

case related by Dr. Bacon. Paralysis was present in some form or other in four out of Dr. Clouston's six; but paralysis does not follow as a matter of course because a tumour is present in the brain. Calmeil found that three-eighths of those affected with organic disease of the brain were free from paralysis, and, of the other five-eighths paralysed he found four-eighths hemiplegic.

Dr. Boyd has compared the frequency of tumour in the sane and in the insane, and finds out of 38 cases, 17 showed symptoms of insanity, which agrees with Calmeil; but I cannot help thinking this is much too high a percentage, and that a very great number of cases are treated at home and we hear nothing about them; it may be looked upon only as ordinary softening of the brain. In conclusion, the two cases I have related strongly corroborate the excellent paper by Dr. Clouston on this subject, as regards the pathological influences exercised by tumours growing in the brain. He says they have three distinct effects on the brain structure: 1st, they create irritation, tending to ramollissement in the nerve substance with which they are in contact; 2nd, they cause pressure on distant parts, which in its turn causes an alteration of the structure and nutrition; and, 3rd, they set up progressive disease, resulting in an increase of the connective tissue and thickening of the coats of the blood vessels.*

Autobiographical Letter from a Patient. Contributed by
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Bethlehem Hospital.

DEAR SIR,—

In accordance with your desire I will give you a short review of my mental condition while here; but before commencing with that subject, I will furnish you with a brief sketch of my life during a certain period to enable you to comprehend the several causes that led to my breakdown; and I am the more willing to undertake the task, should I, by so doing, render you any assistance in treating any such similar cases. Firstly, I must tell you that, as a boy, I was of a most excitable and irritable temperament, and had a mad love for jumping and running about, also for cricket and other like games. When I was about thirteen years of age I went to the University College School, where I remained three years, after which I entered the

* See Case of Tumour of the Brain associated with Epilepsy and Catalepsy, by Dr. Fletcher Beach, "Journal of Ment. Sci.," Oct., 1879, p. 326.—[Eds.]

College, attending lectures there for a term of eighteen months. While at school I contracted the terrible habit of self-abuse, which I practised all my life until within a few months of my coming here, when I was startled out of my lethargy and came to perceive to the dire effects which that fearful sin had produced in me.

I was very fond of my books, and worked pretty hard for the Matriculation Examination, which I passed in June, 1869, and then proceeded to read up for the first B.A., reading very late into the night; unfortunately it was labour thrown away, my father being forced to take me with him to South Africa on account of his affairs being entirely mismanaged by those under whose charge he had left them. Had the B.A. degree depended but upon one examination, I should certainly have attempted it, only, as you doubtless know, it is necessary to pass two examinations, the second of which one is not permitted to enter for, until the October of the year following that of the first one. About the time that I passed the *Matric.* I took to smoking, which I fear I even then indulged in to too great a degree. I can also see now that I seemed to lose, after I had been at school a couple of years, to a great extent, the zest with which I had previously entered upon all my studies. Several times I used to imagine myself to be the only human being, and that other people were created and that books were written in order to try me. Of course I drove the absurd idea away, but the delusion at different times would hold me entranced.

I was eighteen when I left England, and after reaching Capetown, proceeded, after a few weeks' stay, to the Free State, where my father had a business under the management of a nephew of his. While there I learnt to frequent the billiard-room, and as a natural sequence, got into the way of drinking spirits—French brandy in particular—like a young fool thinking it one of the most manly things to be able to imbibe a large quantity of alcoholic drinks. During my stay there, about eight months, I had a very bad sore throat and sore feet, though no swelling was visible, and I had to take to my bed, but recovered in a few days and believed myself to be in perfect good health; in fact I always imagined myself to be enjoying such, which could never have been the case whilst I was leading such a wild life. After that I came back to the Colony to a small town, near the Orange River, and entered into business with another, where I lived for four years, and after a few months quiet life again frequented the billiard-room, and, of course, lifted the elbow very much. When I was twenty-one I had connection with a dirty woman and caught the disease, which I had very badly. I was very careless, went walking about and doing my work whilst I was suffering for two months. Meanwhile all this time my father's business was being utterly mismanaged by his nephew, the knowledge of which, instead of rousing me to make an effort to try and assist him, seemed to make me drink more; in fact during the last few years of my residence up-country I

