Essays on hypochondriasis and other nervous affections by John Reid M.D. 1921 : [Review].

ART. V.—*Essays on Hypochondriasis and other Nervous Affections.* By John Reid, M.D. 1821.

THIS must be an interesting volume to a variety of readers; it is a selection of the most important particulars about nervous diseases which have occurred to the author, stripped of all technical expressions, and written in a style singularly striking and agreeable.

There are many persons not belonging to the medical profession who feel a strong interest about what are called 'the diseases of the mind'; these consist of literary men, especially metaphysicians, reading valetudinarians, who prefer a medical treatise to one of the Scotch novels, and men of all kinds belonging to the Society of Friends. As these are the persons of most influence among the members of our mad-house committees, it is peculiarly important that their opinions on these subjects should be correct. Now it is a favourite notion with them that insanity is a disorder in the mind, independent of any part of the body—that it requires mental remedies alone, and that the study and treatment of it is the province not of the physician, but of the moralist. On the contrary, we believe that a due consideration of the question, joined to attentive observation of the insane, will always lead to the conclusion that there are no moral diseases strictly so called; that, although attended by moral symptoms, they depend on physical processes, and that, as indigestion may produce that delusion called night-mare in sleep, so other conditions of the body may produce those delusions called insanity in the waking state.

Though the most striking symptoms of insanity are moral phenomena, they do not prove that it is a moral disease; for whether the operations of the mind are the functions of the brain, according to the materialist; or the actions of a spirit superadded to the brain,—still, whenever this organ is diseased, the most striking symptoms will be a disorder in the mind.

That there is often not enough of bodily disease to explain satisfactorily the mental disorder (because a person may be at the same time stark mad and in tolerable health) is only a plausible error, built on the erroneous supposition, that the bodily disease which most forcibly strikes the attention of the observer, is that which is most capable of disordering the mind of the patient. So far from this being true, when insanity arises from a blow on the head, disease in the brain, or child-birth, in which case the physical nature of the malady admits of no question, mental derangement is often the principal sign which manifests the existence of the bodily state on which it depends.

That moral management is sometimes the best remedy, nay, sometimes operates by intellectual processes;—as when insanity

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28,838 head of horned cattle; 182,468 sheep; 421 horses; and 10,683 acres of land in cultivation.*

With such an island in our possession, not one hundredth part of which has yet been granted away, it may perhaps be worth consideration whether some facilities might not be afforded to such of the labouring poor with their families, as should be willing to avail themselves of the offer. We speak with some hesitation on so nice a point; but by opening the colony to persons of such a description the necessity of sending out so many convicts would be superseded; and the whole of those who have offended against the laws of the country might, perhaps, be disposed of, with greater utility to the public and no less to themselves, on the unlimited parent colony of New South Wales. The vast range of country recently explored between the Hawkesbury and the Hastings has all the appearance of being extremely fertile, and every where well watered by numerous rivers, some of which are supposed to be navigable by small craft to a considerable distance from the sea coast. Here then there is ample scope to try the experiment of compelling the convicts to support themselves by their own labour; which, while it would free the nation from a large expense, would, by suitable encouragement, contribute to the comfort and advantage of the criminal, and consequently to his reformation, which we believe is rarely effected under the present system.

* We stated in the outset of this article that the population had been doubled nearly in the course of two years. The following comparison of a census taken from the books of the general muster in October, 1818 and 1820, will show that this is nearly the case.

Abstract of the General Muster-Books, taken in October 1818 *&* 1820.

	Acres of Land.				*Horses.*		*Horned Cattle.*		*Sheep.*		*Number of Free Persons and Settlers.*					
	In Wheat.	In Barley.	In Beans and Peas.	In Potatoes.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Male Convicts.	Female Convicts.	Total of Population.
Hobart Town, Including that part called the county of Buckingham.																
In 1818 . . .	3529	135½	145	247½	97	106	4668	7019	30680	62900	640	333	483	1114	185	2755
In 1820 . . .	6293	409	349	454	158	142	8196	13758	44938	95477	726	392	759	1875	266	4018
Port Dalrymple, Including that part called the county of Cornwall.																
In 1818 . . .	1520½	78½	3½	21½	29	32	1398	2271	13195	21099	189	78	150	267	55	739
In 1820 . . .	2981	119	18	63	45	66	2708	4181	12600	29403	255	118	241	712	104	1430
As many arrivals took place during and since the last Muster, may be added	. . .	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	130	20	60	530	. .	730
Grand Total in 1818	5049½	214	148½	269	126	138	6066	9290	43875	84008	829	411	633	1381	240	3494
Grand Total in 1820	9274	528	367	517	203	208	10904	17934	57538	124880	1111	530	1060	3107	370	6178
Increase in 2 years	4226½	314	218½	248	77	70	4838	8644	13713	40872	282	119	427	1726	130	2684

