

must not be regarded as the result of an accidental morphological anomaly, but as the relic of a definite and complex function, still to be observed in the large felines and in the dog and probably in primitive man, who possessed the same ferocity and voracity. It is "an atavistic return to the feline repast common to the beasts and to man in the Stone Age." The author might better have supported his thesis by demonstrating the habitual presence of the phenomenon in some existing race of savage mankind, or at least among the apes.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

*Auto-suggestion. (Rev. de Psychiat., June, 1912.) Bernheim.*

Auto-suggestion is not only a suggestion which one makes voluntarily, it is more often a factor which springs up of itself within the brain. Suggestion is always purposeful, and at the same time it has its birth as a result of a stimulus. Just as in the material world there is no such thing as spontaneous generation, so there is no such thing in the psychic world. Every idea or image which has its origin in a sensation—it may be visceral, cardiac, muscular, etc.—but which is "self"-contained, may be described as auto-suggestion. The creative impression may be unknown or subconscious. When the brain is passive, when it is free from the reception of outward impressions, then it is that its automatic activity predominates. An active and attentive brain banishes the products of auto-suggestion as quickly as they are formed. Thus when the brain is dulled, control is lost and dreams arise. So it is that dreams may be described as hallucinatory auto-suggestions. It is known that experimentally we can influence and even create dreams. The natural dream arises by passive suggestion created automatically without the active co-operation of the subject. Dreams are psychic images which arise in the brain as the result of impressions, but which the subject cannot by any effort of will create; his conscious "ego" goes for nothing.

COLIN McDOWALL.

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## 2. Clinical Psychiatry.

*Amaurotic General Paralysis [Paralyse générale amaurotique]. (Bull. Soc. Clin. Méd. Ment., March, 1912.) Trenel and Puillet.*

Case of a woman, æt. 56, the subject of general paralysis, in whom the most marked symptoms were hallucinations of almost every sense. The knee-jerks were absent on the right, brisk, but of small excursion on the left. Pupils equal, reactions normal, hippus present, optic atrophy. The authors discuss the question whether the association of a hallucinatory state with amaurosis is to be looked upon as a syndrome or merely as a coincidence. Many such cases have been described, in the majority of which a spastic condition was present throughout the disease, but in some, as in this case, the reflexes tended to diminish.

Over twenty years ago Pierret noted the co-existence of mental symptoms simulating general paralysis with tabes, especially of the cervical type. In such cases the delusional state tends to become systematised, and is less incoherent, variable, and demential than that

of general paralysis. Pierret proposed the name of sensorial general paralysis for these cases. Probably they may be looked on as cases of amaurotic tabes associated with general paralysis. W. STARKEY.

*Two Further Cases of "General Paralysis" in Dogs [Deux nouveaux cas de paralysie générale du chien.] (Bull. Soc. Clin. Méd. Ment., July, 1912.) Marchand and Petit.*

In two former papers these authors have drawn attention to an affection of the nervous system in the dog, which results in demential, motor and convulsive symptoms strongly resembling those of general paralysis. Two further observations are here recorded fully.

The symptoms are very similar to those in man—the animals become dull and demented, losing all interest in their surroundings; they may even be thought by their owners to be going blind and deaf. Their gait is staggering, reflexes exaggerated, the appetite is gluttonous, and their habits become wet and dirty. Later, convulsions may occur. The age at onset is from twelve to eighteen months, and the duration seems to be from eight months to a year. The disease appears to set in some months after an attack of distemper, which seems to play in the dog a rôle similar to that which syphilis plays in man as a precursor of general paralysis.

*Post-mortem* a diffuse meningo-encephalitis is found chiefly affecting the frontal region. The pia is adherent to the cortex and is infiltrated with embryonic cells; there is marked peri-arthritis and peri-phlebitis of the meningeal vessels. The perivascular changes are also marked in the brain substance, both grey and white; there are also cell changes, displacement of nuclei, etc., spider-cells are numerous, some isolated hyaloid corpuscles are found in the cortex, and there is atrophy of the tangential fibres.

We have then apparently in distemper an infectious disease which is, at any rate in the dog, capable of initiating a subacute meningo-encephalitis comparable to general paralysis. May there not be some infections beside syphilis capable of acting as precursors in man?

W. STARKEY.

*Statistical and Clinical Observations on the Changes in the Incidence and Process of Progressive Paralysis in Elsass Lothringen [Statistische und klinische Beobachtungen über Veränderungen im Vorkommen und Verlauf der progressiven Paralyse in Elsass-Lothringen]. Psych. Allgem. Zeitschr. f. (vol. lxxix, No. 4.) Dr. Joachim.*

Dating from the year 1872, there are records of 730 certain cases of general paralysis in the asylum at Stephansfeld. Statistics show a gradual lessening in the proportion of paralytics to admissions, especially in the case of males. There is an increase in the number of unmarried cases. There is only a trifling lengthening in the duration of the disease. Alcoholism as a factor is recorded in decreasing grade, and there is a diminution in the paralytics drawn from the lower classes.

The demented form predominates more and more over the other forms, and remissions have become more frequent. Tabes appears to be associated more often with paralysis. HAMILTON MARR.