appeared to live in the billiard-room, never retiring to rest before 12 p.m. and not rising before 8.30 a.m. I was, I may almost say, in a complete state of coma ; my memory failed me, and when I was spoken to, or when I read, I could hardly understand what was said or what was written, and, like an idiot, did not seem to be aware of the cause which I know now too well. My mind appeared never to be at rest, and something within me compelled me to drink, for I really did not like spirits ; it was owing, no doubt, to my system demanding some stimulant to create a false strength that for a time took the place of the true strength ebbing away from me. I felt very wretched all the time, and I have some recollection (what a fearful thing to have done !) of having sold myself to the devil for a few years' peace of mind. I was constantly desiring short life, my life was so miserable that it was quite a burden for me to live. On my return to Capetown I felt still more wretched, and generally suffered, after taking lunch, from a heavy dull pain in the top of my head ; I also found that I could scarcely read, at times reading a whole column of a newspaper, of which when I had reached the end, I discovered that I did not know what I had been perusing, and was forced to throw the paper on one side. After a few months I left for Natal with my father, where he had set up a business, and whilst there most decidedly did not get better. I seldom went out anywhere. I could not speak in company, and it was quite an effort for me to make even the most commonplace remark. I must tell you that I always was very bashful and reserved, especially in the presence of ladies, from a boy upwards. Two or three months before my arrival here my father in closing his business had to leave for the Old Colony on business matters, and left me in charge of his affairs. During his absence I was in very low spirits, and suddenly imagined that I was accused of the most heinous crime that a man could be guilty of, and on his return he found me in a fearful state, and I told him that I was determined to go before a magistrate and take an oath to the effect that I was entirely innocent of the offence imputed to me. He prevailed upon me to go with him to an attorney, a friend of his, before whom I took the oath. Of course I still did not feel satisfied, and attempted to take my life with a razor. Fortunately I had the delusion that I could not kill myself, and that in punishment of the sin I had persisted in the Almighty had doomed me to an everlasting life of torment. I heard, or fancied I heard, all kinds of whispers about me which made me imagine that first this fate and then that fate was in store for me. On the voyage along the coast to Port Elizabeth I thought that everybody knew me, and I heard some remark that, when taken before a magistrate, my tongue would be cut out, and that "when he lays his head on his pillow he will sleep for a week." This latter remark, I imagined, was made in allusion to my father, so that when he had taken some powerful narcotic in his food the steamer's course might be reversed in order to land me at Zanzibar and to hand me over to the Arabs to torture me.

