

PART III.—PSYCHOLOGICAL RETROSPECT.

German Psychological Retrospect.

BY DR. IRELAND.

(Continued from page 304.)

In the "Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie," xxix. Band, 1 Heft, Dr. Meschede gives a long, careful, and somewhat diffuse article on the Pathology and Pathological Anatomy of Pyromania, the tendency or impulse to set fire to objects. Dr. Meschede is not aware of any cases of pyromania where the morbid appearances found after death have been described.

He gives us a long account of Natalie X., a girl who commenced to have fits when three years old. She gradually became violent and unmanageable, especially when the fits were more frequent than usual. At last she became very dangerous, attacking animals and children with pointed instruments, and trying to set things on fire. When questioned she said that an inner voice drove her to do what she was blamed for. She several times set fire to the Asylum of Schwetz, where she was confined. She died at the age of 18, a confirmed epileptic maniac, apparently of phthisis pulmonalis. On examining the body the skull was found asymmetrical, the left cavity being larger than the right. On the Clivus Blumenbachii, just behind the sella turcica there was a prominent osseous growth in the form of a crest; the arachnoid at the lower part of the brain thickened and less clear than usual. The substance of the brain was tougher than usual; the pons and medulla oblongata, especially the olivary body, were hardened.

Dr. Meschede considers that the disease commenced with the osseous growth on the clivus causing epileptic fits. It is clear from the history of the case that the epilepsy commenced before the mental derangement, and was the most constant and prominent symptom during its continuance.

The author gives another case of epileptic imbecility, with pathological changes in the base of the brain and skull, adhesion of the pons with the clivus, and displacement of the vertebral and basilar arteries. The patient, who was also an epileptic, was very malicious, biting the other lunatics, and occasionally striking his head against the wall.

Dr. Meschede concludes his paper with a description of a large number of cases where there were hallucinations connected with fire and light.

Dr. Meschede is disposed to place the seat of motor impulses, such as those which impel to violence and fire-raising in the pons Varolii.

Dr. C. Westphal, in the "Archiv. für Psychiatrie," iii. Band, i. Heft., has a long article on Agora phobia; by this he means the fear

of squares or open places. He gives, from his own observation, three cases of this singular affection, all of which seem to have occurred in Berlin. They all felt a peculiar uneasiness or anguish in crossing over wide squares or free, unenclosed spaces. One of the patients compared it to the feeling of a swimmer crossing a lake, uncertain whether he will be able to reach the other side. This feeling of distress was accompanied by uneasiness and beating at the heart. They all found the sensation diminished after the use of wine and other stimulants, and often felt quite at ease when accompanied by a companion. One of them used to follow someone going the same way, or a coach crossing a square, for he found this made the sensation less intolerable. One of them felt relieved when he used a walking stick. The other two seemed to have derived no relief from this simple precaution. The feeling of distress was sometimes overpowering, and prevented them crossing many of the wide streets and squares in Berlin. It was quite different from giddiness, and was unaccompanied by any trace of insanity. They were all young men. The first case described had a want of symmetry of the whole body, the right side being somewhat larger than the left. The second and third had been troubled with epileptic attacks. The second case was of a family in which insanity and nervous diseases prevailed. The first and second cases also complained of seeing shining circles floating before their eyes. In a note added to the same number, Dr. Westphal quotes another instance of this hyperæsthesia. The subject of it was an officer who was thrown into the greatest distress, accompanied by beating of the heart and profuse perspiration, at the sight of a large room, a long street, or a wide square. This feeling was generally absent when in command of his troop, and never attacked him when riding or in the open country. The author easily shows that this peculiar feeling is quite different from the disease described by Trousseau under the name of *vertigo a stomacho læso*.

