

A treatise on the real cause and cure of insanity : in which the nature and distinctions of this disease are fully explained, and the treatment established on new principles : inscribed, by permission, to the Right Honourable Lord Southampton / by Andrew Harper.

Contributors

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R E A L C A U S E A N D C U R E
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INSCRIBED, BY PERMISSION,
To the Right Honourable
L O R D S O U T H A M P T O N.

BY ANDREW HARPER,
AUTHOR OF THE ECONOMY OF HEALTH.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR C. STALKER, STATIONERS
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1789.

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REASONS

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P R E F A C E.

IT is surprising that the progress of a disease, which annually transfers an increasing number of individuals from the duties of society to the wild abodes of secluded misery, should not, before this period, have attracted the consideration of many distinguished characters in the annals of medicine; and it is equally to be regretted that the management of insane people, relinquished by the faculty, has fallen too much into the hands of men who never possessed any great share of physical skill.

As there is, no doubt, much labour yet remaining in the field of medical science, it is seriously to be wished that professional men who have time and abilities, instead of being contented to follow the beaten track, and throw together the compilations of others, or make a few general remarks of their own, would enter more industriously into the cultivation of some of those numerous and important subjects, which so well deserve their attention.

The slow progress of discovery and knowledge, in all investigations, first meets whatever is most obvious and demonstrable. Thus the circulation of the blood was first discovered and explained, and all the causes and symptoms of diseases have, since that time, in a great measure been referred to this source: But an acquaintance with the nervous influence, the grand principle of animal life, which pervades and governs
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the whole system, has been too little cultivated. For my own part, I am well persuaded that the advancement of medical art, and therapeutic certainty will keep an equal pace with the improvements that may be made in ascertaining the laws of this powerful agent.

If it be possible to elucidate the nature of Infanity, which, although a disease *sui generis*, involves in its consideration all the principal laws of the system, that end can only be effected by disengaging it from mysterious intricacy, and connexion with matters foreign to the purpose, and by presenting the subject in a clear, uncompounded, satisfactory point of view.

This point of view is an object to which the substance of these sheets is particularly directed, and if the inquiries they contain be supported by the truth of solid facts, the
result,

result, besides its probable utility in other respects, will naturally lead to the solution of the two following important questions.

Whether Insanity be hereditary or not?

And what it is that constitutes real Insanity?

In the course of inquiry, the extreme absurdity of the common opinion, that Insanity is an hereditary disease, will plainly appear. It is true that every constitution is naturally calculated for the reception of particular impressions and passions, and when the incidents of human affairs and peculiar habits of living happen to conspire too powerfully to fan the native spark, the flame of Insanity may possibly be kindled; but still the cause can only be accidental, and not by any means hereditary.

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The investigation of the subject will also serve to fix the vague limits of constructive Insanity, and afford a criterion to judge of it with certainty. Perturbations of mind that proceed from bodily causes are merely circumstantial and temporary, and being only a symptomatic affection, and not an original disease, the derangement, which is the symptom, will cease when the first cause is removed. But all such derangements being either melancholic, hypochondriac, or delirious, are totally different, both in symptoms and duration, from that real Insanity of which I am to treat.

E R R A T A.

Page 8, line 13, *for*—do certainly proceed from great anxiety of mind under the unhappy situation, *read*—are entirely delirious proceeding either from general, or local irritation.

Page 30, line 5, *for*—distant *read*—distinct

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TH E principal object in discussing any disease, and the most important step towards determining the method of treatment and the certainty of cure, is to ascertain its exact seat, precise extent, and specific existence, or what is commonly termed the proximate cause.

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In the first place, I shall take a close view of those causes which have been commonly considered as predisposing to Insanity, and by comparing them with other causes which from their nature and effects might as reasonably be deemed predisposing, I shall endeavour to determine whether or not the former or the latter of these causes, or either of them, do really predispose to Insanity.

In the next place, I shall pursue my researches, upon the grounds obtained by the former inquiries, and by means of other demonstrations, into the proximate cause, the specific existence, and the exact seat of Insanity, and then having found and explained the last problem, after saying a few words on prevention,

I shall finally proceed to establish a regular plan of treatment and cure.

All partial, local affections, and preternatural appearances within the brain, have been always reckoned by authors as causes predisposing to Insanity. The principal of these appearances and affections, which the eye of Anatomy has discovered in the brain of persons who have been afflicted with Insanity, are peculiar hardness, or softness of the cortical and glandular texture of the brain, ossification of the carotid arteries, induration and calculous concretions in the pineal gland, distension and turgescence in the plexus choroides, water in the ventricles, tumors, the formation of pus, and adhesion of the membranes, &c. Concussions, fractures,

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&c.

&c., have also been accounted occasional causes.

The inferences drawn from dissections, and the conclusions of the Anatomist with respect to the cause of diseases, appear to me, I confess, extremely liable to uncertainty and even to error. Whoever observes the peculiarity of various constitutions, and the different lines which distinguish different faces, will not wonder that the Anatomist should find a material difference in the conformation and appearances of the brain of individuals. In the most healthy subjects, appearances similar to those which are esteemed morbid, and have accompanied Insanity, are frequently observable on dissection. Besides it is, in all respects,
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more probable that those preternatural affections, which exist after death, are rather the gradual result than the original cause of the disease.

