

wherever they were in contact ; also over the sacrum. He remained for several weeks in a more or less semi-unconscious state.

April 22nd.—Had another series of fits, which caused general convulsions of both sides. He lay on his right side, with his arms drawn up over the front of his chest. There was considerable rigidity of the left arm. His legs were also flexed, and could not be straightened. He never regained consciousness, and died April 26th without any further change.

*Post-mortem.*—Calvarium thin. On left side of brain, pachymeningitis with hæmorrhage. Membrane distinctly formed. Lakelets in both hemispheres, especially over the ascending frontal and parietal regions. The appearance of the membrane gave the idea that there had been a fine membrane formed, and more recently a fresh hæmorrhage, which had not got beyond the stage of coagulation. At the base the fine membrane was easily separated from dura-mater.

The temporal bones on both sides were porous and brittle.

*Cord.*—Grey matter wasted. *Brain* 44ozs.

*Lungs.*—Right, much congested, small portions sinking in water. Right 34ozs.; left, 12ozs.

*Heart.*—Pericardium adherent, adhesions recent. Atheroma of ascending aorta. Heart weighed 12ozs.

*Kidneys.*—Capsules adherent in both. Right, 5ozs.; left, 4½ozs. Liver pale, 46ozs. Spleen, 3ozs.

---

*Congenital Mental Defect with Delusions of Suspicion in Twins.* By T. W. McDOWALL, M.D., Morpeth. (*With Portraits.*)

As the mental defects of twins have of late attracted some attention, the following brief record of twin lads, at present under my care, and whose portraits are given in the accompanying lithograph, may not be without interest, especially as the lads afford a remarkable example of similarity, not only in their bodily appearance, but in their mental characteristics.

They are the illegitimate children of a woman who was seduced whilst in service, was delivered in a workhouse, and has since resided there almost continuously. Being unable to obtain the desired information by correspondence, I went to the workhouse, saw and conversed with the woman, and learned from her and the master as much of her history as could be obtained.

She was only about twenty years of age when the twins were born, and since then she has had two illegitimate children. For the last twenty years the workhouse has been her home ; occasionally she has gone away for short periods when she could no longer endure the



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

discipline of the house, but always to return when she had gratified her lower appetites. Although industrious and not intemperate, she has given much trouble by her lying, violence, and indecency. So well is her character known by the officials and Guardians, that any complaint made by her is viewed with the greatest suspicion. Her stories are marked by absolute unlikelihood, and appear to be invented without discoverable object, unless it be her desire for mischief and to have lewd subjects under discussion. Her conduct and mental condition have been a great puzzle to the poor-law officials. Her life has been a curious combination of roguery, lewdness, and mischief-making. Her mental state is difficult of definition and description. She is not deluded, maniacal, or obviously deficient; but there is a moral perversion that clearly indicates congenital defect, or is the result of some mental affection in early life. When judiciously managed she has proved herself useful and obedient; but when annoyed she has given much trouble by her outbursts of excitement, almost maniacal in character, during which she has appeared to be quite beyond herself. Her lewdness is abominable, and apparently incurable. Without being careful of time or place, or even whether her desires can be gratified or not, she will expose herself or solicit some old pauper, then lodge a complaint with the master that so-and-so had been attempting to ravish her. Such is the mother of my patients—a strange combination of perversion and vice, yet not so peculiar but that everyone who has seen much of criminals and lunatics can recall similar cases. It may be safely taken for granted that it is from her that her sons have inherited their mental weakness. All that can be learned about the father is that he was a farm labourer and died a few years ago.

The first lad to come under my care was George (Fig. 1 in the lithograph). He was admitted 28th July, 1880, and was then seventeen years of age. He was brought here in rags, having absconded from the workhouse, and wandered over a large portion of the north of England during several months, begging and living as best he could, occasionally getting into gaol. He said that he greatly preferred that form of life to living in a workhouse, where he was unjustly and unmercifully punished. It cannot be doubted that the master had failed to recognise the boy's true mental condition, and had viewed his violence and waywardness as evidence only of wickedness, and had punished him accordingly.

His condition on admission was as follows:—He was quiet, attentive, and answered questions civilly, coherently, rationally, and with considerable humour. He seemed to be fairly intelligent, and had evidently had some elementary education, as he could spell well, and make fairly difficult arithmetical calculations promptly and correctly. He stated that a number of men were coming after him with murderous intent; that they were armed with knives 3ft. long; that these men, besides being murderers, were thieves and robbers; that they

were in close and constant pursuit of him, and meant to destroy him; and if he had a knife he would stab them. On ordinary subjects he was rational enough. He knew his whereabouts, the day of the week, &c. He gave an account of himself and of his relatives, and laughed outright at some of his adventures whilst on the tramp.

