

FUNCTIONAL NERVOUS DISEASES, their causes and their treatment. Memoir for the concourse of 1881-1883. Academie Royale de Medecine de Belgique. With a supplement on the Anomalies of Refraction and Accommodation of the Eye and of the Ocular Muscles. By George T. Stevens, M.D., Ph.D., Member of the American Medical Association, etc., etc. New York : D. Appleton & Co., 1887, pp. 217.

The work before us is the memoir which received, from the Academie Royale de Medicine of Belgium, the highest honors awarded, 1881-1883. The author's views have long been known to neurologists and ophthalmologists, and have been considered by them as heterodox, especially his views on the cure of chorea and epilepsy by the treatment of ocular muscles. The first eighty pages treat of "Functional Nervous Diseases," such as neuralgia, migraine, etc., by the correction of errors of refraction, especially astigmatism. In this part of the work there is nothing new, as all have known that errors of refraction are a common cause of headache, and that as soon as the correction was given the pains in the head and neck would disappear. On the other hand, the treatment of muscular inco-ordination, as practiced by the author, is new and of his own devising. There has no doubt much been learned during the past few years in regard to muscular asthenopia, and both Landolt and Stevens have done much to this end.

The nomenclature suggested and used by the author for the different ocular insufficiencies is an improvement on the former modes of expression, as the term *exophoria* is much more convenient than *insufficiency of the internal rectus*.

As to accepting the belief of the author, that ocular muscles out of equilibrium are the cause of epilepsy, chorea, and such affections, and that by partially dividing them relief is obtained, the reviewer is not in accord. In fact he has yet to see any case of chorea or epilepsy permanently relieved by the partial or even thorough division of the ocular muscles. That cases of epilepsy are occasionally for a short time improved by an operation on the ocular muscles, is doubtless true, and it is as equally true that any operation, the patient knowing it, no matter how little the pain inflicted, will have the same benefit, owing to the mental effect produced. In closing this review, we cannot advise the practice of its teachings. The book is well written and well published.