

## SOME NOTES ON FUNCTIONAL NEUROSES.\*

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As the proposed Psychiatric Clinic is being discussed this evening I thought some notes on the Functional Neuroses, especially in regard to the inadvisability of treating these in Psychiatric Clinic, might be of interest to the Section of Medicine of this Academy.

There are I think, two points of view especially to be considered in regard to the treatment of the Functional Neuroses, viz., the Theoretical and the Clinical. In consideration of the theoretical, I would first like to direct your attention to some of the current theories in regard to a common Function Neurosis, viz., Hysteria. First we have the *Psychological Theories* and these have much in common, and are the most widely accepted. Binet, as a result of his experiments, concluded that in hysteria there was a condition of double consciousness, that is, two streams of consciousness flowing side by side, relatively independent and separated by Amnesia. Next, we have the theory of Dr. Pierre Janet, who believes hysteria to be entirely a mental malady. The essential points in his theory are the tendency to disintegration, splitting up, or, as he says, doubling (deboulement) of the personality, and the identity of the hysterical and the hypnotic states, based upon the common factor of suggestibility. The theory of Sides is similarly a dissociation theory, but he lays more stress upon the process of dissociation, and the independent, automatic activity of the sub-conscious ideas or systems. The theory of Freud, the most important and significant feature of which is the tracing of every cause to a trauma of sexual nature; not only does the hysteria always originate in sexual traumatism, but the original traumatic moment must have been in childhood—in the pre-pubescent period. Freud has traced this class of trauma to very early life, three and four years of age, and in one instance actually to one and one-half or two years. If we turn to the *Physiological Theories* we find, chief among these, the definition of Sollier, who defines hysteria as follows: "Hysteria is a physical, functional disturbance of the brain, consisting in a torpor or sleep, localized or generalized, of the cerebral centres. This definition, has, I believe, much to recommend it. Again, there are the *Biological Theories*, among which may be mentioned that of Snyder, who holds hysteria

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