

*Journal*, January 20, 1894. The invaginated bowel is now drawn out of the temporary slit and the latter closed.

## NEURASTHENIA.

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(Continued from May No.)

The invasion of the psychic sphere, the functional depression of a great number of organs, without corresponding material lesions, the neurotic nature of the disease, will furnish the principal indications of treatment. The general treatment of neurasthenia comprises three indications:

1. *To combat the cause of the disease.*
2. *To treat the neurasthenic source.*
3. *To pursue the predominant localizations.*

(1) To carry out the first indication it will be necessary to commence (and this is not always an easy task) to unravel by tact and perseverance the cause of the illness. It will be necessary to study the family circle, to penetrate its desiderata, to study the heredity, to take full account of semi-confessions, of half whispered avowals escaping during a moment of indecision, and to be able to define a course of casual treatment; without which all intervention directly opposed to the illness will remain a dead letter. It is in this pathogenic treatment, in this distraction of the patient from the pre-occupations which possess him, that the actions of the doctor will be particularly delicate; very often he should perform extra-medical work in the family, combat a system of defective education, modify a tense situation, to free the patient from a vicious habit, compel the persons surrounding (often unsympathetic or badly disposed) to participate in the cure. It is necessary, in a word, to detach the patient by all possible means from the pernicious influences (over-pressure, pre-occupations, excesses) which have aided the predisposition. It is by the same methods that one may realize a prophylaxis of the neurosis in any subject whose personal or hereditary tendency would make him liable to neurasthenia.

(2) The neurasthenic foundation is, above all, amenable to a severe *hygiene* and *moral treatment*.

It is most important that the doctor should assume authority over his patient and persuade him that he is not afflicted with any organic lesion, therefore there is nothing opposed to a radical cure. Such persuasion is not difficult to obtain, for the neurasthenic only asks to be reassured, but it is still necessary to try to maintain it. An attitude firm and at the same time kindly, a patient and sympathetic hearing of some of the troubles so varied, in whose description the imagination of the patient is never in default, a minute examination of all the organs will aid in obtaining the confidence of the patient, in acquiring his adhesion and collaboration to the treatment. Once in possession of the patient, in order to combat the psychical asthenia, it will be necessary to impose a line of conduct upon him, to outline a means by which he may maintain his wavering will with firmness, to measure and increase progressively his portion of responsibility, and in a word, to force him little by little to occupy himself and to wish.

A similar *hygienic* treatment would not be applicable to all forms. To cerebral neurasthenics one would advise exercise, walking, without fearing even a certain degree of physical fatigue; to spinal neurasthenics, on the contrary, quiet would be found advantageous. In all cases, distraction, travels, residence in the country, a winter's sojourn in a temperate climate would be useful.

*Hydrotherapy* is above all the medical treatment of neurosis. Administered in a stimulating form (douches, sea baths) in exclusively depressive states, in soothing form (lotions, frictions, wet pack, cold immersions, long baths). Among excitable neurasthenics, it will give the best results if its use is persevered in. There should be added, in summer, a stay at one of the following thermal stations: Nères, Luxeuil, Royat, St. Sauveur, Lamalon, Ragatz, Evian, Bigorre, or in a special hydrotherapeutic institution.

Electricity has been utilized under its different forms. They have successively extolled Franklinization (Vigouroux), the electric stool, electric baths. In cases of localized manifestations, they have found the electric breeze, the spark and electric friction beneficial. Beard and Rockwell