

of the murderer and the conditions of the act were widely different. They cannot, therefore, be regarded as average cases; at the most each was the representative of a special group. The mental condition was very carefully investigated, and in no case could insanity be said to exist, but in each case there was a definite psychopathic state demonstrable.

Wetzel appends a bibliography of other similar cases in German psychiatric and medico-legal literature. HAVELOCK ELLIS.

*An Arithmetical Prodigy [Une Calculatrice-Prodige]. (Arch. de Psychol., Sept., 1913.) Lahy, J. M.*

In this careful study the author seeks to determine the psychological basis on which an exceptional memory for figures arises, and more especially to decide how far such an aptitude is congenital, and how far acquired.

The subject is Mlle. Uranie Diamandi, sister of the famous mathematical prodigy, Pericles Diamandi, who was investigated by Binet. He was the eldest of a large family, most of whom died young. Uranie, now *æt.* 25, was one of the younger children. Both parents are Greek, born in Cephalonia, of more than average intelligence, the father of vivacious and sanguine temperament, the mother slightly neuropathic. Both parents have good memories, but before the present generation there have been no signs in the family of a special talent for figures.

Uranie possesses excellent health and, indeed, unusual vigour; no pathological signs were discovered. At school she was a good scholar, and she can speak five languages; it was at the age of twelve that she experienced the sudden revelation of her aptitude for calculation. It is to be noted, however, that this moment coincided with her brother's first success. At fifteen she was known as an accomplished calculator, and at nineteen her abilities were recognised by a scientific committee at the Sorbonne. Although she herself insists on her "extraordinary gift," Lahy points out that she has really been constantly stimulated by her brother's example, and she follows his methods. Voluntary imitation, constant training, and much force of character have been large elements in her success. She is entirely devoted to her career. Although her general interest and affections appear normal, she is indifferent to children, never played with dolls, and regards calculation as her religion. At the same time Lahy admits an inborn aptitude; not everyone who wishes can become an expert calculator, and the brother of another arithmetical prodigy, Inaudi, vainly sought to imitate him. No rule can be laid down, the author believes, concerning the intellectual basis on which this anomaly arises. Notwithstanding the frequent occurrence of *idiots savants*, in Gauss and Ampère we find the same aptitudes combined with the highest genius, and in the Diamandis they are combined with a good normal intellectual average.

On psychological examination Uranie showed no superior tactile sensibility; her muscular sense was inferior, simple reaction times rather slow, and with the dynamometer the left hand was superior. It is more remarkable that memory was not found to be specially developed: for letters it was below the average, and even for figures,

under ordinary conditions, it was scarcely above; nor was attention highly developed. On the whole this examination revealed simply a normal subject. Her aptitude is of highly specialised nature, and to it Lahy devoted very careful study. This study confirms the opinion that the cause of Uranie's success is chiefly to be found in prolonged voluntary training, and that this has been inspired by her ardent faith in her own exceptional gifts, and she speaks of her methods in the tone of a religious adept.

Her technical methods have, however, been of great help to her, and they largely resemble her brother's. Visual images count for much with her. She has numeral schematic figures, "visual rhythms" by which figures are grouped into geometrical figures. Everything is done to break up the monotony of figures. She is also aided by coloured-vision; every figure from 1 to 9 appears to her a different colour; all the letters of the alphabet are also of different colour. In addition to visual memory, motor memory also plays some part; in hearing figures she recites them in a low voice, and her lips are always in movement as she works, even though no sound is uttered.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

## 2. Asylum Reports.

### *Lunacy in Egypt.*

We have just received the reports of the two asylums for the years 1911 and 1912. The delay in their production was due to the enormous amount of work connected with the administration of the overcrowded asylums and the starting of the second asylum at Khanka. Now that we have the reports, we are astonished at the marvellous care with which they are drawn up. The various tables contribute exact information, not only as to the medical, but also as to the social and economic sides.

The reports consist of two chief divisions, the one referring to the parent asylum at Abbassia, and the other to the new and auxiliary asylum at Khanka.

During the year 1912, 1331 patients were under care. A great increase of admissions has taken place, the greatest increase being of fellaheen suffering from pellagra. It reads strangely to us that of 416 cases discharged, 259 were still insane, but not being dangerous, were sent out to make room for more acute cases. The death-rate in 1911 was high, being 217, that is, 14 *per cent.* of those daily resident.

A considerable number of deranged patients are first received at various local general hospitals, and of these a large proportion are sent on to Abbassia, but many either recover in the hospital, or are found not insane when they arrive at Abbassia. There was an increase of 260 patients in the year. Formerly there was an old criminal lunatic institution at Tura. This has now been closed, and the patients have been sent to Abbassia, adding greatly to the danger and the responsibility of the officers, and also endangering the safety of the other patients. Most of them are in special blocks. At Abbassia gradual extensions are being made, and houses for officers and head nurses are being provided.

The male population greatly exceeds the female, and there is no overcrowding among the women.