

shire, in search of work, and finding none, owing to the slack state of trade. He was half-starved when re-admitted, but soon grew stout and cheerful. He made his escape while steps were being taken to have him discharged in the usual manner. He asked reporter once or twice if he could pass for a recruit, and was informed that it would altogether depend upon whether he was examined closely or not, he having, notwithstanding the rude weapon which he had employed, performed a very neat operation. The deprivation of one testicle has evidently not deprived him of sexual desire, for he appears very anxious to know if he would be able to marry. This case is rather remarkable, both as regards the nature of the wound, and the fact of the patient having recovered so perfectly from so determined a desire to injure himself, and the retaining of his mental faculties, notwithstanding the adverse circumstances into which he was thrown on both occasions, after leaving the Asylum; for there is little doubt that it was only want of work that drove him back again.

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*Two Cases of Delusion as a Premonitory Symptom—in the one case not followed by Insanity, and in the other followed by Symptoms necessitating the Detention of the Patient in an Asylum.* By HENRY SUTHERLAND, M.D.

H. N., et. 26, clerk to a bank, consulted me in December.

No history of hereditary insanity, but the patient had been much addicted to self-abuse.

*Chief Symptoms.*—Loss of sleep, constipation, headache confined to one spot, on the vertex, “the size of a penny piece,” and one delusion.

He was calling at a house where there were two children; one, a boy, had a bottle of some poisonous chemical compound; the other child, a girl, died soon after from a fever. The patient believed that this child died of poisoning, and that it was his fault, because he did not tell the parents that the boy possessed a poisonous mixture. There was no doubt, however, that the girl met her death from natural causes, and there were no grounds for the patient's supposition that the girl had been poisoned. This idea, however, became fixed in his memory. He could not forget it. He was in the habit of obliging his mother to repeat over to him twenty times in an evening the fact that he was not to blame in the matter, and, of course, even then he was not satisfied.

Latterly he had become very much depressed, and had stated that he wished to make away with himself. He had, however, taken no steps which could excite any alarm.

The question the relatives were most anxious about was whether or no the patient should be sent to an asylum. If he were, he would probably lose his situation for ever, as it was not likely he would be taken back to business on his discharge. If he were not, there was a risk of the suicidal threat being carried out. In this case, it was thought better that the patient should remain at home, the brother undertaking to sleep in the same room with him, and to watch carefully for further symptoms.

Sleeping draughts and aperients were ordered, and plenty of exercise in the open air, with much benefit. No further symptoms of mental disorder were developed.

B. R., æt. 42, a grocer's assistant.

For six months he was under treatment for nervousness and debility. He then had an apoplectic attack, from which he recovered and went on for another six months, in all a year, without any decided mental symptoms being observed.

Suicidal tendencies were then developed, the patient attempting on one occasion to strangle himself with a pocket handkerchief. He then became odd in manner and irritable, and quarrelled with his master, who had been very kind to him, without cause.

At the same time a somewhat curious delusion was developed. He believed that everybody and everything combined to present the number five continually before him, with the object of teasing and worrying him. Everything appeared to be arranged in fives. Several times in the day he had been asked to change a five pound note; customers had bought five pots of preserved meat at one time, and had continually purchased a pound of sugar, which cost five pence; bills for articles supplied had frequently amounted to five shillings. In his own home he was not secure, as the first things which met his eye on going into his sitting room were the five ornaments on the mantle-piece. Even outside his house people would not leave him alone, as they had actually taken up five heavy stones in front of his door.

Soon after this he became violent and unmanageable, and was sent to an asylum.

The two cases above described are placed together as a contrast. In the first the mental aberration proceeded to the point where a delusion was formed, and there stopped. It appears to be somewhat unusual for this stage to be arrived at without the symptoms going so far beyond it that the patient is obliged to be detained in an asylum. In the second, other mental symptoms were developed in addition to the delusion, but not until the patient had been for a year under medical treatment.