

**A TREATISE ON  
EMOTIONAL DISORDERS  
OF THE SYMPATHETIC  
SYSTEM OF NERVES**

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A Treatise on Emotional Disorders of the Sympathetic System of Nerves by William Murray

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**WILLIAM MURRAY**

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BY  
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## P R E F A C E .

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A CONVICTION that much of the mental suffering around us is due to disordered conditions of those parts of the body which are closely related to the ganglionic system of nerves, has emboldened me to write a Treatise containing many familiar observations on a subject which has been freely discussed and fully acknowledged by both the public and the Medical Profession.

The truth is, that we are all familiar with the disorders which accompany disturbed conditions of the mind, but the mechanism by which this disturbance is brought about is too slightly apprehended, and too often only disguised by a *name* which explains nothing of the nature of the disease.

Seeing that it is this class of disorders which supplies the charlatan with fit patients to work upon, and that their gloomy fears and alarm give him ample scope for the most exaggerated statements, and for the use of treatment which too often only protracts suffering, it is hoped that a full exposition of their

ailments will protect these sufferers from imposition, and direct them to a rational source of relief.

The subject is vast and deep—too much so for the scope of a small work, or the experience of one person. I expect, however, that a correct line of investigation has been followed, and that by abler observers than myself, a fuller exposition of it will in due time be given by us. Let me, therefore, offer a few remarks explanatory of the object of my Essay, so as to guard the reader *against the idea that a complete review of the relations between the body and the emotions has been attempted.*

*What I have sought to establish is,—the relation which exists between the emotions and the viscera through the sympathetic system of nerves.*

In doing this, only so much of the physiological relation of these (the emotions and the viscera) has been touched upon as is necessary to a comprehension of the morbid states induced by a disordered condition of the one or the other. And I have only to a very slight extent considered emotion in its effects upon the cerebro-spinal system, having throughout selected those phenomena which tended most to establish the theory that the emotions affect the viscera, and the viscera the emotions through the sympathetic system.

To mark distinctly the line which separates the phenomena which are cerebro-spinal from those which are sympathetic is impossible. As, however, some broad distinctions can now be drawn between the functions of these two divisions of the nervous system,

the time has arrived when we ought to avail ourselves of this knowledge in studying emotional disorders, so as to determine those conditions of the mind and body which attach themselves to the one or the other system of nerves.

The conditions of the mind, therefore, which belong to the state of the sympathetic system, are set forth in Section II; and as an introduction to the subject, Section I contains an account of the influence of emotion on the body through the sympathetic system.

In speaking of the emotions, I have made no attempt at an elaborate classification such as may be found in the masterly works of Bain; for I could not, after a careful effort, allot to any one of the emotions a series of effects sufficiently special and distinct to enable me to identify it by its action on the body. I have, therefore, indicated the character of the emotions under two heads, the one including generally those which are pleasurable and beneficial in their effects, the other including those which are disagreeable and injurious; and I have not, on this account distinguished with much nicety between appetites, desires, conations, emotions, passions, &c., each of these being held to be a variety of that flow of nervous force which is continually streaming through the visceral regions of the body.

I have throughout used terms expressive of the emotions in the meaning we attach to them in every day life, and I have done this that I might appeal to my reader's common-sense and experience, at the risk of being criticised by the educated psychologist.

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