On the Age of Commencement and Influence of Heredity in the Pathogenesis of Primary or Precocious Dementia [*Sull' età di comparsa e sull' influenza dell' creditarietà nella patogenesi della demenza primitiva o precoce*]. (*Rev. Speriment di Freniat., vol. xxix, fasc.* 3.) *Levi-Branchini Marco.*

This article is a contribution to the study of primary dementia, and deals with the age of onset and influence of heredity in the pathogenesis of this mental disorder. The author gives in excellent tabulated form the percentage of those so afflicted in Ferrara Asylum as compared with those suffering from other forms of insanity, the course of the disease and its clinical varieties in the two sexes. He prefers the term primary to that of precocious dementia as it seems better to indicate the idiopathic nature of the disorder. In his researches he finds that in 90 *per cent.* of the cases there was normal development of the psychical condition, and as 40 *per cent.* occurred in adults of from 30 to 50 years of age, the term precocious seems rather an anachronism.

Two hundred and thirty cases formed the material for this paper: of these 125 were under his actual care, the rest were from the asylum records. The division into clinical varieties adopted was that of Kraepelin. Catatonic phenomena were frequently met with in the hebephrenic and paranoid forms, while the genuine and lasting types of catatonia were so rare as to almost give rise to the doubt if this really deserved a separate entity, but should rather be merged in the other two varieties. One hundred and thirty-nine were cases of hebephrenia, 34 of catatonia, and 57 of the paranoid variety. In tabulated form the author gives the result of his clinical and statistical researches, and sums up the whole under the following twelve headings:

1. Apart from variety of forms primary dementia appeared in 53 *per cent.* of the cases before the age of 25, and was about equally a disorder of youth and middle age. In the earlier period it assumed almost specifically the hebephrenic (64 *per cent.*) and the catatonic forms (79 *per cent.*), in middle life the paranoid form (82 *per cent.*).

2. Primary dementia represented 28 *per cent.* of the mental diseases in the asylum (13·8 *per cent.* men, and 14·2 *per cent.* women).

3. The absolute number of males was about equal to the females (62 and 63 respectively).

4. Both sexes were attacked almost equally.

5. Of 100 cases 56 were of the hebephrenic form, 8 of the catatonic, and 36 of the paranoid, but comparing 100 of each sex there was a marked difference in the results as given below:

Males.	Hebephrenia.	Catatonia.	Paranoid.
100	48	9	43
Females.			
100	64	7	29

6. As seen above hebephrenia attacked principally the female sex, paranoid chiefly the males, and catatonia both almost equally.

7. Hebephrenia was the variety of primary dementia that undoubtedly

held the preponderance (64 to 48 *per cent.*), and next the paranoid (43 to 29 *per cent.*).

8. In 59 *per cent.* of cases heredity was traced in a marked degree, both psychopathic and neuropathic, but almost entirely the former. Syphilis, tubercle, alcohol, and apoplexy entered very little into the family history.

9. Morbid heredity was found equally in both sexes, and in the hebephrenic and catatonic varieties, less marked in the paranoid form.

10. In 90 *per cent.* of the cases there was normal development of the psychical state. Catatonia seemed to attack by preference those of lesser intelligence. In 10 *per cent.* the mental state before death was that of moderate mentalisation; in 24 *per cent.* it was poor; in 10 *per cent.* very much impaired, and in 6 *per cent.* good.

11. The hebephrenic form of primary dementia occupied in both sexes the first place among the clinical varieties of this mental disorder.

12. The fundamental clinical forms of primary dementia were only two in number: the hebephrenic and the paranoid. A. I. EADES.

A Case of Phenomenal Talent for Counting in an Imbecile [*Ein Fall von Phänomenalem Rechentalent bei einem Imbecillen*]. (*Arch. f. Psychiat., B. xxxviii, H.* 1.) *Wizel, A.*

The subject of this study, Sabina W—, was a woman æt. 22 years, who had been for four years an inmate of the Psychiatric Compartment in the Jewish Hospital at Warsaw. She came of a long-lived family and there was no nervous heredity. The family had an especial gift for music but none for arithmetic. Up to the sixth year of her life Sabina grew up a healthy and intelligent child. She went to school and could read, write, and count. At the beginning of her seventh year she was seized with a grave attack of typhus fever, from which she seemed to make a fair recovery, when she was suddenly visited by epileptic attacks which succeeded one another for three days. After they had ceased she remained in an unconscious state for several days. She ceased to see and speak, was dirty to her clothes, ate feathers and other stuff. She had a stupid look and recognised no one. She became much emaciated. After some days the power of vision returned, she learned to speak, as if for the first time. Her intelligence slowly improved; when she was eleven she was about the level of a child of three. She had delusions of persecutions and fits of excitement. Admitted to the hospital she was small of stature, and looked no older than fifteen or sixteen, although she was twenty-two. The palate was high. She suffered from epileptic seizures in the form of the *petit mal.* For about ten days at a time she would remain apathetic, seeking the sun in summer and the stove in winter. Then she would suddenly become violent, complain, shout, and threaten. This state would last another ten days. Her intelligence was found to be weak. It was especially deficient in the power of generalising and gaining abstract ideas. The sense of past time was most inexact. When asked how long she had been in the hospital she answered two weeks, then nine hundred weeks, seventeen years, two years. She could not tell how old she was, or how many brothers and sisters she had; she cannot read or write, cannot