

the patient was compelled to assume the dorsal decubitus, a delusional insanity occurring which might be explained by an autotoxæmia of intestinal origin. Constipated individuals as a rule are never a healthy class; they are apathetic, suffer from headache, vertigo, migraine, depression, diminished peptogenic power of the gastric juice, coated tongue, and a bitter taste is felt in the mouth. The symptoms may be the result of the production of putrid fermentation. Persons suffering from hysteria, hypochondriasis and other allied neuroses, near neighbors to insanity, are usually constipated, and it is well known that the digestive organs of patients in lunatic asylums are looked after carefully so that constipation may be corrected.

Psychical troubles may not be caused by constipation, but I believe their course is greatly influenced by such a condition. The insanity of alcoholism may have its origin in the absorption of the products of putrescence in the intestines, because those addicted to alcohol are generally constipated, the liver is congested, the stomach is not doing its work, fermentation occurs in the intestines as the result of bacterial attacks, ptomaines are retained, and the nervous system suffers. Cases of alcoholic insanities should therefore be studied in connection with the condition of the intestines, though the part alcohol plays upon the nervous system must not be forgotten, yet if we study the clinical features of an acute attack of insanity due to alcohol, we find many of the symptoms entirely different from those we would expect to find when alcohol acts on the nervous tissues, and more of those symptoms indicating a condition of rapidly developing toxæmia of intestinal origin, from the absorption of some of the poisonous alkaloids of the fæces, as skatol and indol. Some or all of these products are absorbed into the general circulation, and are no doubt expended on the nervous apparatus, and many of the cases of mental alienation presented to us, can be explained on no other basis, than that of the absorption of the products of intestinal putrefaction. If we make a thorough examination of the urine in these suspected cases we will find a marked increase in the quantity of indican, a substance which invariably makes its appearance in the urine with the presence of new symptoms. The presence of indican in the urine always