ABSTRACTS

NEUROSES AND PSYCHONEUROSES.

[51] Occlusal neuroses: the application of psychotherapy to dental problems.

Three patients are analytically discussed. They had become tooth-conscious, and were thrown over into a tooth-neurosis, which is described as an occlusal neurosis. The simple procedure of permitting the patients to talk themselves out of their grief certainly can be considered as a specific antidote for having talked themselves or having someone else talk them into it. If it is purely a habit, with no neurotic background, then it is a bad habit, which should be corrected. In every walk of life the frequency of this symptom is noted—many people grind their teeth. One need but observe the constant motion of the jaws to arrive at the same conclusion. If this is so, then the writer thinks that it is not too radical to state that a high percentage of all human beings are producing pyorrhoea mechanically, and this, he believes, is the important factor in the etiology of a serious problem confronting the dental profession to-day.

C. S. R.


The psychological factor is said to play a rôle of considerable importance in the etiology of at least some cases of migraine, acting upon a somatic tendency to this type of malfunction. The problem that still awaits solution is the determination of the relative importance of the part played by these two factors. While symptomatic treatment has a place, to attain more lasting results a more definitely causal treatment is required. The information gained from the detailed study of a case which has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion may have a bearing upon the prophylaxis and treatment of other cases, always provided that the attitude of mind so induced does not lead to a stereotyped way of thinking. The case considered in this paper shows that a psychological factor played an essential rôle in causation. The mental mechanisms operative were found to be related to a primitive mode of reaction, which is to be observed in all persons at a certain level of development. This suggests that a similar mechanism may be at work in other cases of migraine. The variation which takes place in the course of development renders it possible that apparently unlike reactions, when examined more closely, may be found to rest upon a like nucleus.

C. S. R.

Four cases of boys who were non-psychotic and had true auditory hallucinations are presented. Two of them showed what probably are early symptoms of a schizophrenic reaction. The other two, while maladjusted, showed nothing suggestive of schizophrenia or any other psychosis. All four boys were below the average in intelligence, two of them conspicuously so. The hallucinatory episodes are studied with regard to the quality of the hallucinatory perception, the localization, the presence of accessory sensations, the content, and the apparent functions that are involved. The hallucinations seem to have participated in the fulfilment of the functions of: (a) defence; (b) enhancement of self-esteem; (c) satisfaction of instinctive cravings and of a desire for pleasure; (d) repression of unwelcome instinctive cravings; (e) self-punishment, in expiation of a sense of guilt. It is emphasized that while certain functions are fulfilled, these probably constitute only one link in the chain of factors which really causes the hallucinations to occur. In one case there was evidence of mixed deafness in one ear and in another there was the possibility of some organic auditory disturbance. The significance of the findings for the general problem of projection and their relationship to recent work on eidetics are discussed.

C. S. R.


A long paper describing the investigations carried out from which several important conclusions were drawn.

The frequency of mental diseases and of mental eccentricities in the families of schizophrenic patients was investigated in American material. A far-reaching agreement was discovered between the findings in New York and the findings of Ruedin, Luxenburger, Hoffmann and others in Munich. The differences between New York and Munich are less than those between Munich and Basle. To be exact, the expectation of schizophrenia among siblings of schizophrenics was found to be 4.8 per cent.

Since the biological unity of the group of schizophrenias is not probable, an investigation was made to determine whether familial influences are of equal importance in different forms of schizophrenia. The following generalizations were arrived at from the material, only as conjectures and without the confirmation of larger figures.