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Original Contributions.

THE NEUROTIC AFFECTIONS OF THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM.*

BY A. R. GORDON, M.D., TORONTO.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen.—My purpose in presenting this paper is two-fold, first to discuss briefly this class of respiratory disease as a type distinct which perhaps has not received the general attention which its importance demands; and second, to emphasize the possibility, I will not say probability, of these neurotic conditions becoming an important element in the inflammatory diseases of the respiratory tract.

In dealing with a subject such as this, one cannot afford to be dogmatic, but fortunately we have much data from which we may draw safe conclusions. These respiratory neuroses manifest themselves as vasomotor disturbances, muscular spasm, trophic lesions and rhythmic irregularities, consequent upon a disturbance of the perfect nerve equilibrium of health, either an increased or lessened excitability of the generating or inhibitory centres, or excessive stimulation. Fortunately the range of activity of these important centres is considerable, but where an over-excitability of the cell exists, whether of generation or of inhibition, and its function is impaired, and we have superadded an over-stimulation, we may expect untoward effects.

Such pathological conditions of the nerve cells are found in the neurotic, the anemic, the ill-nourished, the over-wrought, those exposed to bad hygienic surroundings and unfortunate environ-

*Read before the Toronto Medical Society, January, 1907.