He was at once induced to employ himself, and in a few weeks he was sent to the tailor's shop as an apprentice. There he has conducted himself, as a rule, very well ever since. He has not shown any great aptitude for the work, but he can sew fairly well and put a jacket together under supervision. He was found to be a masturbator; sometimes he indulged in the habit to a great extent, but during the last few months it is believed that he has nearly, if not altogether, abandoned it. At irregular intervals he has had attacks of excitement and violence. Without any visible cause or previous warning he has attacked the man nearest to him with hands and feet, swearing and using abominable language. Such attacks have rarely lasted more than a few hours, never a whole day, and were evidently due to his delusions of persecution. Those attacks have diminished in frequency and severity, but there are still peculiarities in his conduct, and he is still deluded. In the airing-court he may frequently be seen skipping sideways along the path, shaking his head violently and uttering a curious sound. When asked why he does so, he laughs, but gives no explanation. He very rarely now stops work altogether, but when his delusions trouble him, he becomes a little unsettled, perhaps weeps, and makes curious remarks to his neighbours; indeed, persons not knowing his delusions would be unable to make out what he would be after. He now never fights, except with his brother.

As to his true mental condition, it may be described as imbecility with delusions of suspicion. That there is a congenital mental defect cannot be doubted; and it is exceedingly probable that his delusions developed at an early age. But as to this I can obtain no reliable information. The master of the workhouse, who saw him grow up, is now dead; the mother believes that her son is a very clever boy, quite right in his mind, but cruelly ill-used. This is certain, however, that although he is described as having been smart enough at his lessons, he has been from early childhood a most unmanageable youth, subject to fits of frantic passion, and dangerous to his neighbours.

Concerning the brother John (Fig. 2), extracts from the Case Book will afford sufficient evidence of his history and mental condition.

He was admitted on the 10th August, 1881. The medical officer certified that the lad was suspicious, surly, irritable, and violent; that he had attacked several people in the workhouse without provocation, and that on many occasions he has been dangerously violent.

*History.*—He has been all his life an inmate of a workhouse. He has always been of a violent and malicious disposition, and has committed numerous assaults. (The other facts have already been given.)

*Present mental state.*—He knows his surroundings, and says that he has been sent here because he is wicked. He states that he has been very ill-used at the workhouse, and gives that as a cause for his violence. His memory is good. His expression is sullen and rather stupid.

*Physical condition.*—It is only necessary to note that in the left choroid there were patches of atrophy. This makes it probable that he is the twin who had fits in early childhood.

It is really unnecessary to reproduce the entries as to his conduct, &c. For a long time they only amounted to this, that he did a little work in the upholsterer's shop, that he behaved well, but was unsociable, sullen, suspicious, and deluded. He complained that the attendants and patients ill-used him and stole his food. Without having ever committed an assault, except on his brother, whom he hates, he has often threatened to be revenged on his persecutors. In November last it was thought he might safely be sent to the shoemaker's shop. Here he has done remarkably well. He has worked steadily and intelligently, and apparently with some benefit to his mind, for he does not appear to be quite so sullen and unsociable. He is still deluded, and states that both at work and here he is constantly tormented by people calling him nasty names. He is a masturbator, and requires watching to prevent him indulging in indecent practices with the idiot lads in the same ward.

The accompanying lithograph gives a fairly good idea of the appearance and facial expression of the lads. George's portrait (the top one), rather flatters him; the forehead is a shade high, and the nose is too good. The expression is too intelligent; it should be lower and more criminal. In life, the boys are so alike that a stranger could not tell the one from the other. The structure of the head is decidedly low, almost criminal, and the expression is stolid and unintelligent. They differ somewhat in stature and weight. George is 5ft. 5½in. in height, and 150lbs. in weight; John is 5ft. 3½in., and 125lbs. Their build and gait are identical, and their neck is thickened by a slight enlargement of the thyroid.

So far as my experience goes, the case of these lads is unique, and I have not discovered a similar one in medical literature. It is not so very unusual to find twins bearing a striking resemblance to each other, and plays have been constructed to show the confusion which may thus arise. But here we have two lads so alike that they are with difficulty identified, and at the same time presenting symptoms of mental derangement essentially similar.

---