

make physicians pessimistic as to their power to help toward a cure. The hereditary tendency is conceived of too strongly as "biological" and therefore not to be materially modified in any given individual, and too great emphasis laid upon this point has tended to a gross sort of materialism and fatalism. The belief that a patient's mental sufferings are a reproduction of tendencies which his father or his mother showed before him is too often accepted as an excuse for doing nothing to relieve him. Meantime, another set of facts has been coming more and more prominently forward. The "something" that we inherit is, in most cases, a "tendency" indeed, but nothing more, and—as in the instance of tuberculosis—the actual disease may never show itself provided the patient can be suitably protected against causes operative after birth. So true is this that even where the disease "runs true" through several generations, as in those cases of hysteria or obsessional disorders, for example, where parent and child exhibit the same symptoms, it can often be shown to have been the influence of the ignorant, nervous mother, driven by a fatal impulse to strive toward reproducing herself in her child, and the fatalistic impulse of the child to imitate the mother, rather than any real hereditary tendency, that brought the result to pass. This line of thought is so important that we must leave it now only to take it up again.

The *strains of modern living* is the next influence on which stress is often laid, but its consideration need not detain us long. The telephone, the morning paper, the noise of crowded streets, the seething competition and the pressure for a narrow and exclusive individualism such as everywhere make themselves manifest, seem foes of tranquility and health.

But it is probable that these strains appear to be greater than they are, and, on the other hand, they bring, in a measure, their own remedies. The pace set is set, after all, by men for men, and while it is too fast for some it is not certain that on the whole it increases faster than the power of adaptation of the majority. At the worst, the strains of modern living are mostly obvious and open enemies, whereas the enemies which we have most to fear are those which, in our ignorance, we do not see. If we could but secure all the power of meeting hard conditions that belongs to us by birthright we should not have to strive so hard to make these conditions easier. It is not so much overwork as worry and apprehension that really sap the nervous vigor, and while worry and apprehension doubtless accompany necessary competition and well-founded anxiety and doubt, yet it is a piece of common knowledge that the most harrassing worries are those that are without external provocation but which imply internal tumults of the emotions,