N. B. The Military are omitted in the Population Columns.

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is manifested by only one hallucination, and that one is dissolved by a joke, a trick, or an interview; or when the disease has been effaced by inciting the mind to natural and healthful occupations—is an argument that, at first sight, appears to have great weight, yet further examination will show it to be unsound. There are many states of mind, the undoubted consequences of bodily disease, which are nevertheless relieved by moral causes. A piece of good news will dissipate the gloom produced by a weak stomach, or an ailing liver; a torpor of intellect from ill health will be roused in conversation with an ingenious companion: examples are without end. The operations of the mind, the more they are moved according to intellectual laws, are less under the dominion of physical circumstances; so that one of the best ways to counteract the influence of the latter is to encourage the operation of the former. They are the weakest minds which are most easily overset by bodily disorder. Very old men, weak-minded women, and children, are made delirious by a degree of fever which would not affect more vigorous intellects.

There is another argument which is at first sight equally weighty, and at second sight equally unsound. We meet with men who entertain extravagant opinions on particular subjects; these have so forcible a resemblance to partial insanity, that it is common to say, 'they are mad on that subject.' These cases are known to be the result of intellectual processes, and it is concluded that insanity is brought on in a similar way. Thus the impression which evidence produces in the mind depends partly on its strength, and partly on the frequency with which it is contemplated. A weak reason repeated often convinces as much as a strong reason repeated seldom. 'Constant dropping wears away stones' is not only physically but morally true. Some one has said 'tell a man what he knows to be a falsehood every day for a year, and in the end he will believe it.' Here, then, are erroneous notions, totally independent of bodily disease, built up in the mind by intellectual processes, in outrageous absurdity nearly equal to the hallucinations of the lunatic. How like to those cases in which insanity is manifested by mistaken notions on only one subject! yet the similitude, however striking, is apparent only; for, not to mention that there is some little difference between the two absurdities,—of one who believes that our names influence our fortunes, and of another who believes that his legs are made of straw,—there is in the hallucinations of the insane not enough of time or peculiarity of habit to produce them by the intellectual processes above explained. Of the whimsical opinions of the eccentric the first idea may have been struck out in a moment; but it is only by slow degrees, by long continued habits, by returning to it again and again, and feeding

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it with every fragment of knowledge or thought which we pick up that it attains its full stature and strength, and acquires in the mind that disproportionate ascendancy which renders it at all comparable to the hallucinations of the lunatic. With the latter the process by which they are fabricated is very different. After exposure to any of the moral or physical causes which irritate or disturb the actions of the brain, the mind becomes confused and hurried, and in a few weeks, or even days, there sprout up the most absurd notions, which are totally inexplicable by previous meditation, and which the individual as firmly believes as his existence.

But though the above, we conceive, is the true theory of many of the absurd opinions of eccentric minds, yet we are far from thinking that it explains all eccentricities: there are met with in life many odd persons, who, in most of their opinions, are antipodes to common sense, fickle, full of self-esteem, sanguine, headstrong, untaught by experience. Inquire into their history, look closely into their actions and opinions, watch their career, and you will find them born of a mad stock, and, if they live long enough, and do not die of some other complaint, trace them ultimately to a straight waistcoat and a madhouse. It may be said, if the above account be true, and there is a moral as well as a physical eccentricity, it is probable that there is a moral as well as a physical insanity. We believe no such thing; strange habits by intellectual operations may produce great eccentricity of opinion and action, but they will never produce madness in the true acceptation of the word, till they have affected physically the bodily organization.

Not only are the reasons for the moral theory of insanity unsound, and the difficulties in the physical theory apparent only, but there is so much downright and positive proof that bodily disease can produce mental disorder in exactly that kind and degree which constitutes insanity, as to leave no doubt about its being the true explanation of this otherwise mysterious and inexplicable malady.

Our sensible impressions are caused by outward objects: joy and sorrow, by cheerful or depressing incidents; laughter and tears, by ludicrous and sorrowful ideas, belief by evidence; this is the case in health: but there are diseases of the body which are capable of raising such striking imitations of these mental operations that it is impossible to distinguish the spurious copies from the legitimate originals. Thus in fever, with delirium, the patient mistakes his ideas for outward realities. In diseases of the liver, the sufferer feels a depression of spirits like that from loss of property or loss of friends. Hysteria sometimes produces as much laughter as Cervantes, and as many tears as Sterne; even our belief is, in a great degree, under the influence of the body. In languid health, we have not

not that confidence in our opinions which we feel when more robust. On the contrary, wine dissipates the doubts of sobriety; and those who have frequently observed their own minds in sickness, must remember occasionally a distinctness of thought, and a confidence of belief which was completely dissipated after regaining their ordinary health. Our sensations, emotions, actions, and even convictions, are capable of being excited by morbid actions of the body.

