

gross infection may be produced in milk for at least three days, and a smaller degree of infection for ten days or even longer. Blow-flies produce gross infection for six to nine days with non-spore-bearing micro-organisms and some degree of infection for three or four weeks.

Neurasthenia.

An interesting book on "The Treatment of Neurasthenia by Teaching of Brain Control," by Dr. Roger Vittoz, translated by H. B. Brooke, is published by Longmans, Green, and Co. The author states that his method is founded on the fact that every form of neurasthenia is due to the brain working abnormally, and that it is only by realising this that it is possible to arrive at a cure.

He refers to the simplest of modern theories in regard to the brain—*i.e.*, that which admits of two different working centres called the conscious or objective, and the unconscious or subjective brain. While admitting that these terms are not precise, he suggests that the subjective brain is, in a general way, the source of the ideas and sensations, and that the objective brain in a sense "focuses" them, that is to say that reason, judgment, and will are controlled by the objective brain. By admitting the existence of this duality the author claims we shall be able to understand the meaning of brain control.

This duality is little to be noticed in a man whose brain is in a healthy state, as his ideas or sensations are the result of the working of the two brains, and he does not distinguish the working of one brain from that of the other.

In a great number of nervous illnesses this duality is at any rate marked, and the sufferer is generally more or less aware of it.

Some have assigned to the subjective brain the origin of certain cases of neurasthenia, but it seems more probable that this must be looked for in the want of balance and unity between the two brains; it is to their proper correlation that a man owes his mental health, and his illness is due to the more or less apparent separation of the objective from the subjective brain.

Brain control, we are told, may be defined as a faculty which is inherent in a man in a normal state of health, and keeps the balance between his two brains. When we speak of normal brain equilibrium we mean that every idea, impression, or sensation is controlled by reason, judgment, and will—that is to say that these can be judged, modified, or set aside as required.

A man in a normal state of health is not fully conscious of this faculty; he realises that he has control of his brain, but does not at all understand how this control works. On the other hand, a neurasthenic perceives it more clearly, and realises that he lacks something; that "something" is brain control.

Every idea and sensation is "focused" by this brain control, which also acts in certain cases as a check, regulating the psychological and even (as we shall see later) the physiological functions of the brain, controlling actions as well as ideas. The brain control of a man in a normal state of health is automatic—that is to say, it acts of its own accord, without any effort of the will, and, moreover, develops with age and education. It may therefore be said to be the natural attribute of a healthy man.

This faculty dominates the whole life of the individual, and it may even be said that perfect health is impossible without this brain control; we are, of course, not speaking of cases where there may be a temporary lack of brain control, as, for instance, in a fit of anger.

We have seen what brain control should be; let us now see what is meant by lack of this control.

Lack of Brain Control.—It is easy to imagine the state of one lacking this regulating faculty; his uncurbed brain would, without a controlling power, be indeed in a state of anarchy. A prey to every impulse, subject to all fears, unable to reason or weigh an idea, forced to receive all the impressions of his subjective brain; he is nothing but a wreck doomed to a life of suffering.

Complete lack of brain control is exceptional among the cases with which we are now dealing; what we find more frequently among neurasthenic persons is insufficient or unstable control.

Insufficiency or Instability of Control.—In the case of insufficiency, brain control exists as a faculty, but has not sufficient effect, either owing to its lack of development or the existence of certain defects. The objective brain in such a case has not sufficient power over the ideas and impressions. The sufferer will judge and reason in a normal way, and will nevertheless be dominated by ideas and impressions which he himself recognises as absurd or exaggerated, and over which his will has no power. This is the typical neurasthenic.

The phenomena of instability of control are in the main the same; in fact the sufferer's state of health is continually changing from good to bad, and that for no evident reason. These changes recur from time to time; a gay mood may, for instance, be succeeded by a

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