

## **Browne, W. A. F. - Case of Double or Diseased Consciousness**

### **Publication/Creation**

1847

### **Persistent URL**

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/ufw7q9cp>

### **License and attribution**

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution, Non-commercial license.

Non-commercial use includes private study, academic research, teaching, and other activities that are not primarily intended for, or directed towards, commercial advantage or private monetary compensation. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



Wellcome Collection  
183 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BE UK  
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722  
E [library@wellcomecollection.org](mailto:library@wellcomecollection.org)  
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

# CASE

OF

CASE OF DOUBLE OR DISEASED CONSCIOUSNESS.

## DOUBLE OR DISEASED CONSCIOUSNESS.

On 15th March 1847, I died J. M. at 18, in the  
presence and in the presence of Dr. McCallum of Dumfries.  
About two years ago the patient, who is the daughter of a  
respectable druggist, was affected with hysteria, various  
a good constitutional change. The symptoms noticed were  
the phos and spasmodic nature of the fugers. The pho  
concomitant now case of this state, and were not

BY

W. A. F. BROWNE, M.D.,

MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT, CRICHTON INSTITUTION, DUMFRIES.

On 15th March 1847, I died J. M. at 18, in the  
presence and in the presence of Dr. McCallum of Dumfries.  
About two years ago the patient, who is the daughter of a  
respectable druggist, was affected with hysteria, various  
a good constitutional change. The symptoms noticed were  
the phos and spasmodic nature of the fugers. The pho  
concomitant now case of this state, and were not

*From the Phrenological Journal for July 1847.*

On 15th March 1847, I died J. M. at 18, in the  
presence and in the presence of Dr. McCallum of Dumfries.  
About two years ago the patient, who is the daughter of a  
respectable druggist, was affected with hysteria, various  
a good constitutional change. The symptoms noticed were  
the phos and spasmodic nature of the fugers. The pho  
concomitant now case of this state, and were not

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY NEILL AND COMPANY.

MDCCCXLVII.

CASE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

W. A. T. BROWN, JR.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

EDITION

PRINTED BY GALT AND COMPANY

1964

Case of Double or Diseased Consciousness, by Dr. Brown.

4

sudden and unexpected; but occasionally it is determined by  
force of the movement of articles in the room, such as the  
fall of a poker, or an alteration in the position of a chair.  
New impressions, however, seem to retard the process, as  
she is never attacked in church, which she attends regu-  
larly, although she may be and has been while returning  
home.

### CASE OF DOUBLE OR DISEASED CONSCIOUSNESS.

of the testimony of one of her friends by the death of a friend.  
Her bodily health is perfect, all her functions are regular and  
vigorous. Her aspect is intelligent and no impairment of

On 15th March 1847, I visited J. H., æt. 18, at the request and in the presence of Dr M'Culloch of Dumfries. About two years ago, the patient, who is the daughter of a respectable druggist, was affected with hysteria previous to a great constitutional change. The symptoms noticed were the globus and spasmodic flexure of the fingers. The phenomena which now exist followed this state, and were not mitigated nor modified by the establishment of the constitutional change alluded to. For many hours each day, the patient is in what may be called her normal condition; for nearly an equal number she is in an abnormal condition. She has no recollection during the one, what passes, or what she has done, or acquired, or suffered, during the other. There is no tie or connexion between the two periods or states. The somnambulist state is ushered in by a yawn, a sensation of globus, and the drooping of the eyelids, which remain half closed during its continuance, but do not obstruct vision. It generally passes away by the ejection of a mouthful of phlegm from the stomach. Between these two acts, the yawn and the eructation, the woman is vivacious, more mirthful than when *herself*, knits, reads, sings, acquires songs, converses with relatives and acquaintances, and is said to display greater shrewdness than at other times. Her letters are better in composition and penmanship than she can produce when awake or in the natural state. This may be called her state of clairvoyance. When aroused, she has no recollection whatever of anything that has taken place: she has forgotten, or rather has no knowledge or consciousness of the persons she has seen, the songs she has learned, the books she has read; and if she resumes reading, it is at the place at which she had stopped when in her natural condition. When she reads in her abnormal state, the same thing happens. The duration of the trance is generally about two hours. It occurs repeatedly during each day, and more frequently of late. The development of the fit is generally

“ 5th June 1847.  
 DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 29th May, and your kind inquiries respecting my daughter, I am happy to say, the symptoms, we think, are still favourable. Since I wrote to you, her short and slight *ill turns* have become more frequent—say six times a-day,—but of a very mild character, and remaining no longer than one minute, during which time she is perfectly sensible, hears distinctly, but cannot speak, and is relieved by a yawn. She is quite as stout and healthy as before.”

It is worthy of notice, in the case of this patient, that although there was no change or impairment of the idea of personal identity, there was a total loss of one-half, or nearly so, of the patient's life. There was in her natural, healthy, and responsible state, an entire obliteration of one-half of the actions and impulses which went to make up her history, which rendered her the conqueror being she was, which placed her and preserved her in relation to surrounding persons and objects. Could she under such circumstances be considered as responsible? Could she be held to have merit or blame, to be liable to reward or punishment for that act or series of acts, of which she had, in the course of a few minutes, no consciousness or recollection? Let us suppose that she had stolen or committed murder while in her abnormal condition; and let us ask, could the law have taken its course? Let us suppose that she had only been applied while the offender was ignorant of the act which she was doing, or committed, which would be when in an abnormal condition; and the singular anomaly would have arisen of transporting or hanging a culprit of unimpaired mind, because the presence of this was necessary to restore a recollection and correct notion of the crime, accusation, and punishment. Is it not possible that such errors and cruelties have been committed? It is, at all events, necessary to bear in mind such cases as that now narrated, when forming an opinion as to the responsibility of persons, accused of crime.

Since the above was written, I have received the following communication from the patient's father —

“ I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th May, and in reply to inform you that my daughter is still in the same state of health, and continues to be perfectly sensible, and hears distinctly, but cannot speak, and is relieved by a yawn. She is quite as stout and healthy as before.”

10 1871

DGH/6/18/10

6

*Case of Tuberculous meningitis by Dr. Wilson*

Dear Sir, I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 27th inst. and your kind inquiries concerning my daughter. I am sorry to say, the symptoms we think are still tuberculous. Since I wrote to you, her sleep and appetite have become more frequent and steady, but she has lost a few pounds in weight, and remains in a feeble state of health. I hope which time she is perfectly recovered, her education will be not spent, and is followed by a more healthy and happy and healthy relation.

1983.24