There is, in sickness, a condition of mind bordering on delirium, in which the patient is delirious enough to afford an example of that state, yet collected enough to observe and reason about it, which comes nearer than any phenomenon with which we are acquainted, to an experimental demonstration of the double nature of our being, of the physical and moral impulses of our thoughts, which are here brought into contact and comparison. In this state, the ideas are moved, one minute by the will, the next by something else; one minute we can command them, another we feel them slip out of our grasp, and whirl across the mind with indescribable fleetness, guided, or rather hurried on, by some impulse strange to and stronger than ourselves. Insanity is a state in which the operations of the mind cease to be governed by intellectual laws, and become subservient to bodily impulses. The dominion of the organs is not the natural, but a diseased state; the physical theory of insanity, so far from leading to materialism, leads us just the other way.

This view of the subject removes all that mystery which is so perpetually felt in contemplating the subject. As long as we seek to explain, by intellectual processes, how this belief or that emotion got access to the mind, so long we 'find no end, in wandering mazes lost.' But as soon as we know that as illness may produce fretfulness, and liver disease low spirits, so there are morbid states of the body which are capable of producing emotions, convictions, and actions without the intervention of the moral causes which usually produce them, the mystery vanishes, and we can as readily explain how a lunatic should believe without any reason, as how a sickly child should be peevish without any provocation, or an hepatic patient low-spirited without any affliction. It is the only key to those strange cases where persons have been seized with an irresistible desire to destroy those who had done them no injury, for whom they felt no antipathy, or even who had been objects of affection. In these cases we believe that nervous irritation produces directly that thirst for blood, and that act of destruction which, in health, requires the recollection of injury and the passion of revenge. This state, which is morbid in man, seems to be natural in the instincts of animals in whom actions, which seem like

the result of thought and contrivance, are, in truth, the result of bodily sensations; so that insanity may be said to be the conversion of human into animal nature.

This view of the subject is not contradicted by the circumstance that there are singular states of mind, and that it is difficult to know to what class they belong—whether to moral eccentricity, to physical derangement, or lastly, what must not be left out of the account, to roguery.

We have been looking over the life and writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, and the conclusion to which we come is this:—that if allowance is made, first, for a credulous and fanciful intellect, (there is among sane men an infinite variety in the susceptibility of belief,) and secondly, for the use of allegorical instead of common language—if we had him alive, could catechise and cross-examine him about his statements, separate what was mere allegorical jargon, and what was mere matter of opinion, and get his actual experiences in plain language, much, if not all the mystery would vanish without resorting to insanity for an explanation. In the present age, philosophers credit nothing but what they perceive by sense, receive on satisfactory evidence, or infer by strict reason; all notions suggested by other impulses they view with doubt or disbelief. Wieland, in his Agathodamon, conjectures, that in the infancy of the human race, men did, as children do now, confound their past dreams with real occurrences; that when they had been dreaming of a dead friend, they would think that they had been with him, and that thus has arisen the belief in ghosts. Berkley was of opinion that the reality of things consisted not in their outward existence, but in being perceived. It is a common belief with religious enthusiasts that strong inclination is divine impulse. Now if from natural facility of conviction, or from religious hypothesis, Swedenborg believed that meditation carried to a certain intensity was reality, how easy for him to sit in his arm-chair, shoot his soul into Heaven; wander through its streets and squares; behold its lofty buildings and splendid palaces, roofed with gold and floored with precious stones, converse with its inhabitants dressed in white or shining, or flame coloured garments, and walk under trees with silver leaves, golden fruit, and rainbow flowers!

That the visions of religious enthusiasts are only intense musings is rendered still more probable by the accounts of other visionaries. St. Theresa flourished in Spain during the sixteenth century, and wrote her own life. It seems to have been spent in cultivating the art of musing; in which, the senses being closed, and the outer daylight excluded, the forms of the inner mind, like stars by night, become brighter and more visible. The whole life is a curious example of the extent to which this faculty may be acquired by practice

practice, but we have room only for a passage to our present purpose. She thus describes one of her earliest, we believe her first vision.

