

tone condition in nerves, which may be intensified by a galvanic current, has been called an *electro-tonic* state; while perversions of it as regards sensibility are, as Jaccoud says, "both *quantitative* and *qualitative* as regards the excitability of nerves, . . . perverted or erroneous, which are purely subjective," and various forms of *anesthesia* observed especially amongst the hysterical. Says Prof. Putnam, "neurasthenia has come of late into general use to indicate certain states of the nervous system of which the anatomical basis is unknown, but which are characterized on the one hand by a lack of vigor, efficiency and endurance, affecting usually a large number of the nervous functions, and on the other hand by signs of active derangement." That such conditions, if not at present thoroughly understood, are at least dependent upon physical variations from the normal is seen from such considerations as the fact that, as Bartholow says, "in the pathological state when the sensibility is diminished, more energetic contractions are obtained with a descending (galvanic) current, while in the normal condition . . . the inverse or ascending current produces the strongest contractions."

Taking but one other illustration of this point, we remember Bernard's experiment in cutting the cervical sympathetic when a great afflux of blood takes place on that side of the head through paralysis of the muscular arterial walls, accompanied with augmentation of temperature and sensibility; and how, conversely if the same is stimulated by an induced electrical current, the pupil dilates, the globe of the eye protrudes, the bloodvessels of the part contract, the temperature falls below the normal, secretion of tears is lessened, etc.

From these illustrations we may fairly say that if we do not know what the minute histology of the changes is, we at least know something of the modes by which the pathological conditions are produced. Perhaps we will be most nearly correct if we call neurasthenias inadequate nutrition, whether due to mere starvation, to exhaustion, or perversion.

In a very practical paper read by ——— on *migraine* in Children, the writer points out the causes to be hereditary in a marked degree, to be induced by bad air and food, overcrowding and high-pressure in schools, and to unhealthy stimulation by bad company, and the mistaken kindness

of taking the young to theatres. Such stimulation of a certain portion of the nervous system resulting in early puberty and, often, associated vice, too frequently, along with many additional exciting causes, if long continued, carries the nervous irritability beyond physiological limits, and results in pathological conditions, or a *neuritis*. A realization of the fact and all that a neuritis involves, ought to be sufficient to make the physician, though often in vain, preach eloquent sermons against the many irritating influences, emotional and intellectual, which to-day are creating what is rapidly becoming a type. The almost unlimited symptomatology and its serious and often permanent manifestations would seem to teach that in many a true *neuritis* is often developed, which, while it may often be secondary, is certainly not infrequently, according to Jaccoud, spontaneous. He says, "I am convinced that a good number of paralyzes and circumscribed neuralgias which pass for essential or rheumatic are really an inflammation of the corresponding nerves." After describing the pathological anatomy of the inflammation of nerves, in which are the usual ecchymoses, abnormal hyperæmia, softening, exudation serous or sero-fibrinous, with varying termination, he speaks of the symptoms belonging mostly to functional troubles. Their nature makes it apparent that it is quite impossible to draw by means of them a line between functional disturbance and actual disease. They are pain along the course of a nerve, increased by pressure, or by the slightest superficial irritation of the nerve. This pain is lost late as the lesion lessens conductivity: tactile sensibility may gradually be dulled while spontaneous pain remains. In mixed nerve lesions, jerking and painful muscular *contractures* are present, gradually to be followed by abolition of reflex movements and electrical contractibility. Lesions of nutrition are not absent, as *erythema*, *herpes*, or other vesicular pigmentation or bullous eruptions, and even pigmentary and arthropathies. Taking this symptomatology, and who does not recognize many of the symptoms as those present in what are often erroneously diagnosed as neurasthenias. For lessening this ever-increasing class of *insane* and *neurasthenics*, the removal of such exciting causes, as those mentioned, and the correcting of the beginning of these evil are clearly taught and urgently indicated.