AN ENQUIRY
INTO
PROGNOSIS IN THE NEUROSES
AN ENQUIRY INTO PROGNOSIS IN THE NEUROSES

by

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“It is the best thing, in my opinion, for the physician to apply himself diligently to the art of foreknowing. For he who is master of this art, and shews himself such among his patients, with respect to what is present, past and future, declaring at the same time wherein the patient has been wanting, will give such proofs of a superior knowledge in what relates to the sick, that the generality of men will commit themselves to that physician without any manner of diffidence.”

HIPPOCRATES ON PROGNOSTICS. Translated by Francis Clifton, M.D., Fellow of the College of Physicians and of the Royal Society, London, 1752.
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PREFACE

Notwithstanding the exhortation of Hippocrates quoted on the fly-leaf, knowledge in prognosis has lagged considerably behind other medical knowledge. With regard to neuroses there has been a vague idea that these patients get better, but there has been little accurate information about the conditions which are favourable or otherwise for this. In July 1935 Luff and Garrod published a paper in the British Medical Journal summarizing the results in 500 adult patients. Their follow up reported on these patients for three years after treatment. This is, I think, the only attempt made to follow up a large number of these patients. The present volume deals with nearly twelve hundred patients, and the period of follow up has been considerably longer. The patients have all been observed by the author, though not all treated by him personally. Those whose cases are described in detail were treated by him. He has also read every letter on which the book mostly depends. Some of the reports were communicated by his colleagues, who had themselves seen their former patients.

This book does not profess to settle this question. It is hoped that it may help to stimulate further enquiries and that it may indicate certain errors of method in making such enquiries, so that others may avoid them.

I am indebted to Miss Morris, who was my personal secretary during all the years under review, for her help in arranging the lists of patients and for keeping them up to date, also for putting a human touch into the letters of enquiry, which made answers more likely to be obtained.

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