'Being one day in prayer, it pleased our Lord to show me his hands only, and they had such an excess of beauty in them as I am not able to express. Within a few days I saw also his divine face. Afterwards he resolved to do me the favour that I might see him all. Upon a certain day of St. Paul, whilst I was hearing mass, all this most sacred humanity of Christ was represented to me as it uses to be painted after the resurrection. This vision, though it be imaginary, or representing itself by way of image to me, *was never seen by me with the eyes of my body, nor indeed was any other, but only with the eyes of my soul.*'

More easily disposed of are those cases in which parts, or even the whole, of a congregation have been thrown into convulsions by strong shocks from the well-charged battery of a fanatic and fiery preacher. That mental agitation should produce convulsive diseases is not wonderful, because not uncommon; and it is easy to explain how these should differ from other convulsions, arising from other causes. Opium, black drop, poppy, lettuce, henbane, hemlock, belladonna, and stramonium, are all narcotics, yet each affects the constitution in a way peculiar to itself. That the concentrated essence, the double distilled spirit of fanaticism should produce fits neither exactly like hysteria nor epilepsy, nor any thing but themselves, is neither surprizing nor inexplicable.

We have been the more particular on this subject, because we conceive that the moral theory of insanity is speculatively false, practically pernicious, and that it is the prevailing and influential belief not only of the amateur doctors of this science, but of a considerable part of the medical profession itself; and that though a large part entertain the opposite opinion, it is with them a gratuitous assumption, an empirical affirmation,—it is so because it is so; they give no account, or a lame one, of the faith that is in them. But we must now turn to Dr. Reid's book. As we have on former occasions expressed our sentiments about the management of the insane, we shall avoid those Essays which relate to this degree of the disease, and select those which treat concerning the fainter shades, which are commonly denominated nervous diseases.

The first essay considers the question how far nervous diseases can be resisted by the will. Patients are commonly told not to give way to their complaints, and Buchan concludes the treatment of hypochondriacism by advising the patient, above all things, to keep up his spirits,—as if the essence of the malady did not consist in an inability to do so. Dr. Reid however cites some strange in-

stances of the power of the will over the actions of the body, particularly the following extraordinary narrative.

'Dr. Cheyne, in one of his medical treatises, narrates a case, the accuracy of which is established by an irrefragable combination of evidence, of a man who could die to all appearance at any time that he chose, and, after having lain for a considerable period exactly as a corpse, was able, as it should seem, by a voluntary struggle, to restore to himself the appearance and all the various functions of animation and intellect. It is to be inferred from the latter part of the story, that the unnatural and painful exertions by which this person assumed the semblance of decease, produced at length a really fatal result. Death would be no longer mocked with impunity. The counterfeit corpse, a few hours after its last revival, relapsed into a state which was capable of no subsequent resuscitation. But the case is so interesting and remarkable, as to deserve our giving it in all the detail with which Dr. Cheyne presents it to his readers.

'He could die or expire when he pleased, and yet by an effort, or somehow, he could come to life again. He insisted so much upon our seeing the trial made, that we were at last forced to comply. We all three felt his pulse first; it was distinct, though small and thready, and his heart had its usual beating. He composed himself on his back, and lay in a still posture for some time; while I held his right hand, Dr. Baynard laid his hand on his heart, and Mr. Skrine held a clear looking-glass to his mouth. I found his pulse sink gradually, till at last I could not feel any by the most exact and nice touch. Dr. Baynard could not feel the least motion in his heart, nor Mr. Skrine perceive the least sort of breath on the bright mirror he held to his mouth. Then each of us, by turns, examined his arm, heart, and breath; but could not, by the nicest scrutiny, discover the least symptom of life in him. We reasoned a long time about this odd appearance as well as we could, and finding he still continued in that condition, we began to conclude that he had indeed carried the experiment too far; and at last we were satisfied that he was actually dead, and were just ready to leave him. This continued about half an hour. By nine o'clock in the morning, in autumn, as we were going away, we observed some motion about the body, and upon examination found his pulse and the motion of his heart gradually returning; he began to breathe gently, and speak softly. We were all astonished to the last degree at this unexpected change, and after some further conversation with him, and with ourselves, went away fully satisfied as to all the particulars of this fact, but not able to form any rational scheme how to account for it. He afterwards called for his attorney, added a codicil to his will, &c. and calmly and composedly died about five or six o'clock that evening.'

Dr. Reid concludes that if such facts are true, the vital actions of the body must be in some degree under the influence of the will, —that though it may be difficult to struggle against hypochondriacism

driacism when full formed, it may be practicable to resist its first approaches; and on this he builds his mental regimen of health.