With regard to the affections in question, there are few or any of them that can be supposed to produce real irritation on the brain. They can only act by compression, but it is evident that pressure may retard the motion of the nervous influence, obtund the sensibility or nicety of perception, and thereby occasion stupefaction, and yet, by no means, create any degree of irritation. Indeed if such irritation did, at any time, exist within the brain, it would certainly discover its effects by causing heat, plenitude, pain, fever, delirium, &c. I have seen instances
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of ideotism and stupidity take place after concussions and fractures, and I recollect a case of an internal tumor which had originated from a blow on the head. It was attended with occasional and periodical fits of phrenzy and perturbation, that no doubt arose from those exacerbations which the tumor naturally experienced in consequence of the changes that happened in the system, yet in neither of these instances was there any thing resembling Insanity. Another argument in favour of this doctrine may be drawn from the circumstance of ossification. For example, when an enlargement and ossification of the carotid arteries have been found, who could venture to affirm that this phenomenon was the cause of Insanity, for who can believe that

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that there should happen a determination of offic matter towards the brain, and if that was not the case, then this arterial induration must have been owing to the original texture. In the hydrocephalus also, when the whole brain has been deluged, in a manner, with water, no symptoms of Insanity have appeared, but only a fixed stupor and lethargic insensibility.

A general determination of morbid matter, or of acrimonious, stimulating particles settling on the brain, has likewise been accounted capable of producing Insanity. Therefore the gout, the excretion of ulcers, mercurial preparations and such like have been sometimes reputed the exciting causes of Insanity. For my own part I never
saw,

law, neither do I believe there ever was an instance where the translation of morbid cause of any kind whatever could be fairly ascribed as having any share in the production of this malady; at the same time, I cannot deny that I have witnessed more than once a derangement of intellect consequential to venereal complaints, which was attributed to the effects of the mercurial preparations lodging on, and irritating the brain. But I am clearly of opinion that in such cases the maniacal symptoms do certainly proceed from great anxiety of mind under the unhappy situation, assisted perhaps by a retention of semen.

Violent fevers, delirium, canine madness, frequent intoxication, the constant use of narcotics, and habitual convulsions
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are the chief of those causes which appear to me as likely to produce Insanity as those already described. In fact, the effects of these causes are manifestly more adequate to the production of Insanity than those which have been generally accounted instrumental in the business, whether we have a view to their general and powerful irritation in the system, or to their local action upon the brain.

The stimulus and excitement in long and severe fevers, and the delirium which attends them, which is really a temporary mania, must be more than sufficient to fix Insanity, if it were possible for any local irritation of this nature, on the brain, to create it. I have often known the mental faculties weak-

ened by the consequent debility, but never heard of Insanity being the immediate effect.

The stimulus arising from the infectious bite of canine madness exhibits the highest degree of irritation and excitement, and that even in the head too, above any which is known to affect the human system, and yet the symptoms of this dreadful disease have no real affinity to mania. The horror, convulsions, hydrophobia and biting orgasm bear no resemblance to true Insanity. The operations of the mind, 'tis true, are distracted, but the general disorder, inflammatory heat, and febrile commotion very readily account for that.

Narcotics,

Narcotics, of which opium is the chief, although they occasion sleep, stupefaction, delirium and death, were never found I believe to bring on Insanity.

In epileptic fits, notwithstanding the nervous system suffers so much violence, there is not the smallest disposition to Insanity; for it never was known, I imagine, that a person subject to convulsions was also afflicted with mania. The paroxysms of agitation and orgasm are equally violent and irresistible in mania and in convulsions; but apparent equal motion or excitement would occasion equal apparent effects, therefore there must be some particular latent distinction in the nature of the cause of these two effects, which seem only different in

circumstance and not in degree. In convulsions the nervous influence is forcibly thrown into the muscles and viscera, but no such determination takes place in mania. Hence it may be inferred that the exciting cause of Insanity must originate and act differently from that of convulsions, which difference can only be found in the consideration that the cause of convulsions arises from some partial or general irritation, not within the brain, except in accidental cases, and by reflecting that the excitement proceeding from the mental affections, however excessive, very rarely carries the nervous power into the muscles so as to cause involuntary contractions; because, no doubt, the prime movement being the seat of irritation, the spasmodic orgasm, although
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it produce the greatest agitations in the nervous system, does, at the same time, repress the free progression of the nervous influence. In illustration of this reasoning, I cannot omit making mention that I have invariably observed that persons of lax fibres, and soft muscular structure, are never affected with Insanity. The reason of which is, I presume, that the laxity of the constitution readily yields to the spasmodic impulse or mental irritation, and thus relieves the mind. A lax state of the fibres, therefore, predisposes to convulsions, and for the same reason tends to prevent Insanity.

From all these discussions, it appears to me, at least, abundantly evident that no general, partial, local, particular

cular affection, preternatural appearance, or morbid change, cognizable to the senses, within the brain, nor any stimulant, irritative, or debilitating cause in the circulatory system, can possibly be capable of inducing or predisposing to Insanity, in any shape, or degree, no more than the exhibition of a few grains of *Antimon. Tartarizat.* can be said to predispose to a fever.

