

dismal despair controls; this secondary wretched condition works more harm and shock to the already depressed nervous system in a few hours than weeks of the primary neurasthenia.

Hence, I would warn all to give the greatest attention to these secondary conditions which soon become forcible primary causes, and ever remember the close relationship between neurasthenia and digestive disturbances, with toxemia and ptosis of abdominal organs.

My experience leads me to conclude, after laboriously following up the history and career of a great many cases, that 50 per cent. of all neurasthenia is produced primarily by lithæmia, gout or faulty metabolism, and indigestion, with the consequent irritation, auto-toxemia, insomnia, and debility. Or, in simple Anglo-Saxon, that just as much neurasthenia is caused by improper eating and exercise as by overwork and worry.

Sydenham long ago recognized suppressed gout, where the mind and nervous system chiefly suffered a real neurasthenia, and this occurred more frequently than disease of the great toe.

Alexander Haig, who may be a crank, and may have fads, yet who has dug up many important truths for the welfare of our race, regards that faulty metabolism from the gouty or lithæmic diatheses is the great cause of neurasthenic conditions.

Some go even so far as to define neurasthenia as the exhibition on the nervous system of indigestion and auto-toxæmia. I think it would be better to say that these conditions produce a large percentage of neurasthenia.

To further show the complexity of this part of our subject, I will state a few axioms or facts, and although they are apparently contradictory, yet they will enable us to find the truth:

1. I can recall a dozen of families; three or four of each have frequent attacks of neurasthenia; none of those are engaged in exhausting or sedentary employment, but rather easy, healthy occupations; yet all are subject to lithæmia migraine and constipation, and their attacks of neurasthenia come or go, as Haig and Sydenham said, with their gouty attacks.

2. On the other hand, we all remember many patients, whose attacks of indigestion, lithæmia or gout were brought on by fretting or worry which first precipitated an "attack of the nerves," or neurasthenia.

3. Again, we have often met persons, in the evening, who were bright and good-natured and hilarious, perhaps at a medical banquet; but the next day they were sour, cross and stupid; or, similarly, some