

Fernald on the thymus gland, and on the relation of psychic changes to endocrine function are but other instances.

But perhaps the physical origin of psycho-neurosis has been somewhat *overdone* by the internist who has oft-times confused the effects of the knife and the drug with those of suggestion.

We have been apt in the past to ascribe to auto-intoxication, to low-grade sepsis, etc., the factor in obscure psychoneuroses, and more recently the extirpation of the colon has rivalled extraction of the teeth in curing all manner of functional disturbances. At times, it is true, results would seem to justify the performance of some of these radical measures, but sadly enough the psychiatrist vainly waits in oblivion, outside, for an invitation to counsel and help.

That even the moral character may be obviously changed and that various mental complexes may arise through direct physical agency is well exemplified in the case of one individual under my own observation, who, at the age of forty-five, became a moral degenerate without appreciable cause. It was the subject of criticism in the community, until the oculist discovered a choked disk, and the neurological surgeon removed a tumour from the brain.

Organic conditions, then, and physical defects are undoubtedly responsible for mental conflicts, conversions, complexes, etc., but I protest bitterly and earnestly against the surgeons who undertake independently the supervision of such cases without previous reference to the psychiatrists, who alone are capable of forming a sane judgment.

Regrettable as the confession may be, we are all of us familiar with instances where operations have been done for the mental effect. Is it not appalling to learn that a surgeon of repute would, without psychiatric advice or consultation, operate for this purpose upon a woman aged sixty-five, the unfortunate victim of the mental delusion that she was pregnant?

So much, then, for the physical cause of mental disease.

*Psychic Causes.*—As to the psychogenesis of mental and physical disease much might be written. It must be assumed that many physical conditions are directly preceded by psychic factors, that headache, vomiting, delusions, etc., are often psychogenetic in their origin. There is no doubt whatsoever that subconscious disturbances may equally affect the mental health and act upon the functions of synaptic groups. Nay more, when we consider how in every motor act but two or three neurones are concerned, that with sensation but four or five, how much more complex must be the mental states with shocks and associated memories, where innumerable neurones and synapses are involved.

Worry, disappointment, grief, are all factors in producing insomnia,