

and mental action with marked peculiarity and distinctness. The reactivity and power of co-ordination with each other is commonly changed in the incipient stages of mental disease.

Sleeplessness is often noticed and spoken of for weeks before there is a suspicion that the case is pointing towards mental collapse. While we cannot accurately describe the physiology or psychology of sleep, we do know the absolute necessity of brain rest to maintain healthy mentality. The vascular theories do not afford us an explanation of either sleep or sleeplessness, and we must look to the cortical cells themselves for an explanation. Insomnia must be due to some disturbance between anabolism and katabolism in the mental area. When a patient complains of persistent sleeplessness we may well suspect the approach of further indications of a nerve storm well worth guarding against.

At least fifty per cent. of the patients entering our institutions for the treatment of mental disorders have a history of nutritive and digestive troubles. The lack of activity in assimilation and elimination seems unmistakably a factor in contributing to the toxic condition, which finds expression in the mental symptoms. Obstinate constipation and distressed feelings in the epigastric region are common to nearly all cases of melancholia, and we cannot doubt that intestinal putrefaction with the formation of complex products of bacterial fermentation sustains a causative relation to many distressing cases of mental disease.

The modern teachings of Salmi, Krafft-Ebing, Ford Robertson and others, supporting the toxic theory of intestinal infection, are each year finding greater favor among careful observers. The progress which has recently been made in bacteriology and physiological chemistry has gone far towards demonstrating that the great majority of the processes of disease in general are due to toxic elements in one form or another. May we not then quite reasonably look to the general organism to discover along the lines of modern pathology a bacillus or a toxin which may originate, directly or reflexly, the conditions in the insane? The future brightens with a hopeful and cheering prospect that the application of this toxic theory of diseases to the nervous system is destined to clear away much of the present vagueness and mystery of the causative agents and pathogenesis of mental diseases. I am convinced from the light of my own experience that many cases of mental disorder might be prevented if the early symptoms of digestive and nutritive derangements could be corrected. The relief experienced by the regular and systematic cleansing of the alimentary canal, together with prescribing an appropriate diet, has warded off more mental distress than we are at all aware of. We have all noticed in the cases undergoing treatment that as soon as digestion and elimination are restored and maintained in a normal condition that our patients gain in flesh, and that increase in weight affords grounds for a cheering prognosis.