

book should go far to enable him to make good use of this familiarity. The book, however, should not appeal to the medical profession alone. There are now many who are trusting greatly to the assistance of the laity when, after the war, the task is undertaken of putting the treatment of the neuroses and psychoses of civil life upon a new basis. Dr MacCurdy's book is so written that any intelligent layman will be able to follow its essential lessons. It should thus be most useful in following up the movement for the instruction of the laity already set on foot by the admirable work of Professor Elliot Smith and Mr T. H. Pear¹.

One of the lines upon which the book will exert a strong educative influence lies in the clearness and definiteness with which it brings out the essentially psychological character of the war neuroses. In the early days of the war the medical profession, in accordance with the materialistic outlook it had inherited from the latter part of the nineteenth century, was inclined to emphasise the physical aspect of the antecedents of a war neurosis. As the war has progressed the physical conception has given way before one which regards the shell explosion or other catastrophe of warfare as, in the vast majority of cases, merely the spark which has released long pent up forces of a psychical kind. Dr MacCurdy's book should contribute greatly to progress upon these lines. His cases not only bring out clearly the great part taken by purely mental factors in the production of the war neuroses, but they also show to how great an extent the symptoms of neurosis are determined by mental factors, even when the main agent in the production of the neurosis is concussion or fatigue.

In coming into touch with the neuroses of war Dr MacCurdy was especially struck by their simplicity as compared with those of civil practice. He rightly ascribes this to the fact that the war neuroses depend essentially on the coming into

¹ *Shell Shock*, by G. Elliot Smith and T. H. Pear, Manchester University Press.