'Cheerfulness and hilarity, when unprovoked by unwholesome incentives, undegraded by brutality, or untainted by licentiousness, instead of being interdicted as a crime, ought to be prescribed as one of the means of urging a lazy circulation. A man may be merry upon principle, and occasionally take a laugh, as others do a walk, for the benefit of his health. A celebrated Italian comedy turns altogether upon a stratagem to cure a hypochondriac by making him laugh. It is much in our power to look on the sunny side of things, instead of keeping the eye constantly fixed on the darkened hemisphere of human life. There is no faculty of the mind which it is of more consequence should be exercised and cultivated from the earliest youth than that of self-control. This power is to be improved by exercise as well as that of the memory or the muscles.'

In the art of procuring cheerful feelings, as in Franklin's art of procuring pleasant dreams, the secret is the same. We cannot procure happiness by an effort of the will, but we *can* by learning its causes, and exposing ourselves to their influence. The Great Artist of the universe works by second causes. A philosophic is better than an empiric art. As long as the afflicted continue to brood over their sorrows, no effort of the will can prevent their feeling miserable: but let them contrive not to brood over their sorrows, and relief comes quickly. In acquiring this power of regulating the feelings, there is nothing so useful as some favourite pursuit; but the best is a rational and cheerful piety. Even he who doubts the truth of religious hopes cannot doubt that they are the natural remedy for great affliction. Philosophy may be sufficient for the trifling ills of life, but in the hurricane of sorrow its 'still small voice' would be inaudible; there are times when the Laplander without his furs is better off than a sensitive heart that has been sent into this bleak world without the covering of religion; even Darwin, after explaining the pathology of sorrow, admits that 'consolation is best supplied by the Christian doctrine of a happy immortality.'

Dread of death, the subject of the next Essay, is a common symptom in nervous diseases, and is here considered with regard to its influence on health. In these cases it seems rather to spoil life than to destroy it. 'Not only the child, but even the young man till thirty never feels that he is mortal;' but after forty a man's thoughts are much occupied by the inevitable prospect, and most of us have our little corps of consolations to protect us from the fear of it. Those of authors come out in their works. One of the most remarkable is a little Essay on Death by Lord Bacon; not that in his Essays, but towards the end of his works, near his

will. We asked the curate of a London parish, who has great experience of death-bed scenes, how people generally meet their end? And the answer was, 'either they wish for it as a relief from suffering, or they are not conscious of it.' Even Dr. Johnson, who dreaded death so much at a distance, seems to have feared it as little on its arrival as other people; and we believe that to many persons with right views, who have had a liberal allowance of sickness and sorrow, death becomes an object not so much of apprehension as of curiosity and interest. This state of mind is not only necessary for our comfort during health, but for our safety during sickness. One of the ablest physicians alive once said, that in a dangerous illness, *cæteris paribus*, a Christian would have a better chance of recovery than an unbeliever; that religious resignation was a better soothing medicine than poppy, and a better cordial than æther; and Dr. Reid gives a similar opinion in the following well expressed passage:—

'The habitual horror which thus overshadows the mind darkens the little day-light of life. An indulgence in this morbid excess of apprehension not only embitters a man's existence, but may often tend to shorten its duration. He hastens the advance of death by the fear with which his frame is seized at its real or imaginary approach. His trembling hand involuntarily shakes the glass in which his hours are numbered.

'Contradictory as it may appear, there are well-attested instances of persons who have been driven even to suicide by the dread of dissolution. It would seem as if they had rushed into the arms of death, in order to shelter themselves from the terrors of his countenance.'

The next Essay is on the injuriousness of solitude in mental alienation. Burton concludes his Anatomy of Melancholy with these words: 'Be not solitary, be not idle.' Rasselas describes the hallucinations of the astronomer as growing stronger in solitude, and weaker in society; and Dr. Reid considers the *close* air of the metropolis with its excitements better than the *pure* air of the country with its dullness.

'The lamp of life burns to waste in the sepulchre of solitude. Misery ought, in a more especial manner, to shun that seclusion which it is too apt to seek. It is necessary to a pure relish for rural retirement, that a man should carry into it a mind unincumbered with painful remembrances, and unwounded by the infliction of any great calamity. How can he be expected to enjoy the vernal freshness of the fields, and the blue transparency of the sky, whose hopes have been prematurely withered, and whose moral prospects terminate in a clouded horizon? One reason, more important than his defect of sight, why the eloquent author of Rasselas felt so decided a distaste for country scenes, was perhaps the morbid melancholy, the radical wretchedness of his constitution. A wretchedness which originates in remorse tends still more completely

completely to paralyze the sensibility to all the fascinations of external and inanimate nature. This may be considered as one of the punishments which in the present world is inflicted upon moral transgression. Had our first parents been allowed after the fall to continue in the garden of Eden, the loss of their innocence would have robbed it of all its charms.'