If any excitement or irritation throughout the frame were adequate to the production of Insanity, those causes which have these effects in the highest degree, such as violent fevers, habitual convulsions, excessive venery, frequent intoxication, corrosive minerals, and acrid medicines, would most certainly be marked not seldom with the invasion of immediate, or gradual Insanity.

sanity. But no such thing is by any means demonstrable, and if any conclusions of this kind have been adhered to, I will venture to say that they have been ill founded and fallacious. Any immediate irritation within the brain, on the other hand, must undoubtedly create local pain, considerable fever, delirium, heat, signs of plenitude, or of stagnation, comatose affections, or some certain marks of stimulus or of pressure, previous to the invasion of Insanity; yet I believe no considerable symptoms of this nature antecedent to Insanity, have ever been observed before the actual appearance of the malady, to justify an opinion that the brain, or head, was morbidly affected. These symptoms, it should be remarked, are, but in a very slight degree, concomitant

comitant to this disease, and that there is nothing more frequent than to find them obviously existing with great vehemence and effect, in cases of severe head-achs, phrenitic fevers, apoplectic, lethargic and paralytic habits, blows and injuries on the head, &c. without one instance of Insanity occurring subsequent to such circumstances.

Considering how effectually the sensorium commune or prime movement is secured and defended by the cortical and cineritious part of the brain, and how far distant it is from the propulsive force of the circulation, by means of the intermediate meanders, circumvolutions and reticulations which constitute the glandular part, and occupy so large a space between the sanguiferous

ferous anastomoses and the incipient nerves, it is hardly possible to conceive that any effect or change from irritation or any other cause, can take place in the glandular secretion, or communicate any efficient alteration or influence upon the nerves, *ab externo*, that is from the region of the arterial terminations. Therefore if any commotion or irregularity be conveyed to the prime movement, it must result from some cause that affects the nerves after they arise from the medulla oblongata ; and this I apprehend to be exactly the case in the delirium of fevers, in which the operations of the prime movement are disturbed and confused by means of the increased and rapid pulsation of the carotid arteries, &c. affecting the nervous motions below the origin of the nerves.

After what has been already advanced, it will appear, I think, manifest enough that the causes, to which Insanity has commonly been imputed, have really no share whatever, in producing that disease.

Irregular and morbid affections in the nervous and sympathetic parts, such as flatulence and crudities distending the stomach and intestinal canal, plenitude and infarction of the vessels of the uterus, and also obstructions of the abdominal viscera, particularly of the liver and spleen, by the compression of the nerves and vessels in their vicinity, to which I may add a retention of semen, or rather a want of motion in the nervous parts which prepare it, these causes, I say, by forming an unnatural resistance

sistance to the nervous motions create disproportionate impressions on the prime movement, (commonly but improperly called delusive sensations) and occasion hysterica hypochondria and melancholy, but yet nevertheless cannot be esteemed as causes predisposing to Insanity. Here it may be necessary to remark that by the word Insanity I mean a real unequivocal mania or madness, such a mania as characterizes itself by an alienation of reason, a depravation of the intellectual powers, and an ungovernable impetuosity of disconnected ideas and irrational conduct. This is that kind of madness and that alone which deserves the name of Insanity. On looking over an author who has wrote lately and largely on this malady, I was astonished

to see an arrangement of almost as many different species of Insanity, as there are objects of pursuit, or perception within the circle of nature to engage the faculties of the mind.

The melancholic and hypochondriac state should be properly distinguished from Insanity, to which in fact it has no more affinity than a diarrhœa has to a phthisis pulmonalis. Of this disease there are two kinds. One is the melancholic, properly speaking, which is characterized by gloom, dejection, timidity and despondency of the mental faculty, and proceeds from any cause that greatly debilitates the system, or depresses the mind. The other is the hypochondriac kind, and discovers itself by whimsical capricious fancies, a
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perverted imagination, and an absurd notion, or ridiculous conceit that the body is formed of some strange composition, or foreign substance. This state of the disease arises from those irregular and morbid affections of the nervous and sympathetic parts above described, which, by giving a resistance to the nervous motions, as was observed, and by returning unusual and extraordinary sensations to the prime movement, the mind cannot help believing what it feels, and although the sensations be not delusive, but real, and although the mind be not deceived in the perception, yet it is mistaken in the similitude or comparison of the impressions.

It has repeatedly occurred to my observation that habits, where the fibres are

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lax and slender, although highly susceptible of excitement, and at the same time extremely subject to the melancholic state, never become the victims of Insanity. This I should judge, is owing to that aptitude, whereby a lax state of the system always admits of some speedy excretory discharge either periodical, or critical, or of some favourable termination and abatement of nervous exertion or orgasm.

The same observation I have as often found equally applicable to those habits, in which the fibres are either exceedingly dense and callous, or remarkably compact and tense; which habits notwithstanding they frequently induce the hypochondriac state, are not by any means admissible of Insanity. The
reason

reason of which would seem to be that a nervous system of this texture is insusceptible of very intense, exquisite, tumultuary motions.

