

The physician who has neither the time nor the inclination to devote such attention and care to the neurasthenic patient should have the frankness and moral courage so to inform the patient and not keep him on, by promises of recovery, which he cannot back up with results; while the physician who feels that he is discharging his duty by telling the patient that his sufferings are "imaginary" and "trifling" can scarcely be said to have the modern conception of this neurosis and is therefore unfitted to deal with it. Let the patient feel that you are in sympathy with him and give him hope and you will soon have his greatest confidence and with this strong factor you may proceed to advise your patient what to do.

Briefly outlined the treatment followed out by the highest authorities is somewhat after the following:—

First of all seek out the cause, whether it be of an hereditary nature or an acquired one. In hereditary cases, if the patient come or is brought to you early in life, then the best methods you can pursue are in the form of prophylaxis. In these cases neurasthenia is more the expression of a permanent quality than of an intercurrent disease. There may be an exceeding keenness of intellect, exquisite taste, etc.,—yet it may be a life of intense ill-health; there may be intervals of brilliant effort and feverish exertion, then followed by exhaustion and apathy, irritability, depression of spirits and bodily suffering. When in hereditary cases we speak of cure we are understood to speak only of the attack on hand. The importance of forming an early prognosis in children and young persons in whom an hereditary proclivity of neurasthenia is present and detected, cannot be overestimated.

Prophylaxis then in these cases must be followed out. From early in life, every means possible should be resorted to, to strengthen the bodily and mental condition.

Exercise in the open air as much as possible, good food, plenty of sleep and not overmuch brain work. The personal hygiene of the patient should be carefully looked into. Intellectual hygienics should of course be of an easy nature. The amount of brain work should be limited. Cold bathing properly prescribed should be an important feature. All forms of outdoor exercise which are healthful and do not cause strain should be recommended.

Alcohol and all other stimulants should be avoided and this is most important. I should also mention that at the age of puberty, when constitutional disturbances so frequently evidence themselves, the patient should be strictly guarded and watched.

*Treatment of the acquired form and of Neurasthenia in general.*— Here again, seek out the cause and endeavour by every means to have it