In the choice of a residence for a low-spirited invalid, the question is where he will be the most amused. The country is a different place to one who has been brought up in cities, and to another who has been brought up in the country. The former finds, after a few days spent in exploring the neighbourhood and admiring the landscapes, that he has come to the end of his amusements. He has no new rides to take; the working people seem to sleep over their work, and the educated classes to be fifty years behind in knowledge. He gets tired of the spot, and longs for the metropolis, with its glittering shops, its crowded streets, its various physiognomies, its stimulating society, its ready access to knowledge, its 'full tide of human existence.' On the contrary, to him who has been brought up in the country, it supplies not only pure air and a week's amusement, but a constant succession of tranquil unwearing occupations. He can angle, shoot, hunt, botanize, and converse with the neighbouring farmers on scientific agriculture. To him the various physiognomies of the flowers are as exciting as the various physiognomies of men; an argument about drill and broad cast is as interesting as one on the influence of paper currency; and a gallop after the fox not only circulates his blood, but amuses his mind, as much as a walk through St. James's. To a man of sensibility, imagination, and rural pursuits, the country is any thing but dull. Goëthe represents his hero as recovering from a fit of melancholy in the country, and as being interested and elevated by the objects around him. 'I lie down in the tall grass near a falling brook, and close to the earth a thousand variety of grasses become perceptible. When I listen to the hum of the little world between the stubble, and see the countless indescribable forms of the worms and insects, I feel the presence of the Almighty who has created us, the breath of the All-benevolent who supports us in perpetual enjoyment.'

But better than a residence either in the town or the country is a tour. Rousseau says that the happiest week of his life was passed in travelling on foot in Switzerland. In after-life, whenever he travelled he was so much occupied in taking care of his luggage, and looking forward to his destination, that the journey itself afforded him no pleasure. Who has not experienced the same feeling? A few days in the country are delightful to every one, and a tour is a means of perpetuating the pleasure. Not to men-

tion the movement, with its novelty, its air, and its exercise, every village at which we halt is a source of interest; there is its geography to explore, the aspect of its cottages and villas, its groups of sun-burnt happy faces, and above all, there is its churchyard, with its quiet graves, and its epitaphs, which have not a depressing but a tranquillizing influence on the imagination and the heart.

The last Essay we shall notice is on *Intemperance*. Here are two truths which cannot be repeated too often; *one*, that wine is not nourishment; that it excites, not strengthens; that it is not diet, but medicine, to relieve or prevent languor, and to assist the stomach in digesting its food; the latter of which it oftener troubles than aids. The *other*, that intemperance is to be measured not by the quantity of wine, but by its effect on the constitution; not by cups, but consequences. Let no man fancy because he does not drink much that he is no sot. Pope said that to him more than one glass was a debauch, and every man who habitually takes more than his stomach can bear, sooner or later arrives at those miseries which he has so often read of as the effects of hard drinking. Every healthy toper is a decoy duck, and no more proves that health is safe in intemperance than an unwounded soldier that life is secure in a battle. 'Strength of nature in youth,' says Lord Bacon, 'passeth over many excesses which are owing a man till his age.'

In a collection of tracts 'on the effect of spirituous liquors,' by an eminent living barrister, there is a paper entitled 'the Confessions of a Drunkard,' which affords a fearful picture of the consequences of intemperance, and which we have reason to know is a true tale. The following are a few disjointed paragraphs, but they read as connectedly as the entire original.

'Of my condition there is no hope that it should ever change; the waters have gone over me; but out of the black depths could I be heard, I would cry out to all those who have but set a foot in the perilous flood. Could the youth to whom the flavour of his first wine is delicious as the opening scenes of life, or the entering upon some newly discovered paradise, look into my desolation, and be made to understand what a dreary thing it is, when a man shall feel himself going down a precipice with open eyes and a passive will,—to see his destruction, and have no power to stop it, and yet to feel it all the way emanating from himself; to perceive all goodness emptied out of him, and yet not to be able to forget a time when it was otherwise; to bear about the piteous spectacle of his own self ruins:—could he see my fevered eye, feverish with last night's drinking, and feverishly looking for this night's repetition of the folly; could he feel the body of the death out of which I cry hourly, with feebler and feebler outcry, to be delivered——it were enough to make him dash the sparkling beverage to the earth in all the pride of its mantling temptation.'