It is also well known that young people are hardly ever liable to Insanity, and that the attack of this malady seldom happens before an advanced period of life. This affords a strong presumption that Insanity must depend upon some direct and immediate disorder in the operations of the mind. It is likewise to be remembered that the proportion of men afflicted with Insanity is much greater than the number of women who suffer from the same disease. The greater weight of care and anxiety which falls to the lot of the men, as well as a more extensive combination of ideas, and a deep-

er exertion of memory and reflection, on the one hand, and the laxity of the female constitution, which has been explained, on the other, must be the cause, I should imagine, of the difference; consequently the affections of the mind, must be particularly concerned in Infanity.

From these premises so far established, it must, I think, be granted that no idiosyncratic disposition, no morbid affection, general, or local, nor any physical change or effect, that may exist in the habit considered as a mere corporal system, can possibly constitute nor even create Infanity. How fallacious and destructive then must the opinions of those be, who have ventured to refer the cause of mania to abster-

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mious living, severe exercise and want of sleep. These causes produce general debility, and as has been stated, predispose to melancholy; but that they should occasion Insanity is utterly impossible. I am not ignorant of the received opinion that Insanity very often springs from melancholy, but I am well convinced that Insanity most frequently makes its appearance without any melancholic symptoms, and when such symptoms have preceded a Mania, that some intervening cause, either by affecting the mind, or by raising the tones of the system, has been the true parent of the malady.

The symptoms of Insanity are all clearly marked, during the paroxysms, with direct unequivocal indications of a

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high tone in all the nervous motions, as well as in the prime movement whence they originate. The clamorous ravings, the furious gusts of outrageous action, the amazing exertion of muscular force, the proud and fanciful fallies of imagination, and the excessive propensity to venereal intercourse, are striking testimonies of redundant energy in the nervous system. Besides it is contrary to every principle of reason and medical knowledge to suppose that an increase of motion should be produced by a diminution of the moving powers. I allow, a relaxed or asthenic state of the system is susceptible of quicker oscillations or motions, either in the vascular, or nervous structure than a tense or firm state, but then it is equally certain that the power
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and efficiency of motion must be proportionally less. I will likewise admit that Mania sometimes remains after the habit is reduced to a considerable degree of relaxation and debility; but in such cases it must be remembered that the real is not always so great as the apparent debility, and that the disease has, by that time, become fixed and habitual, so that the whole produce of the nervous power is wasted in the drain of maniacal paroxysm.

Upon the whole then, I flatter myself, that the nature of Insanity has been clearly traced up so far as to render it an unquestionable axiom, that the cause of it must depend upon some specific alteration in the essential operations and movements of the mind, in-

dependent and exclusive of every corporal, sympathetic, direct, or indirect excitement, or irritation whatever. It has also, I conceive, fully appeared in the course of the investigation, that no possible degree of stimulus or excitement, corporally applied or acting in the system, can raise the tone of the mind or nervous motions so far above, the healthful equilibrium as to produce any thing parallel or equal to true Insanity. It has been admitted likewise that the mental faculty may suffer a variety of changes and modifications in its motions, *ad infinitum*, from corporal causes, below the healthful equilibrium, but these changes and modifications have been proved totally dissimilar to Insanity, so that this point requires no farther elucidation.

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I will therefore take upon me to define and pronounce the proximate cause and specific existence of Insanity to be a positive, immediate discord, in the intrinsic motions and operations of the mental faculty, exerted above the healthful equilibrium, its exact seat to be in the prime movement, and its precise extent, just as far as the nervous power conveys its influence.

To pursue the line of illustration, and communicate my ideas of the human mind, it now becomes necessary for me to adopt a peculiar mode of expression. Every impresson, image, or idea, that exists in the mind has a peculiar note, pitch, or modulation. Those ideas, therefore, which from their nature bear the closest alliance,

or

or nearest similitude, must consequently have the greatest concordance of notes and congruity of modulation. On the other hand, those ideas, which in their nature are most distant and opposite, have the greatest disparity and dissonance of modulation. Hence two ideas nearly similar or equal will coalesce, or fall into unison, and two ideas widely opposite or different, will cancel and obtund each other. In the former case, the original idea will remain perfect, in the latter, a new idea will be produced, or the last will be the efficient one. Every idea may be measured by its elevation, or its depression, and in this point of view, every idea has its regulating or at-tempering idea that can restore it to mediocrity, or unison. The elevation
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and depression of ideas is adequate and parallel to the degree of pleasure and pain which ideas yield. But elevation and depression, or pleasure and pain are the extremes of ideas. Therefore every pleasing idea requires a painful one, and every painful idea a pleasing one, in reciprocal proportion to their extremities, to bring them to the equilibrium of mental or rational mediocrity. Either of these extremes constitute a degree of mental irritation; and the medium is the point of apathy, or composure. It is to be remarked that I am here speaking of the mental faculty, as abstractedly as possible. In the ECONOMY OF HEALTH I have, in some measure, explained the opposite effects which these extremes of mental affection have upon the system. Although

though I be now treating of apparent simple ideas, I must observe that there are really no simple ideas, except the primary, infantile ones, and such as are original and new to the mind. As to the velocity of ideas I know of no rule by which they may be estimated, and can therefore only say that images pass almost instantaneously through a chain of connexion, and being collected into a focus, they form a regular, complete idea, or what I would like to call comprehension. The greater the variety of objects which have been presented to the mind, the larger is the field of ideas. Now although this state of ideas tend to confusion, yet as the present obliterates the past, and as the strongest or most impressive cancels the less forcible,

