

The Relation of Infectious Processes to Mental Disease.—C. K. Mills (*American Journal Med. Sciences*, November, 1894.) The author refers to the report of Drs. Regis and Chevalier-Lavaure and to Dr. Hurd's paper on "post-febrile insanity," in which mental disorders (post-febrile) are regarded as developing from specific poisoning, from shock, from anæmia and from nervous exhaustion. As subdivisions of specific poisoning are mentioned "the delirium of fevers, both intermittent and exanthematous, of pneumonia, of uræmic poisoning, the transient insanity of influenza, the mental confusion of multiple neuritis, the delirium of iodoform, salicylic acid and chronic alcoholic poisoning and the delirium of puerperal fever."

Regis and Chevalier-Lavaure studied selected cases of insanity to show whether there was excessive production or storing of products which should be eliminated. They studied blood, organic liquids and especially the urine, to find how toxic their qualities were during the various forms of insanity, and as compared with the same in health. The theory of the toxicity of intestinal contents was also referred to, also the possibility that general paralysis of the insane is due to infection.

The author then gathers the scattered opinions of others, trending toward the assumption of the "confusional" type of insanity as post-febrile; as toxic, as due to anæmia and exhaustion following acute and infectious disorders, or (Korsakoff) as a toxemia due to a special poison developed in multiple neuritis, influenza and infectious disorders.

He refers further to a case of a febrile typhoid fever (Gerloczy) which was seemingly like acute mania. The description of "mental confusion" (Chaslin), as an intermediary between functional and organic insanity, is also brought into line. He refers briefly to multiple neuritis, myelitis and disseminated sclerosis, speaking both of the evidences of their infectious origin and of their interlinking with mental manifestations.

He refers further to a case of acute delirium with autopsy, showing incipient meningitis; to another in which no meningitis was found; to the studies of Mayberry into the effect of an epidemic of erysipelas upon mental troubles. Rasori's case of acute delirium with autopsy and careful bacteriological examination is fully detailed. He cultivated a bacillus, which injected into the rabbit produced death with symptoms of septicæmia in one and a half to six days. He also gives three cases occurring in Philadelphia in one of which Dr. Ball found a small bacterium.

Puerperal cases are held as furnishing a foundation for belief in infectious origin; the analogy of eclampsia is also referred to. His conclusions merely claim septic infection to be one cause of mental diseases, even while admitting the negative evidence found in autopsies and the but meagre bacteriological evidence so far obtained. PHELPS.

The Role Played by Fixed Ideas in the Pathogenesis of Hysterical Polyuria. Souques (*Archiv. Neurolog.*, Dec., 1894).

The conclusions reached by the author on this subject are: (1) Continuous hysterical polyuria is much more common than has been supposed. Most previous observations of alcoholic, emotional and traumatic polyuria belong to this category. But it does not by any means encompass all the cases of polyuria *sine materia*. At least, the polyuria of hereditary degeneration forms a category distinct, and incapable of being brought into the hysterical category. (2) Hysterical polyuria is the consequence of a fixed idea of a urinous order. This idea fixes its origin in an anterior, a previous existence in the subject of an urinary trouble, a poikiluria, or hypersecretion (the result of an acute excess of alcohol, nocturnal incontinence of urine). (3) The idea inhibits, probably, the vaso motor centres of the kidney, which entails a renal vaso dilatation, that is to say, a polyuria.

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