

These reflex actions, he stated, were useful in diagnosis in four different ways. In the first place, they were invaluable in distinguishing one nervous disease from another; secondly, the seat of the trouble could be located by their use; thirdly, the extent of the morbid process could often be defined through them; and, fourthly, it was possible by them to tell whether the condition was merely the result of hysteria or shamming.

The doctor disposed of the last two cases in a few words. When, he stated, he was visited by a patient who thought that she—for such patients were usually ladies—was suffering from some nervous disease, he was in the habit of looking wise, prescribing certain medicines and then interviewing the husband. “Him,” said the doctor, “I tell to order a new dress straight from Paris and then to give a party. And I recommend him to inform his wife that Mrs. So-and-so, who is to attend the party, has also got a new dress, but that hers was made in Ottawa. Such treatment, I find, usually works a cure.” In the case of patients who were merely shamming for the purpose of securing the payment of damages from transportation companies or something of the same sort, the reflexes gave an almost infallible clue.

He showed slides of sections of the spinal cord and of the brain affected by tumors and various diseases, and gave accounts of the symptoms of each case and the manner in which by means of the reflexes he had been able to make a correct diagnosis and to locate the seat and extent of the trouble. There were, he explained, many kinds of nervous diseases whose more obvious symptoms were very much the same, and yet for which the treatment was diametrically opposed. In distinguishing these diseases the reflexes were of the very greatest value. He described the use of the ophthalmoscope in determining the existence of tumors in the brain, and also described the method of determining affections of the cervical portion of the spinal marrow and the cerebellum by means of reflexes of the pupil of the eye, the jaw and the abdomen. In particular he emphasized the importance of the reflexes in determining the exact location of tumors of the brain. Until the exact location of such disorders was known it was impossible for the surgeon to operate, inasmuch as while operation was possible when they were located in the cerebrum or cerebellum it was absolutely impossible in those cases where the seat of the trouble was the pons, or stem of the brain. The position of growths and disorders could be determined with exactness by a careful and thoughtful use of the reflexes.

At the conclusion of the paper a vote of thanks was tendered Dr. Russell, the appreciation of the Association being expressed by Dr. F. Finley, Montreal, and Dr. McPhedran, Toronto.

The rights of Surgeons and Patients, discussed by Dr. J. C. Munro, of Boston, was the next address.