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I do not conceive that multiplicity, diversity, or variation of ideas, as far as my reason and observation goes, can by their own effects, without any other cause, produce Insanity. But if the mental faculty happens to be particularly occupied and engaged by the presence and operation of some separate, exclusive object, affection, or idea, or even peculiar train of uniform ideas, the mind, by being thus pitched upon a specific note, and its nervous motions circumscribed within the limits of a certain modulation, receives too deep an impression, from this unchanging effect, in the tone of its movement. Now this particular object, affection, or idea, thus in possession of the mental faculty, or prime movement, gains ground by continuance, and if it still

remain in exercise, it gradually becomes the fixed, habitual motion, or predominant note, and then by engrossing the natural and general movements, it begins to obtund and interrupt the efficiency and perfection of the common and incidental ideas or impressions, and at last brings every image or modulation into unison with itself, and thus ultimately, by drawing the whole circle of sensorial motions into its own vortex, the order, and harmony of mental operation is destroyed, and discord or Insanity ensues. But still, in order to create that kind of discord which constitutes true Insanity, the prevalent affection or idea must be of that description of ideas which are measured by their elevation above the line of equilibrium.

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The principal of that class of passions, affections, or ideas are those which are formed by the highest motions or modulations of the mind, such as love, ambition, power, licentious avarice, pride, gaming, emulation, and pursuits of fame and honor. The principal of that order of ideas, on the other hand, which are estimated by their depression below the line of equilibrium, are those which are composed of the lowest notes or movements of the mental faculty, such as fear, or the constant dread of some evil, jealousy, grief, envy, anxiety, religious enthusiasm, disappointment, study, and the habitual practice of infamy and turpitude. These affections or ideas, it has already been admitted, are capable of disordering the mental faculty: But since

from their own nature, as well as from the particular habit of body which necessarily accompanies them, the disorder in the prime movement operates below the natural tone or equilibrium, the imagination therefore, or the superficial action of the mind, before the simple perceptions unite into the focus of mature ideas, is only affected; and even if in this case the disorder should supersede the reason, agreeable to the coincidence before explained, the paroxysms of tumultuary modulation would be short, and happen but seldom, because the state of the system and nervous influence would be insufficient to support them.

The proximate cause of Insanity having now been clearly explained, it appears

appears obvious enough that the predisposing causes can only be such as immediately depend upon the affections and operations of the mental faculty. The chief of these affections or passions having been enumerated, and the nature of their action or effects properly discussed, it only remains for me to take notice of that peculiar quality of temperament and constitution which is most admissible of Insanity. A very soft and lax fibre, as before stated, is most susceptible of the depressive class of ideas, in which the sensorial and nervous modulations are too feeble, supposing them actuated by some permanent object, to engross or absorb the usual and general motions. A fibre exceedingly dense and compact, on the other hand, being unqualified for fine, minute nervous movements, obstructs

structs the formation of mature, refined ideas, and therefore is not calculated for acute, permanent modulation or affection, nor capable of obtunding the common sensorial motions. But a constitution which holds a medium between these extremes, and in which the nervous system has a considerable degree of excitability and sensibility, is susceptible of full perception and exquisite modulation in the mental faculty, and forms that kind of temperament which is most liable to maniacal Insanity. Hence it is evident that Insanity can only be hereditary, precisely on this ground, and to this extent, and no farther. I remember a very singular case of a man, who, from the age of puberty, spent his whole life under the influence of the most amazing vicissitudes. For the space
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of about six weeks he enjoyed a volatile flow of spirits bordering upon transport or even madness, and during an equal period, he sunk into a state of the deepest melancholy and dejection, and suffered all the horrors of religious despair. Hence it appears that this last was the morbid state, and hence also it may be inferred that while the period of elevation continued, the tone of the mental faculty was too high pitched to allow any particular idea to get the ascendancy, or engross the general modulations. This was perhaps the most remarkable instance of constitutional, corporal predisposition that was ever known, and yet the case was entirely distinct from mania, as the rational operations were not subverted.

Before

Before I close this part of the subject, it is highly necessary that I should remark that any of the class of depressive ideas may, in an accidental manner, produce a temporary Insanity, when the actuating object happens to be exceedingly impressive, and the constitution of the patient strong and excitable. In this case the mania would be occasioned by the nervous motions, being capable of elevation above the line of equilibrium, and might continue till the effects of the disease had reduced them below the line, or might possibly degenerate, *sine arte*, into a fixed habitual mania, agreeable to the principle before-mentioned, which was that the mania, under such circumstances, became a kind of habitual paroxysm, or **periodical** sedative crisis. The same rule

rule holds with regard to the production of melancholy by means of any of the class of elevant ideas, when the habit of the patient happens to be asthenic and relaxed.

