

patient, suffering from neurasthenia who complains of psychic pain, told, "Oh, it's nothing, only nerves," etc., etc. The reality of the existence of these pains was strongly confirmed in my mind by an incident which arose in the following manner: A neurasthenic patient of mine was attacked with severe pains in his left shoulder during my absence in England some years ago. He consulted a surgeon, who carefully examined the shoulder without finding any evidence of local disease, and told the patient he found no cause for his pain, that it would soon be better. This improvement, however, did not take place, and the pain continued severe until my return. Some simple prescription was given him and the pain soon ceased. A short time afterwards he had the misfortune to fall and fracture his femur, from which, while it was being put up, he evidently suffered intensely. When the operation was over I asked him which had caused him more suffering, the fracture or the pain he had had in his left shoulder. He immediately replied the pain in the shoulder, and I knew his character too well to doubt his statement for an instant.

Why are these symptoms of neurasthenia often treated so lightly? I believe it is due to the fact that a hiatus in medical education has always existed in the domain of neurology under consideration. The student has excellent works on insanity written on this disease after the boundary line has been passed, but previous to this stage he has but little. A single chapter on neurasthenia in the recent text-books of medicine, written with about as much warmth as neurasthenic patients are welcomed to the wards of a general hospital, is probably all the average student reads about it. As for clinical instruction this is scanty if not altogether absent. What then must be the logical result? He goes into general practice where these troubles are common without any definite knowledge of this form of functional nervous disease, gropes about in the dark for a variable number of years, and finally grows to look upon them as whimsical, chimerical, etc., gives up their study in utter disappointment, or learns often by sad experience, both to himself and his patient, how serious some of these troubles are. Having devoted my entire attention to neurology for nearly fifteen years, a branch of medicine of which these cases of neurasthenia form an important quota, and having had exceptional opportunities during the past twelve years in a private hospital, with the aid of a large staff of nurses, to study these patients, to observe the various phases of their disease from day to day, to see, in some it is true, a gradual intensity of their symptoms develop until the boundary line was passed and they were transferred to the care of an alienist, or in, I am pleased to say, a much greater number, to observe a.