

All this sounds very fundamental now, but I notice that in certain quarters it is considered probable that typhoid fever does arise *de novo*, and that it is not associated with any specific poison germ. If this be true then enteric fever is not contagious, and all the talk about disinfection of the stools and the care which ought to be observed about the bedside of the patient is in vain. Personally I think this a dangerous doctrine and believe the autogenetic theory lately arisen to depend for its strength upon merely negative evidence; the difficulty of accounting for appearance of the disease in out-of-the-way localities, the doubt as to the existence of special micro-organisms in the system of the patient, etc.

Remotely suggestive of this matter, I lately heard a well-known scientist tell the following story, which he vouched for as true:

A professor of botany in a medical school plumed himself on the practical course which he gave, never failing to illustrate his lecture by analogies drawn from the medical world of science. Thus he informed his class that for the purpose of producing a succession of large, fine flowers they should always be plucked before they wither, otherwise the plant would exhaust itself in its efforts to fructify and succeeding flowers would be small or imperfect, or the plant would refuse to yield any more. To emphasize this truth he pointed to the fading beauties of the human species whose charms often grow dim from similar causes. And this is the impression his discourse left upon the mind of a youth who was "quizzed" about it the next week: "Well, sir, women and plants are very much alike in this respect, neither of them should be allowed to fructify when they have the—" and the contracting brow of the lecturer warned him that he had said enough.

Dr. Henry Howard has lately published a pamphlet entitled "Physiological Psychology" which I have read, and if he will allow me I would like to criticize it. To begin with, why does he call himself a *physiological* psychologist any more than a *pathological* psychologist, for does he not draw his deductions relative to insanity from *morbid* states of the brain as well as from its healthy conditions?

I would suggest the phrase *physical* psychologist, which would be descriptive of his position relative to the obsolete idea of the separate and independent nature of mind and body, and of his

belief in the modern notion of the complete dependence of the one upon the other.

Dr. Howard will perhaps recognize the pertinence of this suggestion if I quote the last sentence of his pamphlet: "insanity is a *physical* disease due to *pathological* defect which causes loss of equilibrium in nerve forces. This is *physiological* (physical?) psychology."

The modern theory which refers all our ideas, actions and thoughts, good and bad, normal and morbid, to changes in the nervous system may appear simple enough, but how little do we really know about it!

As says Griesinger: "Definite information regarding what takes place can neither be afforded by materialism, which would explain all mental acts by the physical, nor by spiritualism which would explain the material by the psychical, and even if we did know all that takes place within the brain when in action—if we could penetrate into all the processes, chemical, electrical, etc., of what use is it?"

Oscillation and vibration, all that is electrical and mechanical, are still not mental conditions—actions of thought. How they can be transformed to these is, indeed, a problem which shall remain unsolved to the end of time; and I believe that if to-day an angel from heaven came and explained all to us our understandings would not even be able to comprehend it."

The second Annual Report of the Ontario Provincial Board of Health (420 pages) reflects great credit upon its compilers. Especially Part III., comprising papers read before various literary and sanitary societies, is well worth perusal. Pamphlet No. 14 (page 204), "Directions for preventing the spread of Asiatic cholera" ought to be carefully read by every medical man.

Dr. Henry Howard does not believe in the freedom of the will, and consequently that man is responsible for and can control his thoughts, words and deeds. Nearly a thousand years ago wrote Omar Khayyam, the Persian Poet, in a similar strain:

"O Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

Oh, Thou, who man of baser earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devise the snake,
For all the sin wherewith the face of man,
Is blackened—man's forgiveness give—and take.

P. A. LAVER, M.D.

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