

One word as to the pyæmic deposits. They were found only in the liver, and their arrangement corresponded exactly to that described by Erichsen—"When, however, they occur as primary abscesses without any deposits in the lungs preceding them, they may appear as simple collections of pus, having a more or less branched arrangement." After a perusal of the literature of the subject, I now much regret the omission of a microscopic examination of the blood and yellow clots in the portal vein. It could not be expected that an examination of a single case, however careful, could settle the various disputed points relative to their real character, but it would have gone far to complete the record of a most interesting and unusual one.

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## OCCASIONAL NOTES OF THE QUARTER.

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### *Moral or Emotional Insanity.*

We are desirous of directing the attention and enlisting the help of our readers from time to time in regard to subjects of special importance, the elucidation of which can be best secured by concentrating the attention of a number of observers at the same time on the same object of research, and accumulating by this means a large number of clinical facts from the wide experience of mental physicians. At the present time we take the disputed question of Moral Insanity. In the July number of this Journal there appeared an article on the subject which may serve to form the first of those contributions towards its study and illustration which we now solicit. In the present number will be found the report of a case of ungovernable temper and homicidal violence, illustrating the influence of race, forwarded to us for publication, the writer desiring that his name should not appear. It is one of the difficulties which attach to the discussion of this alleged form of mental disorder that the particulars of a case cannot, in many instances, be properly given to even the medical world. Publicity would often entail unwarrantable annoyance or suffering upon the friends of the patient, and, indeed, might sometimes divulge criminal facts which would blast character and lead to legal proceedings.

One condition is essential to the value of cases contributed to this Journal illustrative of Moral or Emotional Insanity—

that every effort should have been made to discover the presence of delusions, hallucinations, or mental weakness. Unless these symptoms are absent after being carefully sought for by competent observers, the case cannot be regarded as one of Moral Insanity.

At the same time—although this must be clearly understood to be of fundamental importance—we are anxious to record as many cases as possible of forms of mental disorder in which the intelligential disorder was at a minimum, and the emotional at a maximum degree of intensity. In such cases there is, at least, a difficulty in proving beyond the cavil of the superficial observer, or of legal casuistry, or of public opinion, that the patient is insane, and a still greater difficulty in convincing the uninitiated that restraint is necessary, especially if no act of violence has yet been committed. The prominent and characteristic symptoms are emotional, not intellectual. Such cases, even if the alienist detects slight mental weakness (a weakness probably common to a large number of persons who, unless emotional disorder is superadded, would never be regarded as *non compos*), are of the greatest importance, whether the peace of family life, the prevention of crime, or the repute of the alienist physician in courts of law be considered.

It is hardly necessary to add how important it is that the causation of moral derangement should be carefully investigated and reported, including heredity, and racial proclivities, epilepsy, or allied symptoms.

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#### The "Open-Door" System.

I have to thank those gentlemen who have, with so much courtesy and kindness, responded to my appeal for further and more detailed information with reference to this important item of asylum management, and to express my satisfaction that it has elicited such distinct and unmistakable evidence of its practicability and value under certain conditions.

But I regret that this evidence has, thus far, failed in satisfying my inquiry on the point upon which I was specially desirous of acquiring information.

My first question, which was the basis of most of the others, was this—"Has the 'open-door' system been tried in a mixed asylum, or in asylums exclusively for patients of the private class, and, if so, with what results?"