In iii. Heft of the same volume of the *Archiv.*, Dr. E. Cordes, proprietor of the Hydropathic Establishment, Alexanderbad, considers at length the subject of Agoraphobia or Platz-angst, raised by Westphal. He treats it as the result of hyperæsthesia of the nervous system. It arises from a sense of personal insecurity. The patient is overpowered by a leading idea. In moving across a square this idea is "You can't get across, you will fall, you are paralysed." On entering a room the idea is that people are looking at you and remarking your condition. In walking on a plain it is, "You will never be able to get home." The patient knows that this notion is not based on any evidence; that it is absurd, that it is weak to yield to it; nevertheless it seizes upon him, and he cannot banish it from his mind. The feeling of alarm may be excited by very different suggestive ideas, just as a man who could keep cool in a musketry fire, would be overpowered with alarm if made to climb the mast, or a man who could do both would altogether lose his nerve if he had to make a speech in

the House of Commons. In a similar way the mesmerist gains a control over the mind of the mesmerized, by suggesting some leading idea which gains an overpowering hold over the victim's mind.

Dr. Cordes gives an analysis of twenty-nine examples of hyperæsthesia. What he finds common to them all is that they suffer from weakness and irritability of the nervous system, that they are seized in certain conditions, sometimes in crowds, sometimes in solitary places, sometimes in wide squares, with a feeling of great mental distress. He observes that these feelings often come on after the patient is fatigued.

In the "*Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie*," xxix. Band, 5 Heft, Dr. Tigges takes up the consideration of the cases given by Westphal and Cordes, and tries to explain the symptoms by quoting experiments derived from the application of the constant current to the head.

In the same number Dr. Emil Höring collects a number of cases of Agoraphobia and Vertigo from different authors.

The same subject was treated by Dr. Flemming at the Meeting of the Südwest Deutschen Verein für Psychiatrie, at Karlsruhe (see *Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie*, i. Heft, s. 112). He characterizes the affection as the fear of becoming giddy or insensible.

Dr. William Sander has an essay upon an impression which probably most of us have felt during the course of our lives. Suddenly when an object appears to us for the first time, or when some new event has happened, we feel that we have already seen the object or existed in similar circumstances before. As Jensen has expressed it: "So far does it go that we have almost the conviction that we could say before what was going to happen. Then suddenly everything disappears, and we live again in the present, no longer, as before, doubled half in the past."

Dr. Sander gives the case of an epileptic in an asylum, with whom these impressions were common. The man described his experience thus: "I speak with someone about something out of the newspaper as if I had read it once in the newspaper; then comes at once the feeling as if I had read it already once before, as if I had lived in the same circumstances years before in the same room, and read the same newspaper."

Jensen explained this by supposing that sometimes the double impressions made on the two hemispheres are separated in consciousness, owing to morbid conditions of one or other side of the brain, and that these impressions are afterwards put down by the mind as of different origins, though really the same, and Wiedemeister supports this view with an interesting case of meningitis and atrophy in the left side of the brain; but there was none of these singular impressions in the case cited. There is no proof that they are frequent in lesions confined to one hemisphere, and they are not uncommon with healthy individuals. Dr. Sander has little difficulty in showing this explanation to be insufficient. He himself is disposed to believe that these

"deceptions of memory," as he calls them, are often brought about by the half-forgotten remembrance of a similar event or object. This similar part of an earlier event awakens all the conceptions and feelings as if the whole antecedents had been already lived through in the same manner. It is also possible, he remarks, that the remembrance is that of a dream or lively fancy. The author himself confesses that his explanations do not account for all cases. To my mind, they are not at all satisfactory. It will be remembered that the ancient Pythagoreans, as well as the modern Hindus, regard such impressions as stray recollections of a former existence.

In the same number as Dr. Sander's paper, Dr. L. Meyer has a very well written article on Circular Insanity, Alternations of Mania and Melancholia.

In the "Centralblatt," December 30th and January 30th, 1873, Dr. Lang continues his careful observations on Skatophagia. In the discussions which followed the reading of his papers, the remarks of a number of medical men on this subject were given.

The same subject is considered in the "Correspondenz-Blatt" (February, 1873), by Dr. A. Erlenmeyer, junior.

