

more advisable to use the term "war neuroses," which gives the desired latitude in grouping together the different clinical pictures that occur, and focuses the attention on those influences which come directly from warfare.

In most countries, at the outbreak of the present war, a situation was in existence that was distinctly inimical to the careful study of functional nervous diseases. Neurotics, with their tendency to superficial recovery and frequent relapses, were insoluble problems to the bulk of the profession who were not especially trained in their treatment, so that they had become the *bêtes noires* of most general practitioners and of many neurologists. Being little understood, the general ignorance as to causation led to the adoption of hypotheses concerning the essential nature of these conditions, which were more strongly held than scientific accuracy would justify. This was, of course, a natural consequence of the multiplicity of physical and psychological factors that are probably always at work in the production of peace neuroses.

Neurotics, too, demand so much time of the physician in treatment that a tendency had developed to regard their symptoms as purely imaginary, somewhat spurious, or at least of less importance than obviously organic medical problems. The average medical practitioner naturally preferred to give his attention to concrete physical disabilities rather than to impalpable and subjective symptoms. When the war appeared, therefore, the medical attitude toward neuroses was one of rather narrow bigotry on the part of most of that small group interested in functional nervous diseases, and of indifference on the part of the bulk of the profession. Naturally then, there were few observers who were really competent to study the great mass of material which the war suddenly produced.

These thousands of cases presented problems which were no less important from a military than from a medical standpoint, and hypotheses as to their essential nature were put forth with as much enthusiasm and as little accuracy as the importance of the problem, on the one hand, and the lack of preparation on the part of the observers, on the other, would naturally be