'O if

'O if a wish could transport me back to those days of youth, when a draught from the next clear spring could slake any heats which summer suns and youthful exercise had power to stir up in the blood, how gladly would I return to thee, pure element, the drink of children, and of the child-like holy hermit! In my dreams I can sometimes fancy thy cool refreshment purling over my burning tongue. But my waking stomach rejects it. That which refreshes innocence only makes me sick and faint.'

'Twelve years ago I was possessed of a healthy frame of mind and body. I was never strong, but I think my constitution (for a weak one) was as happily exempt from the tendency to any malady as it was possible to be. I scarce knew what it was to ail any thing. Now, except when I am losing myself in a sea of drink, I am never free from those uneasy sensations in head and stomach, which are so much worse to bear than any definite pains or aches.'

'At that time I was seldom in bed after six in the morning. I awoke refreshed, and seldom without some merry thoughts in my head, or some piece of a song to welcome the new-born day. Now the first feeling which besets me, after stretching out the hours of remembrance to their last possible extent, is a forecast of the wearisome day that lies before me, with a secret wish that I could have lain on still, or never awaked.'

'I can hardly think,' says Sir Thomas Brown, 'there was ever any scared into heaven;' he felt more tempted by the joys of heaven than terrified by the sufferings of hell. Dr. Reid advises that in endeavouring to reform a drunkard we shall tempt him by picturing the sweets of temperance, rather than terrify him by the miseries of perseverance in his habits. He recommends sudden in preference to gradual weaning.

'The habit of indulgence in wine is not more pernicious than it is obstinate and tenacious in its hold, when once it has forced itself upon the constitution. It is not to be conquered by half measures: no compromise with it is allowable; the victory over it, in order to be permanent, must be perfect; as long as there lurks a relic of it in the frame, there is danger of a relapse of this moral malady, from which there seldom is, as from physical disorders, a gradual convalescence. The man who has been the slave of intemperance must renounce her altogether, or she will insensibly re-assume her despotic power. With such a mistress, if he seriously mean to discard her, he must indulge himself in no dalliance or delay. He must not allow his lips a taste of her former fascination.'

'Webb, the celebrated walker, who was remarkable for vigour both of body and mind, drank nothing but water. He was one day recommending his regimen to a friend who loved wine, and urged him with great earnestness to quit a course of luxury, by which his health and his intellects would be equally destroyed. The gentleman appeared to be convinced, and told him that he would conform to his counsel, though he thought he could not change his course of life at once, but would leave

leave off strong liquors by degrees. "By degrees! (exclaimed the other with indignation,) if you should unhappily fall into the fire, would you caution your servants to pull you out by degrees?"'

But there are topers of opium as well as wine. A late fashionable physician used to carry in his pocket a gold box of quarter grain opium pills, which he would offer to a nervous person as we offer our snuff-box. Those who take opium without medical advice, and who are more numerous than is commonly believed, consist of several classes:—1st. Nervous invalids, who habitually, at least frequently, resort to it to quiet that tremulous susceptibility, which so distresses them. 2dly. The poor, who employ it as a cheap mode of producing intoxication. 3dly. Men who have to perform intellectual tasks before public audiences; as barristers, parliamentary speakers, preachers, lecturers, and college students going in for their examination, and who take it, like Turks before battle, to procure the composure necessary for intellectual warfare. The attention of the public has lately been drawn towards this subject by the singular narrative of an anonymous but powerful writer. It is long since we have passed an evening of such enchaining interest as that which we owe to 'the confessions of an English Opium Eater.' In this narrative, however, the pleasures of opium seem so much more tempting than the pains deterring, that the impression left on the mind is rather favourable to the practice. This depends partly on the circumstance, that pleasure naturally arrays itself in more impressive expressions than pain; the glittering strikes more than the gloomy; but there is another cause, which both the writer and his readers ought to know. Whatever wretchedness this habit may have inflicted on him, it has caused him less of suffering and more of enjoyment than it does to most persons. He seems to have been one of a happy minority on whom the first effects of opium are agreeable, and who are long before they reach the deadly dregs. Most persons must serve an apprenticeship of head-aches and sicknesses before they master the art of deriving enjoyment from this drug. We, too, have taken opium, and its effects are these:—1st. Relief from suffering, tranquillity, and then sound sleep. 2dly. A long day of sickness, as after a brutal debauch. At length this subsides, and leaves, 3dly. A state of composure and power, in which the intellect seems equal to any thing, and the feelings are lifted above the ills of life, —a pleasurable state, yet not unmingled with occasional repetitions of the past day's wretchedness; a poor compensation for the suffering which preceded it. This we know, from ample experience, is a more accurate representation of the effect of opium on most persons than that which it produced on the 'English Opium Eater.' Compared with pain or nervous irritability, the tranquillity

lity of opium may be a pleasurable state; but compared with the fresh feelings of unsullied health, it is a hateful one. Opium eating is a practice which begins in sorrow, and ends in sorrow.

