

INTRODUCTION

3

expected to produce. Those who had had little sympathy with the neurotic looked on these victims of war as mere malingerers and advised treatment by a firing squad—"pour encourager les autres." Those who had been previously interested in hereditary defects asserted that these new patients were practically all inferior individuals. Those who had emphasized physical factors in peace times were able to demonstrate to their satisfaction that all the cases were suffering from extreme physical fatigue, concussion from high explosive shells, or poisoning with gases from the explosives. On the other hand, there were those, who had worked with neurotics from a psychological standpoint, who took the ground that the war neuroses were essentially psychic in origin. As a result of this, a large literature has grown up which must be rather chaotic for the average reader to whom it is accessible, since few publications are to be found which give any broad survey of the clinical material, or a careful study of all possible factors. It therefore seemed advisable to make a survey of these cases, bearing constantly in mind the possibility of all the above mentioned factors coming into play, in order that their relative importance might be gauged as a basis for the further study and treatment of these conditions as they arise in the American expeditionary forces.