

The relation between cause and effect being that of different ways of looking at the same process, we have next to trace the relation between "occasion" and "consequence."

A balanced system may have its equilibrium either stable, or unstable; in neither case can it begin to change without external interference, yet there is a marked difference between the two. If the equilibrium be stable the system has no potential energy, and any process of change which it undergoes must be the equivalent of (*i.e.*, be *caused* by) the process of change in another system which may, for purposes of calculation, be merged with it into a single composite system.

On the other hand, when a system is in unstable equilibrium, it does possess potential energy, and if the balance be upset by the action of another system this potential energy may be liberated, and a process of change may be initiated which has no equivalent in the disturbing system. The changes in the two systems are then related, not as cause and effect, but as "occasion" and "consequence." For example, in a motor engine the movement of the machinery is the equivalent of, and *caused* by, the motion of expanding gas in the cylinders, and the expansion, again, is *caused* by the combination of the petrol with the oxygen of the air, which supplies all the energy; but this combination is *occasioned* by the ignition, which has little energy of its own, yet liberates a large quantity of potential energy from the unstable mixture of air and petrol.

GEORGE SHANN.

*To the Editor of THE JOURNAL OF MENTAL SCIENCE.*

DEAR SIR,—You will remember that in a weak moment I consented to review some psychoanalytic literature for the Journal. In response to your request for a paper for the Journal I find that the style of psychoanalytic writers has so infected my mind that I am unable to write anything but the following, which I am afraid you will regard as a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous (sublimation).  
Your unhappy contributor, X.

THE PSYCHOSES.

It is entirely owing to the wonderful discoveries of the great master mind of the day (Freud) that we owe the fact that the psychoses are now understood. For did he not show us the way that when discussing paranoia a case of dementia præcox should prove useful as an example? When an idea rises into consciousness it is apt to be repressed into the preconscious, and finally submerged in the unconscious, with at least one censor and sometimes two ready to pounce upon it should it raise its unhappy head.

Our critics who fail to understand our position weakly ask for some proof of such a statement. Thereby they show their ignorance and unwittingly reveal that they themselves are suffering from unconscious complexes. If they refuse to look down the telescope of Galileo psychoanalysis cannot be held accountable. Besides this there are numerous cases in the literature which can be made to prove anything you like if only apperceived from the proper view-point. As a paradigm the following case may be quoted:—

A boy of six years of age, physically healthy, suddenly developed an acute psychosis lasting a few hours, with great depression, emotivity, and stereotyped movements. The family history revealed little of importance, except that a maternal grandfather had developed arcus senilis at the age of 70. The anamnesis was that one afternoon he earnestly desired some chocolates, the property of his little sister. Undeterred by parental warning a conflict ensued. He seized the chocolates (wish-fulfilment) and greedily ate them, while his little sister cried bitterly. He did more, for he repressed the dearly-beloved doll of the sister into the water-but at the corner of the house. On the return of his father from the city the boy denied having stolen the chocolates, and even if he had taken one or two, said he, it was because they were bad for the sister (rationalisation). Punishment was decided upon and duly administered by the father, during which the symptoms of agitation, stereotyped movements, etc., made their appearance. In addition a strong hatred-of-father complex appeared (Œdipus complex), which lasted about the same length of time as the symptoms just detailed. The psychosis lasted but