

Kraepelin, accounts for 1.1 *per cent.* of the total cases, while alcoholic forms include 28 *per cent.*—a frequency comparable to that of Paris. The cases assigned to manic-depressive insanity (6.6 *per cent.*) differ from the European statistics in that rather more women are affected than men, and in the generally later age of onset. Dementia præcox is common, 12 *per cent.*, as compared with Kraepelin's estimate of 14 to 15 *per cent.*

General paralysis is comparatively rare, but is becoming more prevalent. Very few cases were observed in women. The authors consider its frequency to depend on the state of civilisation and not on climatic or ethnological conditions. Syphilis is widespread, but seems to tend to relatively benign skin lesions, and to spare the nervous system. It was present as an antecedent condition in 80 *per cent.* of the general paralytics.

Latah and amok are not really distinct morbid entities, nor are they peculiar to tropical climates. Latah is a variety of hysteria, and similar manifestations occur in European countries. The term "amok" is vaguely employed for any form of impulsive violence followed by amnesia. In most cases it is to be regarded as a manifestation of epilepsy.

As regards the influence of the tropics upon emigrants, the authors consider that the health of an individual is mainly dependent upon adherence to the rules of life necessitated by the climatic conditions. They have not observed the frequency of insomnia described by Daubler and Rasch.

BERNARD HART.

4. Sociology.

On the Belief in Demonic Possession [Über den Glauben an die Besessenheit]. (Allgem. Zeits. f. Psychiat., Bd. lxxiii, H. 1.) Behr.

Dr. Albert Behr has a learned paper of forty pages upon the medical, religious, and metaphysical aspect of this ancient belief. The influence of bad spirits upon men's minds was unknown to the Greeks and Romans. It came from the East, and was accepted by the Christian church. Dr. Behr considers that such a notion is no essential part of Christianity, in which he follows Schleiermacher. The belief that bad spirits can affect the minds of men is, however, accepted both by the Catholic and Protestant churches. Exorcism is still practised in the Catholic church. Behr mentions a case in Austria where a layman was employed to drive demons out of a woman at the rate of two-pence-half-penny for each devil. In the year 1896, a person believed to be possessed was fettered and the exorcists knelt upon the unfortunate, chanting loud prayers till death released him. In 1848, near Dantzic, a witch was thrown into the sea and drowned, and in Mexico, as late as 1874, a sorcerer was burned.

The belief in Satan, and the mischief which he works, still holds good in Protestant Germany, especially amongst the countrypeople. Demonic possession has been defended by some modern theologians. Behr cites a book by P. Oern, in which the author, who is not unacquainted with

psychology, argues that it still occurs. A strange will, more or less distinct, comes between the body and the mind of the subject, always aiming at the disquiet and destruction of men and opposing Christ and his word.

Against, beside, or under this foreign will may be recognised the will of the real *Ego*. It is not always those who might seem most disposed to such influences who become possessed. Sometimes they are persons who do not talk or indulge in fancies about the devil. Oern regards opposition to religion as due to the action of a strange will—a Satanical power. He gives an instance of what he believes to be demoniac possession in a lunatic, and, indeed, one setting out upon his hypothesis would soon find more in any asylum.

Such influences are scarcely recognised in modern psychiatry. Yet there are many cases where a sejunction of the personality takes place. The patient recognises impulses different from his own, has new tastes, and un wonted feelings, and his character undergoes a change. Sometimes he attributes this to bad spirits, sometimes to electricity, magnetism, hypnotism, telepathy, or other occult influences.