as they pleased. In consequence of this delusion I kept cautioning my father not to take any soups or liquid food, and worried him the whole day, and at night started out of my berth and roused him out of his sleep to see whether he was under the influence of any sleeping draught. Even when I reached Port Elizabeth, which place I knew very well, I still at first imagined that I had come to Zanzibar. During my stay with my mother and sisters I would not stir out of the house, and kept walking up and down the rooms all day long; on the application of different girls for the situation of cook, I told my mother not to take any girl without my first seeing her, being under the delusion that I had signed a paper agreeing to marry some girl after a certain number of years, who, when she made good her footing in my father's house, could compel me to fulfil my engagement. I then fancied that I had not been properly cured of the disease, and was afraid that I would cause contagion to spread all over the house; so afraid was I of doing so, that I was only too glad to leave the house, and eagerly accepted at last my father's proposal of a voyage to England, which he had several times before in vain requested me to take with him. All along I also had the delusion that I had caused fearful ruin and death all over the earth through the fearful habit I had indulged in. On our way to this, I thought that all on board were those whom I had injured and were suffering like myself from secondary symptoms. Only two considerations hindered me from throwing myself into the sea; one was that my doing so would be of no avail, inasmuch as I could never die, and that therefore I should be lying to all eternity at the bottom of the ocean smothered alive and nibbled by fishes and other crawling reptiles; the other consideration was on account of my father's being with me, that I did not wish him to be a witness of my self-destruction. I believed my body to be immortal, because I was under the delusion that I had no blood in my veins, and had very little flesh left, that I had no internal organs whatever, that I had not even either heart or brain, that the very marrow had been drawn out of my bones. On arrival at Southampton my father went to the agent of the Union Line of steamships, of which our vessel was one, to see whether any letter had reached them addressed to him; in the meanwhile a letter was given to me, and I set off in hot haste after him, fearing that he had been put out of the way for a time to enable people to do as they liked with me. I was under the impression that I was known to the whole world, and had become famous, or rather had established myself as the most notorious character that had ever been in existence; also that whilst I remained on the earth men were in duty bound to sin in every possible manner, that all I had learnt at school was false, that no history was true, nothing but the Bible to be taken as truth. I believed that my father had deceived the world, which in turn had treated him a similar way, and that it was left to me to discover the true state of things; that men would first teach me what was right and then would tempt me to do wrong,

and that I had signally failed in the task set me ; that when the time arrived the whole family was to be broken up and destroyed because of my wickedness, not one member to know the fate of any of the others. On entering this Hospital my delusions gathered additional strength, and were reinforced by new ones which cropped up in my mind day by day. I imagined England to be joined to the Continent through people being ruined by using water, all of which I had polluted ; that I was to see none but those I had injured ; that each one was acting a *rôle* in the farce ; that I was too contemptible to be taunted with or accused of my offences ; that even you and Dr. Williams took my hand to make me believe that I was only in a similar condition ; that the other patients were placed in in order to give me as much mental pain as it was possible in the power of man to do by causing my mind to ache with alternate hope and doubt ; that all the great wars in this century had never been waged, such as the civil wars in America and Spain, the Franco-German, the present Russo-Turkish wars, &c., which, after a while, I believed, had been undertaken because of my unnatural life, also that for the same reason all these fearful murders, burglaries, &c., had taken place ; that owing to my evil life the great Creator had manifested His wrath against the sins of mankind by causing famines, droughts, shipwrecks, &c. ; that I was the false Messiah at whose coming the sins of the world were forgiven, sufficient atonement having been made therefor by the sufferings inflicted on all by means of all the diseases I had propagated through the water I had polluted. A little while after my arrival here I at last discovered my mode of punishment, which was that my empty body, being a mere shell, was to be filled with bad food up to my throat, that I would then fall into a deep sleep and thus be buried alive, suffering to all eternity from every possible disease and pain, my body to be filled with worms which would crawl up and down my empty veins ; that I would be tortured frightfully by the abortive attempts to get out of a serpent which was to be placed in my inside by means of an egg put in my food. So afraid was I of the last torture that I used to watch the attendant pouring out the tea and beer, and used to retain in my mouth the morphia you gave me, and watched my chance to spit out the same, thinking that in some curious way the egg was held in solution in the medicine. What an absurd idea ! It must appear inconceivable to a sane man that any such delusions could take possession of the mind of a human being suffering from any temporary mental disease. I actually imagined that some here feigned illness and were willing to suffer their being fed by means of the stomach pump, in fact willing to do anything unnatural, being sustained by the knowledge that they would wreak their terrible revenge on me for having blighted all their hopes and prospects. I used to look at the poor creatures and turn away and mutter beneath my breath that they would soon be more than amply revenged on the brute who had done them so much harm. To crown the farce acting here, I took both Dr. Williams and yourself to be not real medical

