply interested either in politics or money matters. Then stroll gently, in the open air for an hour or even more, and never give yourself a set task to walk from one given point to another given point; gentle horse exercise is much to be preferred to walking. At eleven o'clock take a glass of dry sherry and a biscuit, or a new-laid egg beaten up with a glass of port wine,

and after this sit or stroll in the open air, if the weather permit, until luncheon. For luncheon, at half-past one, take oysters three or four times a week if they are in season, or some other kind of shell-fish : upon other days, take a basin of really good soup, which should be followed by a cut of mutton or beef from the joint. Do not take exercise, immediately after a meal. On the contrary, rest in a recumbent posture for an hour. You may drink, at your luncheon, a tankard of draught stout or Bass's pale ale;\* or, if you prefer it, a wineglass of whiskey with a bottle of Apollinaris water. (If the patient be under twenty years of age a champagne glassful of zoedone will promote digestion and act as a tonic). At four o'clock, a small cup of strong tea may be taken, and after this, either walking, riding, or carriage exercise commensurate with your strength. You may dine at seven p.m., but, before dining, I would advise the use of the Turkish bath three times during the week, and at other times, a cold sponging will be found extremely refreshing. The dinner should never consist of more than four courses, namely—soup, fish, joint, and game ; let pastry be avoided. Two glasses of sherry may be taken during dinner, and two glasses of port may be taken after dinner. You will observe, that I omit to mention the use of light wines, and I do so purposely, for they are in my opinion most injurious and untrustworthy. Don't take any drams in the evening, but an hour before going to bed take one bottle of seltzer or Apollinaris water, with a tablespoonful of fresh lemon juice. Sleep on a hard bed, and let the bedclothes over the body be light and comfortable ; the feet and legs should be kept warm, and well covered during sleep. The bedroom should face the south-west, and the bed should be so placed, that the head is to the north and the feet to the south. Before

\* The bark beer manufactured by the Chemists' Aerated and Mineral Water Association is a pleasant and agreeable medicated tonic, and may be judiciously taken at any period of life.

getting into bed, the body and especially the spine, should be well rubbed with a dry coarse towel. There is another simple, but very important, matter to be attended to. Avoid all draughts of cold air, and have your underlinen thoroughly aired ; always see, that your bedroom window is never open, after three o'clock in the afternoon in the winter, and seven o'clock in the summer, and be sure that your bedroom wall-paper does not contain arsenic. Let your house be in an elevated position, and built upon a gravel or loam soil, and, if possible, with cheerful views and a good supply of water. The rooms, and especially those which are lighted with gas, must be lofty and well ventilated. Your wearing apparel must be of woollen material next the skin, and your boots thoroughly water-tight. I have gone, perhaps, too minutely into these small details ; but every detail, let it be ever so small, is of the utmost importance in the curative treatment of nervous exhaustion. And, lastly, I would say to the neurasthenic, never despair ; place yourself in the hands of some practitioner, who by experience and talent is able to treat you, and one in whom you feel that you can have the most entire confidence ; for you may depend upon it, that you will not get well in a week, but that you are sure to get well, and perhaps rapidly, if you carry out conscientiously the rules which the judicious physician will lay down for your guidance.

THE END.



BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

---

With Coloured Plates and Photographs, 10s. 6d.

*THE BRAIN AND ITS DISEASES.—VOL. I.:*  
**SPECIFIC DISEASE OF THE BRAIN AND SPINAL CORD,**

SHOWING THE PART WHICH THIS AGENT PLAYS IN THE  
PRODUCTION OF

PARALYSIS, EPILEPSY, INSANITY, HEADACHE, NEURALGIA,  
HYSTERIA, AND OTHER MENTAL AND NERVOUS  
DERANGEMENTS.

By **T. STRETCH DOWSE, M.D., F.R.C.P., Edin.,**

Physician to the Hospital for Epilepsy and Paralysis; formerly Physician to the Central  
London Sick Asylum, Highgate.

'May justly be characterised as a valuable contribution to the important subject of which  
it treats.'—MEDICAL PRESS.

'Contains real, good, and earnest work.'—MEDICAL TIMES.

'A solid and able contribution to the literature of cerebral disease.'—T. CLIFFORD ALL-  
BUTT, M.D. (BRAIN.)

'A valuable addition to the treatment and study of nervous diseases.'—JOURNAL OF  
PSYCHOL MEDICINE.

'A noble contribution to neuro-pathology.'—E. LONG FOX, M.D.

'Will take a high rank among those of its class.'—WESTMINSTER REVIEW.

'The volume is evidently from the pen of a most painstaking, thoughtful, and eminently  
practical physician, and must, we think, become exceedingly popular with all those who are  
sincerely interested, and who is not? in the advancement of medicine as a science and an art.'  
—TRUTH.

---

Just Published, 7s. 6d.

*THE BRAIN AND ITS DISEASES.—VOL. II.:*  
**ON NEURALGIA, ITS NATURE AND CURATIVE TREATMENT.**

---

ALSO,

**ON DISEASES OF THE SKIN**  
DUE TO  
**DERANGEMENTS OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM.**  
THEIR CURATIVE TREATMENT.

Price 2s.

London: Baillière, Tindall, and Cox, 20, King William Street.

