

NERVOUS DISEASES AND ELECTRO-THERAPEUTICS.

IN CHARGE OF

CAMPBELL MEYERS, M.D., C.M., M.R.C.S., Eng., L.R.C.P., Lond.,
Neurologist to St. Michael's Hospital. 192 Simcoe Street.

SCRIVENER'S PALSY NOT SOLELY PEN FATIGUE.

BY C. H. HUGHES, M.D.

Honorary Fellow of the Chicago Academy of Medicine, and of the British Medico-Psychological Society, etc., etc., etc., and Dean of the Faculty and Professor of Neurology, etc., of Barnes Medical College, St. Louis.

From an intimate familiarity with a large number of cases of writer's cramp or, better, writer's palsy, and other forms of the so-called occupation neuroses, I have long been of the opinion that the occupation is not the sole cause, but simply the determining, and to a limited extent only the predisposing, cause of the special expression of those neuroses which we call by the several names of Scrivener's palsy, musician's paralysis, chorister's cramp, engraver's palsy, etc., etc., etc.

The usual sedentary, excitable, irregular and excessive nerve-strain life of the individual, blended often with associated brain and nerve exhausting dissipation, together with inherent neuropathic predisposition being the essential conditions of the development of the neural instability and exhaustion neurasthenia, through which it is possible to have an occupation neurosis by excessive or even moderate use of a special group of muscles in the represented daily routine of a certain vocation.

The proof that local over strain is not the sole factor is found in the fact that many cases of occupation neuroses are not the result of excessive over-work; unless we use the term as applied to the particular individual as excessive, which may be, and often is, exceedingly light at the time of the break-down, such as would show unfavourable on the average worker in the same field, and sometimes the local palsy appears after the individual, from general debility, has quit work for a time and again resumed his occupation for awhile only to discover his inability to use with former dexterity the instrument of his occupation.

The following record is a case somewhat in point:

The gentleman did not know he had this affliction to such an extent till making the effort illustrated below in my office. He is not and has never been a professional book-keeper or accountant. His vocation has been to sell goods in an exclusively cash store in a small interior city. He has been all his life at this occupation. He is married, is temperate and moderately regular in his habits. His tendon reflexes and physical