Although some one fixed impressi-
 on, or train of similar impressi-
 ons, be manifestly the sole, general cause of mania,
 I will not contend but that Insanity may
 sometimes result from the sudden invasi-
 on of some deep, intense idea, or the
 rapid succession of several exorbitant
 ideas, or affections, whether elevant or
 depressive. I never knew but one in-
 stance of this nature, where a person in
 consequence of alarming news, was
 seized during the night with a violent,
 settled mania: and yet it deserves to be
 remembered that this person's mind had

dwelt intensely for a long time before, on the same object. It is also true that long continued exertions of the mind, even upon various and promiscuous objects, if not relieved by frequent relaxations, by holding the mental faculty in a state of too quick and acute modulation, or irritation, will undoubtedly give the mind some degree of predisposition to the attack of Insanity.

In every individual case of mania, without perhaps a single instance to the contrary, the torrent of the passions always flows in some particular channel, and the powers of the mind are chiefly spent upon one principal, over-ruling object. This characteristic circumstance ever inseparable from mania, I know, has generally been considered as the effect

fect of some distinct species of the mad-
 lady. But this supposition certainly has
 no good foundation, therefore the
 symptom in question is a strong proof
 of the authenticity of my arguments, and
 justifies the assertion that it is always
 some particular impression rivetted in
 the mind, that generates Insanity.

After so ample a discussion of the sub-
 ject, and the adduction of so many fair
 arguments and weighty facts, in sup-
 port of the conclusions which they esta-
 blish, the prevention of Insanity, redu-
 ced to a narrow point of view, requires
 but little illustration.

Since it has been clearly demonstrat-
 ed that Insanity is a disease of the mind,
 independent of any corporal exciting

cause, and as it has likewise been explained in what manner the affections of the mind are concerned in this malady, the business of prevention must certainly depend upon the due regulation and management of the passions, and a proper conduct and moderation in the pursuits of life. All deep, unremitting exertions of the mind, relative either to business or pleasure, must be avoided, whether in the dazzling maze of politics, the assiduous bustle of commerce, the enthusiasm of religion, the abyss of study, the fascination of gaming, or the giddy round of fashionable dissipation. While the mental faculties are enlivened and invigorated by an easy and rational succession of proper engagements, the mind retains the harmony of its motions, and improves

proves the energy of its powers; but if the objects of pursuit be too rapidly vivid, or too seriously interesting, the mind is harrassed and irritated by the violence of excitement, relaxations by degrees become irksome, and every idea is attended with vehemence and avidity. These considerations ought to be seasonably regarded, the mind should be withdrawn from this tumultuous state of agitation, and above all, should not be suffered to imbibe the influence or foster the contagion of any one particular affection. For further information respecting the management of the passions, I beg leave to refer to the *ECONOMY OF HEALTH*, a late publication of mine, from which may be collected several practical hints on this subject.

I shall

I shall now proceed without delay, and with as much brevity as possible, to establish a plan of treatment, and determine the method of cure, and for the sake of perspicuity shall consider this part of the subject under the two distinct heads of corporal, and mental indications.

The influence of the mind upon the body can only produce general limited effects, and operate to a certain degree, while the influence of the body on the mind may be increased, diminished, modified and varied, a thousand different ways.

In the first stage of real Insanity, there are three positive, corporal indications, and a negative one.

The

The first is to bring the tones of the nervous system, into such a state of temperature as to render it insusceptible of high, sthenic excitability.

The second is to open all the channels of excretion, secretion and circulation, by way of regulation or balance to the nervous motions.

The third is to procure such sedative effects or an attempering crises as tend to abate the acuteness of sensorial modulation, by giving a free progression and transmission to the nervous power.

The negative indication is the avoidance of all causes which produce direct excitement or irritation, without previous impulse.

In order to answer the first indication, the patient must lose blood, at proper intervals, and in small quantities, till the pulse be less full and less frequent during the paroxysms, according to the degree of vital force, and the habit of body, in general. I am fully satisfied of the expediency of this preliminary step, being confident that there never was nor ever will be a mania, in which venæsection, less or more, would be improper in the beginning.

The second indication, with regard to excretion, must be effectuated by administering gentle aperients, to diminish the elasticity of the tones, so far as coincides with the former indication, and in such a manner as to remove abdominal obstructions, if any be. The aperients

rients ought to be of that class which has the least tendency to relax the intestinal canal, and should therefore be chiefly composed of *Rhubarb*, and should be given during the intervals of composure, because in paroxysms, their effects would be entirely lost, or by a change of action, they would remain in the system, causing irritation.

With a view to this part of the indication it is also essentially necessary to promote a constant diaphoresis, and at the same time to increase the diuretic discharge. The diaphoretic medicines must be of that quality which is known to act specifically upon the skin, and the nervous patulous capillaries, without occasioning heat, or plenitude in the sanguiferous system. Of this

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kind

kind, *Antimonium tartarifatum*, *ipeca-
cuana*, *camphora*, and the preparations
of squills are the most suitable.

