

PREFACE

THE account of the neuroses of war set forth in this book was written primarily for the instruction of the medical profession in America. Dr MacCurdy came to this country in 1917 to inquire into the nature of the problems which were about to confront the neurologists and psychiatrists of America through the participation of that country in the war. The experience he gained was originally recorded in the "Psychiatric Bulletin" of the New York State Hospitals in July, 1917, and the Cambridge University Press are greatly indebted to the editors of this journal for their permission to make Dr MacCurdy's work accessible to the public in another form.

The book describes the experience of one with a long record of skilful investigation of the psycho-neuroses of civil life when brought into contact in British hospitals with the special forms of neurosis which are produced by the shocks and strains of warfare. The cases on which the book is based are not startling rarities especially selected to show features of scientific interest, but are characteristic straightforward cases such as may be met with by the score in any hospital especially devoted to functional nervous disorders. The merit of the book lies, not in the nature of its material, but in the skill with which this material has been treated and the clearness with which the essential facts have been set down and utilized to illustrate the special problems presented by the neuroses of war.

The great frequency of functional nervous disorders in the present war has made a subject which was formerly a somewhat narrow speciality one with which every practitioner of medicine has been forced to become familiar. Dr MacCurdy's