

PSYCHIATRY

Locates Headquarters of Emotions In Left Brain

"YOUR HEAD rules your heart," regardless of what the fortune teller reads in your palm. Not only consciousness but also feeling takes place at the base of the left half of the brain in righthanded persons, Dr. Leland B. Alford of St. Louis reported to the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Philadelphia.

Dr. Alford reached this conclusion tentatively after studying patients whose brains had been injured or who had suffered from brain tumors. When the right half of the brain was injured, even if the injury was extensive, the patient appeared conscious and aware of what was going on, and his emotions were normal. Even when the left side of the brain was injured, there was no apparent confusion in the patient's mind, no disturbance of emotions, unless the injury was at the base of the left half of the brain, Dr. Alford found.

Scientists know that the left half of the brain governs the right side of the body, and the left side of the body is governed by the right half of the brain. In righthanded persons, the left half of the brain is dominant, but when the right half is dominant, the individual is apt to be lefthanded.

Dr. Alford studied a series of righthanded patients who were completely paralyzed on one side or the other. It is generally thought that such permanent, complete paralysis of one side of the body results from injury to the base of the brain, rather than to any other part. Of 30 such patients whose paralysis was on the left side, due presumably to injury to the right side of the brain, not one showed confusion of consciousness. On the other hand, of 55 persons suffering from rightsided paralysis, indicating left brain injury, 27 or nearly half were confused. Dr. Alford hopes to be able to prove his theory more conclusively by finding in examination after death actual destruction of or injury to the tissues at the base of the left side of the brain in such patients.

Science News Letter, June 4, 1932

So crowded is the nursing profession that the American Nurses' Association says: "This year 25,000 young women for whom there is no work will be graduated from the nurses' training schools."

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