We have examined a sufficient number of these Essays to show our readers their character, and we have room for no more. The author's object, as will be readily perceived, is not so much to extend our knowledge of the pathology of these diseases as to select those particulars which seem most important, and put them in a striking shape. The audience he has in view are not so much medical practitioners as nervous invalids; these he lectures on the tendencies of their complaints, the habits by which they have been involved in them, and the mental and bodily regimen most likely to extricate them; and this with so much force and elegance of style, as occasionally to remind us of some of the best papers in the Rambler and Spectator.

ART. VI.—*Cases of Walcot* v. *Walker; Southey* v. *Sherwood; Murray* v. *Benbow, and Lawrence* v. *Smith.*

FEW things would more puzzle a literary foreigner, who should now, for the first time, visit London, than the disproportionate prices at which he would find different works of the same living author circulated. If he wished to enrich his library with Mr. Southey's poems he would be told that some were out of print, and that in the purchase of others he must pay for typographical luxury and valuable copyright. One of them alone would be obtruded on him in unlimited abundance, and at a price scarcely more than nominal. If he asked for Lord Byron's last tragedies, he would find 'Sardanapalus and the Two Foscari' an expensive purchase; but he would be stopped at the end of Piccadilly by a man offering him 5000 copies of 'Cain' at 6*d.* a piece. He would pay for medical books a price proportioned to their limited sale and laborious preparation; but in every obscure bookseller's shop he would meet with proposals for the publication of Mr. Lawrence's 'Lectures' at a price so low as to exclude all remuneration to the author, or implying a most extensive sale. If he asked for an explanation of all this, we doubt whether his original surprise would be diminished by the answer. He would be told that 'Wat Tyler,' and 'Cain,' and 'Lawrence's Lectures' were allowed to be circulated without restriction *because* it was supposed that their tendency might be injurious to the best interests of society—that 'Wat Tyler' was supposed to be an attempt to support the worst passions by the worst reasoning, and to inflame the idle and the abandoned into an attack on the property and the laws of the kingdom; the 'Lectures' to remove the restraints of religion by denying the

the possibility of a future state, and the credibility of a revelation; and 'Cain' to turn immortality and revelation into the sources of unutterable horror and misery by proving the malevolence of the Supreme Being: and that *therefore* 'Wat Tyler,' and the 'Lectures,' and 'Cain' were allowed to be disseminated to an extent which could not have taken place if their tendency had been useful, or barely innocent.

We fear we cannot make the subject intelligible to our lay readers without leading them through some dry legal details. The common law of England was the barbarous invention of a barbarous people, deeply versed in verbal subtleties and the exhibitions of puerile ingenuity, but very ill prepared for any speculation with a view to action, and least of all for that most difficult union of theory and practice, legislation. As the progress of general improvement disclosed its deficiencies, and made its faults more intolerable, some were remedied by statute; but the forms, the number and the composition of parliament, while they adapt it admirably to regulate the execution of laws, fit it ill to introduce or improve them. A more extensive remedy was adopted, to which custom has now reconciled us, but which is strongly marked with the rude character of the age in which it arose. The Court of Chancery, originally of very limited jurisdiction, assumed a control over the common law courts, supplied the deficiency of their powers, corrected the absurdity and injustice which often followed a literal adherence to their rules, and finally established, on mere usurpation, a system of jurisprudence which, if it had comprehended all property, instead of being confined within limits very capriciously chosen, had admitted oral testimony, had been administered by a greater number of courts, and had adopted in general a less dilatory mode of procedure, would have approached nearer to perfection than any with which we are acquainted.

One of the principal deficiencies of the common law courts is their wanting the power of prevention. When it has been established that an injury has been committed, they can direct the wrong-doer to pay damages to the sufferer. But their jurisdiction does not commence until the act has been done, and has been ascertained to be an injury; and a successful action at law will often be an inadequate remedy, often a nugatory one, and often, to use Lord Eldon's words in the case which is the principal subject of our remarks, 'a remedy worse than the disease.' The injury may affect a property, valuable, not so much from its intrinsic worth, as from the associations connected with it. If the tenant for life of the name and the honours of an illustrious family were to melt the plate presented to his great ancestor by grateful princes, his successor would be ill compensated by damages to the amount, or to

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