

dangerous *contre-coup* on the delicate terminations of the crests and acoustic maculæ of the vestibular nerve, and go a long way to produce the sclerotic processes, of which very likely the alterations of the voltaic vertigo are the exponents.

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*Emotional Hysteria [L'Isterismo Emotivo]. (Annali di Neurologia, Anno xxxiv, fasc. 3.) D'Onghia, Dr. Filippo.*

At the commencement of his paper the writer draws the reader's attention to the fact that Neri did not meet with any of the ordinary phenomena of hysteria among the 2,000 survivors of the earthquake at Messina whom he examined.

Very often, he remarks, hysterical manifestations are caused by trifling emotions and even every-day annoyances. The lady, who will fall into convulsions on account of some miserable quarrel with her husband, will very likely the next day, when something really tragic occurs in her life, find all the energy that the situation requires, and will put aside her hysteria.

An earthquake occurs unexpectedly. Frequently it arouses an individual from his sleep, and permits only of one thought, that of saving himself. Nothing artificial can prevent the accomplishment of this one aspiration. It is not possible that the nervous energy, which is absolutely necessary to the organism at that supreme moment of peril, can remain useless in a paralysed limb which prevents the individual from saving himself, or in a tongue dumb and silent, which prevents him from crying aloud for assistance. "It is not possible, above all, that another personality, an inferior and encumbering personality, should substitute itself for, or overcome the first and true (personality) and subdue it."

"War, on the other hand, and especially the war of to-day, is such that the nervous resistance of the individual is put to a very hard proof."

"During the long hours in the trenches, with limbs cramped by the uncomfortable position and suffering from excessive cold or excessive heat, when the surrounding silence is only broken by the distant roar of cannon and the nearer rattle of musketry, by the groaning of the projectiles of the former and the whistling of the bullets of the latter, and finally, by the moans of a comrade, who, while moving to satisfy some need, has been wounded to death by some invisible enemy sharp-shooter, that is the time and the manner in which the nervous tendencies of an individual acquire consistency and colour. And when, at an ill-omened moment, the cannon thunders louder, and the roaring is followed by a howling that shakes and overturns everything, what marvel that this latent tendency, this potential neurosis, I might say, is translated into an actual neurosis?"

"Here, also, the danger is imminent, and no one, unless he be in the fulness of health and strength, can sustain it; but, contrary to what happens in an earthquake, the neurosis itself may be the means of the salvation of the individual, by bringing about his removal to the rear."

"The idea, I know, is neither new nor strange; but meanwhile it seems to me that it may be the fundamental point of the question, that it creates a true psychological contrast between the survivor from an earthquake and the soldier in a war. It is the pathogenesis itself of hysteria which offers us the explanation of the phenomenon."

"Each one of us possesses two personalities which, in normal conditions, co-operate harmoniously in our conservation and in our well-being—consciousness and subconsciousness. In hysteria the second sometimes usurps authority over the first, and causes the well-known morbid manifestations, which may succeed in encumbering the life of the patient. But when the actual existence of the patient is menaced, the two personalities recover themselves and unite their energies in common defence. We all know that hysterical symptoms, previously rebellious to every form of treatment, disappear in the moment of peril; the paralytic recovers the movement of his limbs, the dumb regains his speech, the blind his sight, etc."

"But if these morbid manifestations, which previously constituted an obstacle to the free activity of the patient, can become, in some contingency, useful and beneficial to him, the subconsciousness does not hesitate to reproduce them, feigning, I might almost say, for its own sake, a set of morbid symptoms, which may be the only means of saving the individual by removing him from the place of peril."

"Then the conclusion to which we must come, will be, I believe, rather different from that at which Babinski and Dagnan-Bouveret have arrived; that is to say, it is not so much the intensity or the quality of the emotion which determines the appearance of the symptoms of hysteria as the conditions in which the emotion is produced, and the utility, more or less, which the individual may derive from the neurosis which his subconsciousness charges itself with placing on the scene."

The paper is illustrated with reports of a few cases in which hysterical symptoms manifested themselves among wounded soldiers. Dr. D'Onghia explains the paucity of the cases because, being attached to a field hospital, few such came under his care, as patients suffering from nervous and mental diseases are removed as soon as possible to hospitals in the second line.

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*The Mechanism of Paranoia (Journ. of Nerv. and Ment. Dis. April, 1917.) Abbot, E. Stanley.*

The author points out that cases diagnosed as paranoia have rapidly diminished during the past half century. Before that period the mere presence of delusions was often considered sufficient justification for the application of this label. But in 1904 Kraepelin estimated the proportion of cases of paranoia as only 1 per cent., and by 1915 had still further reduced it. Abbot believes, however, that there will remain an irreducible minimum of cases showing elaborated delusions with the absence of all other symptoms except such as are wholly secondary. After describing such a case in detail he considers the mechanism of such cases generally.

Man has to adapt himself to the variations of his environment. To do this he must reason about it. The more accurately he reasons