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A PLEA FOR THE NEURASTHENIC.

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Mr. Chairman, Gentlemen,—

The subject I have chosen to speak upon this morning is, "A Plea for the Neurasthenic."

Generally speaking, such a plea to be brought before medical men, is not warranted, but, as a rule, the individual cases that we know so frequently crop up in the course of the daily practitioner's life, with their aches and complaints, worries and annoyances, are not generally given the due consideration that the knowledge of the condition warrants.

The neurasthenic is the name given to a person suffering from neurasthenia, and this allied with conditions such as hysteria, makes up that group of diseases that are called functional. By this it is meant that the functions of organs are altered, though no gross or tangible change of structure is to be seen macroscopically or microscopically. The characteristic changeableness or variability of the symptoms lead us to suppose that, on that account, function only is disturbed. Function and nutrition are so closely correlated, that if function be long disturbed, nutrition is bound to suffer. At the onset of these diseases, or during the early stages, we may get a condition which is purely functional in type; yet, if long continued, nutrition is bound to suffer, thereafter producing organic changes.

Some day, when we have a more perfect technique, and higher magnifying microscopes, we may be able to place some of the so-called functional diseases in the organic group.

It is a well established fact that a large percentage, if not all, functional diseases are congenital in origin, due to faulty development in