men, but merely two gentlemen who just were able to smatter a little about mental disorders. I believed that all had been prepared for me years before, so as to enable every one to know his part well. I therefore trust you will pardon my having made use of the expression of sinecure with regard to yourself and your assistants. I need scarcely mention that I at first refused my food, but after a while, though I fancied I knew my fate, I could not help eating, for I was very weak, and had a great craving in my inside for food. I imagined that everybody was copying some habit of mine, and even singing the song that I used to hum, especially when I heard, "When Johnny comes marching home again," thinking that I was the Johnny implied, that there would be a jubilee all over the earth after I was thrown away. I really believed that I had to find out the true faith which was hidden from me, then that the Christian religion was the true one in which all believed that the Jews really believed in it, but had deceived me; in this state of mind I read the New Testament, but could not understand it nor believe it. I at first would not pray to God, fearing that my prayer would be accounted as additional sin, which I afterwards entreated the Almighty not to consider as such. During the first few months here I found that I kept spitting out for some time after meals part of my food which appeared to remain in my throat, and that no retching was necessary to eject it, as I had merely to open my mouth. This circumstance strengthened my delusion that I had no stomach or any other internal organs, which received further strength from my hearing at meal times such remarks as, "You cannot fill an empty cask with more than it can hold." "What does rotten meat produce? Worms." "Can a man live without a brain!" (to an attendant). "Yes! your family will go to heaven and you will go to hell, and be there more years than Methuselah lived, and you will have cold arms and cold legs, and you will be filled with maggots which will breed thousands upon thousands." I believed that if I had not been able to sleep a little I should have gone raving mad. I could not wish my worst enemy to suffer in a like manner. Once or twice of an evening whilst pacing up and down the gallery I felt my head swim and found myself edging nearer and nearer to the wall. I succeeded in overcoming the giddiness, each occurrence of which I imagined denoted that my last day on earth had arrived. I at times dreamed of my fate, and one night in particular that I was being stuffed into a sack, unable to resist or to utter a word, though perfectly conscious of what was being done to me, which made me start up in awful horror to find that it was but a dream. I fancied that my unnaturalness was due to my being an abortion permitted for some purpose or other to live, also that I had become a hermaphrodite.

I fear me that you will not learn much from the perusal of this rhodomontade of nonsensical delusions, the existence of which I can only account for in that, whilst my brain was in the comatose state that I

have before mentioned, I heard all these different remarks ; whether such were made in reference to my mode of life or in order to drive me to a place like this I cannot say.

In conclusion allow me to thank you, and with you, Dr. Williams, for your uniform kindness and courtesy towards me, though at one time I took both him and you to be my two deadliest enemies, and trusting to be forgiven for my hastiness and show of ill-temper on different occasions,

I remain, dear sir,

Yours respectfully,

Geo. H. Savage, M.D.

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OCCASIONAL NOTES OF THE QUARTER.

Mr. Dillwyn's Amended Bill.

We confess that, at one time, we hoped Mr. Dillwyn would succeed in framing a Bill which would on the one hand satisfy the just claims of the proprietors of Private Asylums, by offering a liberal compensation for their contemplated loss, and on the other meet the demands of a considerable class of the public who feel uneasy about the nature of the relation subsisting between patient and proprietor in these institutions.

Our hopes, we regret to say, have not been realized.

The perseverance of Mr. Dillwyn in endeavouring to push his measure through the House of Commons has not met with success this year, but as there is every reason to believe he will re-introduce his Lunacy Law Amendment Bill, we think it due to those who are interested in its provisions, to point out their bearing, and their unsatisfactory character.

In a recent article in this Journal we asserted, and we do not hesitate to repeat the assertion now, that not a few of the present proprietors of Private Asylums will gladly hail any arrangement for the extinction of Licensed Houses which is conceived and carried out in a just spirit, by which their interests and peculiar position are fairly and liberally considered.

It ought, however, to be effected by a Government and compulsory measure, not one which is permissive, and would therefore operate unequally and unfairly.

If the conversion of Licensed Houses into self-supporting Lunatic Hospitals forms a portion of a Government Bill, it need not financially be a very Herculean measure. Scarcely six per cent. of the whole number of lunatics in England and Wales are in private care ; and the purchase of the 95 Licensed Houses now existing may be effected at