

"Enterprises of great pith and moment," which in their best estate they would have gloried, without wavering, to have carried through successfully, now paralyze them in mere contemplation. The brain debility conjures up lions in the way, or mountains too high to climb over. The fears and forebodings of indefinable evil about to come, the unnatural and morbid dread of impending adverse circumstances have been the means of bringing about commercial or business disaster before friends see that worry of months, and it may be of years, has been rugging at the patient's heart-strings. The reserves of the nervous system, which we all have in store for emergencies, have been consumed, and the fagged-out system has no alternative but capitulation, which it never does without a struggle.

The neurasthenic may be divided into three classes:

1st. Those who complain of general weariness, becoming easily tired, having poor or capricious appetites, being restless, yet look fairly nourished and healthy.

2nd. Those who are evidently feeble. They are usually pale, thin, and show generally a waste of tissue and a breaking down without any evident local disease.

3rd. This class contains those in which we find a hysterical condition and anæmia, in chlorotic females.

It is well, however, in all such cases not to jump too hastily at conclusions, lest organic and local disease should exist, and the nerve conditions only prove to be symptoms indicating permanent trouble, which may need special and direct treatment. I have made mistakes myself in this direction, and many cases have come under my care in which my professional brethren have been guilty of the same sins of omission. Be thorough in your examinations.

All these phenomena are defects, outside of brain diseases, of a permanent character. The identity is not present, but the family resemblance is striking in this brood of evils which border on insanity. The want of sleep, followed by a low power of thinking in the pursuit of daily business; the weakening of a power of attention and a desire to wander from necessary thought; a shrinkage from doing a business which heretofore was a delight; becoming abnormally wearied in mind when doing routine and ordinary work; not the natural

facility to put ideas into words, and an unnaturalness of temper in respect to small matters and on small occasions; and change of manners and feelings to near friends and relatives without any just reason, are cardinal characteristics.

We often meet with the other psychical extremes, such as unusual and constant buoyancy of spirits, mental exhilaration not natural, loquacity and flightiness, which are observed by everyone except by the individual himself. So marked are those changes of character, that many such are accused of having become drunkards. The accusers do not know that these symptoms are signals of distress. The indecision of the will, the bewildered judgment, the lack of self-control and of discretion, the excitement, alternating with unaccountable mental depression may be only temporary and evanescent, or they may be "coming events casting their shadows before."

If there is any hereditary taint of insanity, or any serious neurosis existing, then these evidences of physical and mental deterioration are not to be lightly thought of, for any such condition may evoke from latent tendencies active diseases of an alarming character. The deficient mental control of sane people thus afflicted is a psychological study of great interest. They know how absurd are their fears and forebodings, yet no reasoning can shake them off or remove the general nervousness. The hopelessness, the silly fancies, the unnatural dread of being in company or of being alone, the fear of contamination in many ways undreamed of when well, the undefined terror on walking certain streets or living in isolated houses, and the general sense of ill-being with a dread of something undefinable about to happen, are only a few of the many psychical conditions found in the neurasthenic. The most pronounced manifestations underlying these morbidly tinged conceptions and misconceptions are timidity, irresolution, and, usually, irritability of manners and speech not natural to the person. This state of feeling has a defined period of invasion, and has not been gradually acquired through daily experience and repetition, nor is it a congenital trait of character. This abnormal condition is often the primary stage of insanity. It is interesting to note how conversely we often find insane convalescents show merely this modification of mental weakness in the last stage before recovery. Just as the colors of the rainbow, or