Dr. Max Huppert (Archiv., iii. Band, 1 Heft) returns to a subject which he has already treated of in another periodical—the occurrence of double conceptions. He observes that the two hemispheres of the brain, which we are entitled to regard as the seat of the conceptions and processes of thought, have functions at once double and simultaneous. He gives some cases where this double process ceases to be equal and simultaneous. The first case was a man, 38 years of age, suffering from general paralysis, who had led a dissolute life. He complained that he heard voices of women, who reproached him with some of his old misdeeds. He was very fond of reading; but now he found that when he took up a book the words which he read were repeated by a chorus of female voices, fifty or sixty in number. At the end of the reading, when he himself had ceased, he heard these voices repeat the last two words or syllables. He found that the voices were no longer heard when he read in a loud tone; but when he stopped reading again they echoed the last word. When he sat down to write a letter, ere he had finished writing out the word, the feminine voices had guessed it, and cried it in his ear. It seems to me that here there was no double conception; but the spoken symbol answering to the written word was heard, although no outward sound or vibration existed. Surely this is simply a hallucination of hearing, which has nothing to do with the duality of the hemispheres.

Dr. Huppert gives seven cases in which hallucinations of hearing or vision were met with. In one case the patient imagined he saw before him, when he shut his eyes, the figure of a man or house that he was thinking about; in another he saw in the air some yards before him the numerals of a sum which he was thinking of. The Doctor's explanation is, if I understand it aright, that the representation of the man, house, or arithmetical sum, existed on the one side of the brain,

and the image or cipher believed to be seen on the other. Dr. Huppert is careful to add that this phenomenon *may* be so explained, he does not assert that it *must* be.

In the "Zeitschrift für Pyschiatric," 29 Band, 2 Heft, there is an account of a mad family. They consisted of a father and mother, and six grown-up children. In the winter of 1850 they appeared at Soleure, and complained that they had been plundered of their property by the magistrates in Amylie in Savoy. It would appear that this was a delusion, that they had given up cultivating their land, shut themselves up in their house, and would listen to nobody. The neighbours, out of compassion, had gathered in the crops for them. They, however, bitterly complained of having been plundered of everything, and said that the Federal Council at Berne could alone help them. By an arrangement with the Gemeinde at Amylie, their land in Savoy was sold, and a house and field bought for them in Soleure. They cultivated the land, but for some unexplained reason the new property was also sold. They new complained more bitterly than ever of being plundered, and would associate with no one. They lived upon bread and milk, used no fire, and washed their clothes without soap in a neighbouring brook. From time to time a deputation of the family went to Berne to complain of the manner in which they had been treated.

This continued for nine years, during which it appears that none of the family who remained in the house ever tasted warm food. Two of the younger members left for situations, and one died. They all persisted in the statement that they had been shamefully treated, and in the delusion that they would obtain justice by going to law. At last the father died of want and cold during the winter of 59-60; and a year after the mother perished on the road returning on a chilly winter's night from one of her fruitless expeditions to Berne.

In January, 1862, Dr. Cramer got the remaining members of the family into the asylum at Rosegg. These were two sisters and a brother; one of the sisters was decidedly microcephalic, and somewhat weak-minded. In eight months she had given up the idea that she was an object of persecution, and became a useful servant. The brother, too, left the asylum and got employment, but the eldest sister, Maria, persisted in the same notions which had filled the mind of the mother, and attacked those who disagreed with her with abusive language.

Dr. Cramer believes that the mother and daughter were insane, possessed with an insane delusion, and that they succeeded in impressing this delusion upon the husband and children. One thing seems clear, that the treatment this unfortunate family met with from the local authorities, was more likely to confirm their delusions than to cure them. Had the mother and eldest daughter been separated at an early period, it seems almost certain that the unhappy influence over the rest would have ceased.

Dr. Schmincke gives a case of inverted sexual inclination (Archiv.

für Psychiatrie, iii. Band, 1 Heft), in a young man 25 years old, who had suffered from convulsive spasms in the limbs. He was much attracted by good-looking young men, but had little or no desire for women. He is now 30 years old, and has, in a great measure, got the better of this perversion of feeling, but is still indifferent to women.