Dr. Behr gives a good example: Mrs. B—, whom he has observed for seven years, was subject to religious delusions and a lively sense of sinfulness; later on she believed that a bad spirit lived within her occupying especially the cavity of the heart. This spirit compelled her, to do everything which he ordered; she felt him within her and heard him speak. He does not speak in her ear, but clearly and distinctly using her own vocal organs. There are disputes between the bad spirit and the woman; she speaks and the spirit answers. She believes that she has been bewitched by three bad women, and has asked the assistance of a physician to get escape. Dr. Behr, with great analytical skill, explains these symptoms as follows: In all men, there are many organic processes which go on below consciousness, but in certain nervous conditions these functions lose their unconscious character, and push themselves into notice, and influence the course of ideas. As long as the intellect retains its activity the patient recognises these as the results of disordered sensation; but when the intellect becomes impaired these disorders—sensory impressions—become the origin of false conclusions and delusive impressions. Under the influence of diseased mental activity are evolved the errors of the hypochondriac or the paranoiac, according to the disposition of the subject.

In this patient, there are also observed movements in the muscles of expression and articulation—the outward manifestations of the delusions and deranged activity within. Lehmann has shown that in any vivid thought there is a tendency to accompany the ideas with articulate words. This is done in a tone so low as to be almost imperceptible. In other cases there is a slight motion of the vocal organs, which can only be ascertained through very close examination.

With some minds, there is an irresistible longing to grope into the unseen, which, in default of Satanic agencies, men have sought to gratify by animal magnetism, clairvoyance, telepathy, spirit-rapping, and other curious inquiries. There is a large and widely diffused literature treating of these subjects. As Behr observes: “Both Satanology and transcendental mysticism have this in common—that they teach the

invasion of an invisible agency into our world. In Satanology there is recognised the hostile attacks upon men through the Prince of the World and his emissaries. In occult lore, the main doctrine is the influence of the transcendental subject upon living men." As DuBrel explains in the journal called *The Sphinx*: "Man lives at once on this side as a living man and on the other side as a transcendental subject. This side and that side are not separate in space, but divided at the threshold of perception (Empfindungsschwelle). That side is this side in another aspect. In exceptional circumstances, as in somnambulism, the powers and capacities of the transcendental subject become known to us, and we can recognise the earthly and the transcendental halves objectively and examine them experimentally. The magical powers of the transcendental subject are exerted in particular directions, as in consciousness of the supersensible (the clairvoyance of the somnambulist) and the magic of the will. This shows itself as the black, harmful magic in sorcery and witchcraft and as beneficent magic in the religious mysticism of saints and prophets.

Thus the churches and the occult philosophers have some grounds on which they may agree, though the latter have wandered beyond the paths of orthodoxy. In fact, a mystic may be defined as one who has the capacity for believing what he wants to believe in spiritual matters. Dr. Behr complains that too little attention is paid to the professors of occult philosophy, who have accumulated a large number of observations, which, in default of criticism, are allowed to pass. Esquirol devoted a large chapter to demonomania, whereas in modern handbooks it is passed off with a few lines. He recommends for study the work of Jung—*Zur Psychol. m. Pathol. Okkultur Phänomene*, 1902—which contains an account of the whole literature of the subject.

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Ten Years' Family Care of the Insane in the Province of Saxony
(*Allgem. Zeits. f. Psychiat., Bd. lxxiii, H. 3*). Alt.

Dr. Alt, of Uchtspringe, gave to the Psychiatric Society of Lower Saxony and Westphalia the result of his experience of the boarding out of lunatic patients in families. He recalls that ten years before he had maintained that in this province there were many hundreds of patients who would be more fitly treated in selected families than in the best regulated asylum. He considers that the boarding out can be put in use in most districts if the leading physician is willing to take an active interest in it. During the ten years trial the number of boarded out patients in the Province of Saxony has risen to 475. At first the practice was confined to families in the village of Vilhelmseich, in the neighbourhood of an asylum, and gradually spread to the surrounding districts. In February, 1900, the Land-Tag voted an extension of the permission to board out into further localities. Dr. Alt remarks that the question whether suitable patients are better treated when boarded out amongst families than in a good asylum may be answered by a visit to these family colonies. He does not specify the kind of patient cared for in them.

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