

*The Muscular Sense.* By JOHN REID, M.A., M.D. and C.M.

SOME writers lately have been inclined to drop this name, and although the matter has been investigated pretty fully, I do not think it has been much inquired into from the pathological point of view. The following notes will therefore probably not be uninteresting, and they may lead to the subject being more thoroughly investigated.

It is claimed for the muscular sense that the contraction of the muscle and force expended thereby are the elements essential to its existence. There are feelings of weight, of heavy bodies pressing on the head, on joints, etc., and all are estimated as weights of greater or less size, although no muscles exist at the parts where these so-called muscular feelings are located. There are diseased states of muscle, atrophy, etc., but along with these, although there may be rigidity, there is never a feeling of weight referred to the muscle. The only feeling is one of fatigue, or perhaps pain and tenderness; the feeling of weight is absent. When muscles are atrophied, weight may still be felt as pressure. When the muscles are diseased the feelings are of the nature of organic feelings, such as are found in parts under organic nerve-centres. If there is a small subcutaneous ulcer, painful, there may be a rigid muscle. This does not give the sensation of weight, but only of a rigid muscle. Were the muscular contraction a gauge of weight, we might be surely able at times to estimate the rigidity as weight. From whatever cause, so far as I am aware, the rigidity occurs, there is but one feeling belonging to the muscle—that of tension. The gut might feel tight when distended with wind. Trichinosis and rheumatism give stiff feelings in the muscles. How is it that there are no special feelings of weight in the special sense? Even among the insane and those who have done laborious work, there are no subjective feelings referred specially to muscles—so far as I know or have seen. The weights pressing on them of tons and such like are not referred to muscles. Yet the false touch sensations, the false aural, etc., are uniformly referred to their proper organs. Surely with

such a heterogeneous mass of diseased mental cases there should be some *muscle sense* ones described. I should not accept cases of suggestion, which all know to be easily manufactured; but the difficulty with regard to this sense is the absence of such subjective feelings referred to muscles. Cases of weight, of pressure, on bones, etc., are plentiful.

My difficulties in this subject are summed up as follows:

- (1) Feelings of weight are not referred specially to muscle.
- (2) Muscles diseased, inflamed, etc., never furnish instances of *muscular sense* proper.
- (3) Muscles rendered tense by electric shock, by irritants on skin, never give but organic feelings of tension or fatigue.
- (4) The absence of the so-called muscular sense feelings among insane hallucinations referred to muscles.

Many of the above points have already been touched on, but I trust that this short notice will lead to exhaustive inquiry.

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*Punishment.* BY C. A. MERCIER, M.B.

THIS is the third or fourth time that I have been the occasion of bringing the subject of Punishment before your notice, and my justification for treating of it again is that I am given to understand you are not yet—all of you—of my opinion. On the first occasion I had but one adherent, but that one, Sir William Gairdner, was in himself a host. On the last occasion a good many voices were raised in my favour, and to-day I hope we shall be unanimous. You will remember that the first time I brought the subject forward, it was in connection with the thesis that every lunatic is not necessarily to be considered exempt from punishment; that most lunatics ought properly to be punished for some of their wrongdoings; and that the practice in every asylum is to punish lunatics upon occasion. To this it was objected that although the fact was admitted that we do pursue towards lunatics the same course of conduct that is called punishment when applied to sane people, yet, when applied to lunatics, it is not punishment, because we dare not call it punishment. This led me