In the "Irrenfreund," No. 11, there is a painfully interesting article on the private and public asylums of Paris and its neighbourhood during the two sieges of 1870 and 1871, by A. Brierre de Boismont. The paper was written in French by its distinguished author, and translated into German by Dr. Brosius, one of the editors. Many of the insane had been sent away before the first siege commenced, but from 3,500 to 3,600 were left within the fortifications.

There is a touching account of the hardships and dangers which the insane had to endure in common with the rest of the population of the blockaded city.

M. Brierre de Boismont avows his opinion that the vagaries of the Commune were the result of insane delusions, and gives reasons for his conviction that Lullier, Flourens, Ferré, Delescluze, and other chiefs of the Commune were lunatics. The following passages, which I translate into English, are worthy of attention:—

"People have spoken at all times about the influence of political commotions upon the production of insanity; but the facts do not bear out the prevailing view that periods of excitement increase the number of admissions into asylums. Marcé says 'Revolutionary times excite and drive into insanity only those already disposed to it, who probably would become mad through some other exciting cause. The type of the delirium can be determined by the ruling political ideas, but the number of insane is not increased to any marked extent through political revolutions. This is proved by statistics.' The following is the number of admissions in the Department of the Seine during the year—

| | Insane. | | Insane. |
|------------|---------|------------|---------|
| 1847 . . . | 1230 | 1853 . . . | 1399 |
| 1848 . . . | 1348 | 1854 . . . | 1493 |
| 1849 . . . | 1351 | 1868 . . . | 2009 |
| 1850 . . . | 1245 | 1869 . . . | 2432 |
| 1851 . . . | 1334 | 1870 . . . | 2519 |
| 1852 . . . | 1527 | 1871 . . . | 2198 |

"In the times following political excitement one often sees a diminution in the number of admissions.

"Some of the insane took part in the disturbances; the victims of their diseased excitability they find a vent for their turbulence in political riots. Many lose their lives during the struggle through their rashness and insensibility to danger; after the struggle they not unfrequently are banished by incompetent judges, who, though conscientious enough, do not distinguish the insane from sane criminals."

The author remarks that insane people should get even a better nourishment than they often do when in their sane mind. "Twice in a hundred years," he remarks, "under the pressure of circumstances, and in the course of misfortunes which overwhelmed the country, were the asylums of the Department of the Seine forced to reduce by a considerable degree the dietaries of the insane; and we soon saw in what a frightful proportion the mortality increased, not to speak of the indirect consequences, for in many cases the disease was prolonged, and in others it passed into an incurable state." During the first siege about one-sixth of the lunatics confined in Paris died.

In the *Archiv.*, iii. Band, 3 Heft, there is an article by Rudolf Arndt on the effects of hydrate of chloral. The author gives an account of the case of a patient admitted into the Griefswalder Lunatic Asylum with general paralysis. As he was very restless and did not sleep at night, chloral was given every evening for a week, after which there came out a severe eruption of *erythema papulatum*, which was followed by jaundice, disorder of the bowels, and retention of urine. As under the influence of this new disease the patient became quiet, the chloral was stopped for seven weeks; but on his again becoming noisy and restless the chloral was resumed, and four days after the erythema returned, and spread itself over the whole body in two days. It was promptly followed by the jaundice, and in a week the patient died.

An examination was not allowed; but the author is convinced that the cause of death was the retention of bile in the blood, and its paralyzing influence on the heart.

The second case was also one of general paralysis, who got chloral to subdue restlessness, and cause sleep. In about a month his appetite fell away, and he complained of pain in the stomach; and in a week after died. On examination the arteries of the brain were atheromatous. The stomach was found to be deeply diseased, the mucous membrane eroded in many places and easily torn; the larger vessels widened in calibre, and the smaller ones burst in some places, so that extensive ecchymoses were formed. There was a perforation the size of a thaler in the posterior wall of the stomach. The author believes that both these deaths were owing to the use of chloral given in ordinary medicinal doses, and that death was brought about by its exciting inflammation of the stomach and bowels, which in one of the cases caused jaundice. He gives a large number of observations, principally from German periodicals, where chloral appears to have been the cause of unpleasant or dangerous symptoms. These are of a varied character; the most frequent one noticed is the appearance of a rash or flushing of the face, eyes, and neck. Schüle found from examination through the ophthalmoscope that the injection of the capillaries extended to the retina, and thought that it extended to the brain. Other authors give instances where chloral appeared to cause congestion of the brain, purpura, œdema of the feet, &c.