A small blister, with the same view,
may be applied and continued upon
the scrobiculus cordis, especially in ha-
bits where the degree of excitability is
not too great. The peculiar stimulus
of blisters has a very powerful tendency
to act upon the skin, and increase the
perspiration: And as a free and copious
diaphoresis is very conducive towards
abating the excess of nervous motion,
an epispastic application is evidently
beneficial, provided the irritation arising
from it be prevented from counterba-
lancing this advantage.

The

The diuretics should likewise be chosen of that quality which acts by a specific, sympathetic excitement upon the kidneys, without proportionally raising the arterial pulsation.

To this intention, *Nitrum*, *Ammonia muriata*, and neutralized salts are the most apposite, but as the saline particles in this form would, in general, be too apt to relax the intestinal canal, the *Sp. ætheris nitrosi*, *Tinct. cantharidis*, et *Vin. aloet. alkal.* may be employed in preference to any others of this class.

With regard to secretion and circulation, it is to be considered that in the intervals between the paroxysms, especially if they have been violent, it be-

comes highly necessary to keep up the action of the circulatory system equal to the healthy equilibrium, which from the effects of paroxysms naturally sinks with languor and debility; by which means a fresh paroxysm is generated, in the same manner as the effect of one fit occasions a second, in an intermittent fever. But the method of supporting the circulatory powers in the case of Insanity must be conducted upon very different principles from that of an intermittent. It must be effected by such medicines as are void of heat and astringency, and possess a quick incisive stimulus, and an antispasmodic, not a narcotic, influence on the nerves. For this purpose *camphor*, *asafœtida*, *castor*, and the volatile salts and spirits are best adapted. Hence the exhibition of the *Peruvian bark*,

bark, and such like must be exceedingly improper, for obvious reasons which have been already explained.

The third indication, which is to diminish the acuteness of sensorial modulation and nervous motion, by procuring sedative effects, or attempering crises, is obtained by means of exercise, change of air, *licentia veneris*, the warm bath, music, and sleep. All these have a powerful tendency to take off mental irritation, and consequently to remove, or lessen the aptitude to paroxysms.

The degree of exercise should be very considerable, and ought to be continued regularly till it occasions lassitude and hunger.

Change

Change of air is highly requisite, because it promotes the circulation, and increases the secretions, in general, and the diaphoresis of the skin and lungs, in particular. A dry and temperate air is most beneficial, while the extremes of heat and cold are equally unfavourable.

Moderate *licentia veneris* is particularly calculated to compose the mental faculty, and its propriety is obvious in different points of view.

The warm bath, or semicupium, as a gentle relaxant, may be used now and then, especially if the skin be dry, and the habit tense.

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The aid of music, particularly that kind which is most agreeable to the patient, should be employed, as it opens the secretions, and by harmonizing the movements of the mind, gives the nervous power a gentle, pervous impulse. Yet if the patient has been excessively fond of music, it might, in that case, possibly be hurtful, by reason of its being too consonant to the morbid train of ideas, or the prevailing mental note.

Sleep being the grand *quietus* of the mind, is a most desirable state, both with regard to its duration, because the longer it continues, the more is the mental tranquility established, as well as with respect to its effects, because the incongruous tumult of ideas being
calmed,

calmed, a more settled, natural connexion is likely to succeed, and also on account of the promotion of corporal health throughout the system. When sleep is perfectly natural, which it is when proceeding from any common cause of temporary debility, or when induced by any of the sedative effects just described, the patient fully reaps all its valuable advantages; but when sleep is procured by opiates, it is then artificial, and not being the effect of debility, but the spurious cause of a transitory debility, it can only act in the present case, by arresting for a short space the sensorial modulation and nervous organisation, by means of a violent suffocation of the nervous energy, or progressive motion. But as the nervous power, not being deficient or exhausted, still continues

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nues to accumulate, within the brain at least, during the action of opium, the cause of maniacal paroxysm is so far from being removed, that it is absolutely very much aggravated and increased by it.

Of the truth of this assertion I am well convinced both from reason and experience, and must therefore condemn the use of opium in mania, as being exceedingly improper and pernicious, notwithstanding I know it to be the common practice to administer it very liberally in this disease.

The negative indication, being the avoidance of all causes which produce excitement or irritation without previous impulse, comprehends in its views,

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acid,

acid, heating and astringent medicines, improper regimen, and unnecessary coercion.

The selection of medicines having been already discussed, the reason, why all articles of the description just mentioned are obnoxious, is sufficiently manifest.

The regimen, in point of diet should be antiphlogistic, plain and slender. The quantity of animal food ought to be rather in less proportion than that of vegetables. The animal food should be of the tenderest sort, and the vegetable as free from flatulence as possible. This is a circumstance which deserves due attention. Whatever produces indigestion, flatulence, or spasmodic irritation

tation in the intestinal canal, has a strong tendency, from the great degree of sympathetic connexion, to create mental disorder, and generate paroxysm. On this account, and with this view it was, that I more than once cautioned against such medicines, as by causing relaxation in the canal, or otherwise, might contribute to this effect. Malt liquors ought not to be made use of in any shape. Rum to make weak punch, with a small portion of acid, and madeira wine for negus, should be preferred when any drink of this kind is wanted, at meals, or other occasions. Port, claret, and the acescent and volatile wines are highly improper.

