

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF "NERVOUSNESS"

Preliminary to our discussion of the nervousness of the housewife we must take up without great regard to details the subject of nervousness in general.

Nervousness, like many another word of common speech, has no place whatever in medicine. Indeed, no term indicating an abnormal condition is so loosely used as this one.

People say a man is nervous when they mean he is subject to attacks of anger, an emotional state. Likewise he is nervous when he is a victim of fear, a state literally the opposite of the first. Or, if he is restless, is given to little tricks like pulling at his hair, or biting his nails, he is nervous. The mother excuses her spoiled child on the ground of his nervousness, and I have seen a thoroughly bad boy who branded his