The author accumulates so many instances and arguments that he fills twenty-six pages against chloral. It would have been well had he given us some idea as to the proportion of the cases where chloral was safely given to those where it did harm.

Dr. Gellhorn, Physician to the District Asylum at Halle, has, in the "*Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie*," 4 Heft, an article on skin exanthemata after the use of hydrate of chloral. He gives details of six cases where the medicine seemed the cause of injurious effects, which he enumerates in the ascending scale:—Rash, renewed exanthema, diarrhoea, quickness of the pulse, and stupefaction of the intellect.

In the "*Psychiatrisches Centralblatt*," Nr. 12, Dr. Leidesdorf points out some of the dangers of giving chloral without due caution. The danger principally consists in vaso-motor paralysis beginning in the capillaries, and spreading to the heart. In small doses it is more apt to cause than to subdue excitement; in large ones, from three to six grammes, it has been known to cause sudden paralysis of the heart and death.

Dr. Kirn, in a paper on Chronic Intoxication through Hydrate of Chloral in the "*Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie*," 3 Heft, confirms the views of Dr. Gellhorn and others. Chloral incautiously given produces not only the well-known rash, but inflammation of the intestinal canal, difficulty of respiration, flow of blood to the head, and stupefaction. In the case of a young woman afflicted with derangement, but physically healthy, Dr. Kirn found a long train of maladies to come from the administration of chloral continued for nine days. The symptoms commenced with rash; then followed febrile action, lasting for eight weeks, in the course of which the patient had œdema of the face, eyelids, and ears, diarrhoea, catarrh of the air passages, and finally abscesses in both arm-pits. She, however, recovered.

Dr. Liebreich, at the Psychiatrischer Verein, held at Karlsruhe (reported in the "*Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie*," 29 Band, 1 Heft, s. 119), gave some experiments upon a new narcotic hydrate of crotonchloral, which is produced by subjecting allylene to the action of chlorine. He finds from experiments on animals that it produces anæsthesia by acting on the brain, while the sensibility of the body is not affected. It does not paralyse the heart like chloral; but, in large doses, was found to cause death by stopping the function of the medulla oblongata. After trying it on animals, Dr. Liebreich had used it on human beings, when it was found to produce deep anæsthesia without impairing the force of the circulation, as chloral, in large doses, is apt to do.

In the *Archiv.* (3 Band, 1 Heft), Dr. Knecht gives a carefully studied case of intermittent mania, in a female, where much benefit was derived from the subcutaneous injection of morphia. The patient had been about eight months in the asylum without any improvement, when morphia was tried with great advantage both to her mental and bodily condition. Morphia, the author believes, helps in many ways. Not only does it mitigate isolated

symptoms, but it often prevents the appearance of exacerbations of insanity, or if it fails to prevent them, it shortens them when they do come. The author tries to give a scientific explanation of the favourable effects of morphia used in injection. The main effect of opium in certain doses consists in the stimulus which it gives to the vasomotor centre, and in its power of increasing the tonicity of the muscular coat of the vessels. This influence is exerted in a peculiar degree on the brain, which is highly vascular, and where the arteries have a well-developed muscular coat. In this way it lessens the circulating fluid within the cranium, confines the activity of the organ, and suspends the progress of pathological changes. Dr. Knecht cites in support of his theory the physiological researches of Gscheidlen, who has come to the conclusion that morphia in small doses has a stimulating effect; in large ones, a paralysing effect upon the muscular and vasomotor nerves. Mendel found that in animals narcotized with morphia the temperature sunk lower within the cavity of the cranium than under the skin or in the rectum.