The custom of immediately consigning the unfortunate victims of Insanity

to the cells of Bedlam, or the dreary mansions of some private confinement, is certainly big with ignorance and absurdity. This practice, 'tis true, may answer the purpose of private interest, and domestic conveniency, but at the same time it destroys all the obligations of humanity, robs the sufferer of every advantage, and deprives him of all the favourable circumstances which might tend to his recovery. I am very positive that Insanity may be cured with great certainty and expedition, in the beginning, and I am equally convinced that confinement never fails to aggravate the disease. A state of coercion is a state of torture from which the mind, under any circumstances, revolts. In the worst cases, where some sort of restraint is indispensibly necessary, the patients

patients hands should only be muffled or manacled, and the whole range of an undarkened room should be assigned for his use. Confinement thwarts every salutary purpose, and defeats every effort which nature makes. If it were possible to give full scope to the extravagant humours and excentric vagaries of incipient Insanity, I can conceive it very probable that the mind would pursue the fantastick delusion, through the path of distracted ideas, till the powers of mental action being spent, and the corporal system materially changed, the tumultuary motions would consequently cease, and the calm serenity of established reason resume its natural influence.

The

The mental indications are as follows.

To endeavour to discover and disannul the particular cause that affects the mind.

To indulge every rational or even whimsical notion.

To obviate all active, fatiguing exertions of the mental faculty.

To remove, as much as possible, all unpleasing ideas, and all intense impressions whether pleasing or painful, if the mind be too ardently disposed to continue under them.

On the first appearance of Infanity it is generally practicable enough to trace the particular cause that affects the mind; and this cause will always be found to be either some object of desire, or else of habit. In both cases the impulse of the mind must be either gratified, by the possession of the real object, or of some other as nearly resembling it as possible, or it must be repressed, by withdrawing the mind in a gradual insensible manner, or by sudden and effectual means, from its fixed object, to some new and opposite engagement.

When the disease has been of some duration, it is then requisite that every notion, whether whimsical or rational, should meet with some degree of indulgence, although at first the prevalent
 notions

notions ought to have been completely satisfied, or totally suppressed. If the mind should adopt some particular amusement, be partial to any favourite study or employment, or imbibe some new fancy, it would be very improper to restrain these fallies, or to force the mind suddenly from its choice. But still the mental faculty must not be permitted to dwell long on any of these predilections.

In the progress of Insanity, there is generally some one singular idea, or connexion of ideas, very distinct perhaps from the original cause, but which is nevertheless of the same extraction, that operates as an alarm in the movements of the mind, and which is frequently roused by the slightest recollection.

collection. This is a notion that will bear no indulgence, it is a fore which should never be touched.

Every active, fatiguing exertion of the mental faculty, whether it arise from the spontaneous impulse of the mind, or the circumstances of intentional management, must, at all times, be prevented. Whenever it happens to be necessary to make artificial transitions, in order to obviate the mental irritation which would arise from excessive action, the business should be performed in such a manner as to occasion no uneasiness or disappointment in the patient's mind.

Unpleasing ideas of every kind should be removed as much as possible, because

cause they are invariably attended with spasmodic excitement or irritation, and are thus powerfully instrumental in creating paroxysm. The production of unpleasing ideas depends equally on the representation of disgusting images, and on the rejection of, or separation from those which are favourite and congenial. All intense impressions, whether pleasing or painful, must be removed, if the habit of the mind seem too much adapted for their reception. Vague, general, and unimportant ideas are best suited to the operations of the mental faculty in a state of Insanity. Such ideas induce but little excitement, and by moving in a gradual, easy succession, they soften the nervous modulations, and leave the mind unruffled and serene; but intense impressions have a contrary effect,

effect, whether they be pleasing, or painful. Pleasing impressions, if intense, are more calculated to bring on sudden paroxysm than those that are painful. Pleasing ideas, however, retain this advantage, that they are more favourable to corporal health, and if properly conducted may produce some sedative crisis, without paroxysm. An intense, pleasing impression should be either gradually obliterated, or instantly suppressed or neutralized, by the accession of a painful one, and in the same manner pleasing ideas should be employed to supersede those which are very painful. Nevertheless as the force of impressions can only be estimated by their effects, that is by the signs of mental exertion, the management, in this respect, must be regulated by the ardor

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or sensibility of the mind under their influence.

When Infanity has continued for some considerable time, without melioration, either from the mode of treatment, or from the efforts of nature, which in this as well as other diseases sometimes surmount every obstacle, its effects begin to reduce and prey upon the constitution, the paroxysms grow either more frequent, or the deprivation of reason becomes more confirmed, resembling idiotism and imbecillity, the tones of the system sink below the healthy equilibrium, nevertheless the disease still continuing to advance, it gradually puts on the form of a settled mania, and every day subtracts from the probability of a cure.

When

When this unhappy period arrives, which is variable according to the violence of the cause and the nature of the constitution, the disease assumes a different character, and must be treated, in many respects, upon principles essentially distinguishable from those which are calculated to relieve the patient in the first stage of this dreadful malady.

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