Dr. Knecht's paper is well worthy of perusal.

Dr. Höstermann (quoted in the "Centralblatt," 30th January, 1873) claims to have obtained successful results in the treatment of simple melancholia with nitrite of amyle given in inhalations from twice to four times a day in doses of from four to five drops inhaled for about forty seconds. He finds that this agent has a notable effect in increasing the quickness of the pulse. It also widens the calibre of the capillaries in the skin and in the head.

Dr. Otto Obermeier has a paper in the *Archiv.*, iv. Band, i. Heft, upon the employment of aethyl alcohol in insanity. By this name he appears to designate a fluid composed of 30 per cent. of rectified spirit mixed with water, "with aromatic additions." With this compound he has obtained much success in cases of melancholia, and never noticed any of the bad symptoms observed by Parkes and Wollowicz to follow the use of alcohol.

Putting together the favourable results obtained through morphia, nitrite of amyle, and the agreeable beverage mixed up by Dr. Obermeier, we may venture to hope that melancholia will soon be rare in German Asylums.

Dr. Voppel, in an article of 45 pages (*Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie*, 3 Heft), gives an account of an experiment which had been carried on for more than two years and a half on the management of the insane in the rural Colony of Colditz. He had a central Institution for their lodging in the middle of a large farm on which the lunatics were employed. He had 139 cases during the period of which he writes, who were kept in employment on about 66 acres of land, apparently worked on the system of *petite culture*, or spade husbandry used by the peasant proprietors and metayers on the Continent. The patients were granted more liberty than is allowed within an enclosed Asylum, and to encourage them a few pence was given them for what they earned.

On wet days they were employed in straw plaiting. He calculated that the labour of four lunatics was worth that of one sane labourer. He found the epileptics to be the strongest.

Dr. Voppel's paper is worthy of attention, though it appears to me that the treatment of the lunatics does not differ very much from what is carried on in County Lunatic Asylums in Great Britain.

I have been obliged, from want of space to defer a report of the article of Dr. E. Hitzig on the relative value of some methods of applying electricity till a future number. The paper is not concluded, but the first part has appeared in the *Archiv.*, iv. Band, 1 Heft.

Professor Betz's Method of Making Sections of Nervous Tissue. By
Dr. BATTY TUKE.

Professor Betz, of Kiev, has lately produced brain sections, which have attracted very considerable attention in Vienna. His specimens are of vast extent. He appears to be able to produce thin sections of an entire hemisphere. We append his method of hardening and cutting as it is stated in the "*Correspondentze Blatt der deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychiatrie und Gerichtlich Psychologie*, Jan., 1873." The method of hardening which we wish to bring into notice is as follows:—observing that differences exist in the treatment of the spinal-cord, cerebrum and cerebellum. The spinal-cord—after the careful removal of the dura mater, it is placed in spirit of from 75 to 80 per cent., which is tinged a clear brown colour by the addition of Iodine. After from one to three days, during which the preparation must stand in a cool temperature, the Pia Mater and the Arachnoid are also removed; the specimen remaining in the spirit, to which a few drops of Iodine must be added daily for three days, maintaining an ordinary temperature. It is then transferred to a three per cent. solution of Chromate of Potass, and back again to the cool temperature. Here it hardens thoroughly, which is known by the fluid becoming turbid, and by the formation of a brown deposit upon the preparation. When this occurs, it must be immediately thoroughly washed with water, and immersed in a solution of Chromate of Potass, from a half to one per cent. strength, in which it will not become too hard or brittle.

Preparations of cerebellum can only be made when it has been taken from a perfectly fresh body. Before immersing it in the Iodine spirit, the vessels and membranes must be carefully removed, especially at the vermiform process and the "square lobes;" and cotton wool should be stuffed into the sulci on either side of the process, the rhomboidal groove, and the nates and testes, should they be in the specimen, so as to render the passage of fluid into the deeper parts more easy. The preparations should rest on cotton wool. The