

Dr. WILLIAMS remarked that the Hermit tested his visitor's knowledge of the classics.

Dr. WARWICK said there was for a few years in Stafford Hole a man who was something the same, but with the difference that he used to have a rattle-trap concern, and went out and made all sorts of bargains. There was, however, no question that he was insane.

Dr. TUKE said he should like an expression of opinion as to whether it would have been well to place him under restraint.

Dr. D. TUKE said there was a distinct delusion in this case.

The PRESIDENT said he should think he was insane, although the legal mind would not accept the fact.

Dr. BLANDFORD thought if anyone had lived with him and seen him hour by hour they could have discovered it. He should think the Hermit had delusions, but was too much on the alert to allow them to be discovered by persons who saw him only for a short time.

Dr. YELLOWLEES moved a vote of thanks to the President and Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians for the use of their Hall.

Dr. D. HACK TUKE seconded, and the motion having been carried unanimously, the meeting terminated.

### Correspondence.

To the Editor of the "Journal of Mental Science."

SIR,—Dr. Carpenter, referring to my review of his recent work, has called my attention to the priority which I claim for the authorship of the "Emotional Theory of Insanity," which he considers due to himself, and he has requested me to give a corrected statement in the next number of your journal. Although I cannot see that I have anything to correct, I shall gladly give a more ample statement, and endeavour to do full justice to the views which Dr. Carpenter has himself published on this question in his "Human Physiology," fourth edition, 1853. My articles on "The Law and Theory of Insanity" were published in the "Medical Chirurgical Review," for October, 1853, and January, 1854. So far as Dr. Carpenter's views, stated in his "Human Physiology," agree with mine, I freely acknowledge his priority.

But on reading Dr. Carpenter's pages, I think that it will be found that this agreement by no means extends to the Emotional Theory of Insanity as I have propounded it, and that his priority on other points was shared by far older writers. The passages which I find referring directly to this question are contained in sections 832 and 833 of the fourth edition referred to, and are as follows:—

"There may, however, be no primary disorder of the intellectual faculties, and the insanity may essentially consist in a tendency to disordered emotional excitement, which affects the course of thought, and consequently of action, without disordering the reasoning processes in any other way than by supplying wrong materials to them. Now the emotional disturbance may be either *general* or *special*; that is, there may be a derangement of feeling upon almost every subject, matters previously indifferent becoming invested with strong pleasurable or painful interest, things which were previously repulsive being greedily sought, and those which were previously the most attractive being in like manner repelled; or, on the other hand, there may be a peculiar intensification of some one class of feelings or impulses, which thus acquire a settled domination over the whole character, and cause every idea with which they connect themselves to be presented to the mind under an erroneous aspect. The first of these forms, now generally termed *Moral Insanity*, may, and frequently *does*, exist without any disorder of the intellectual powers, or any delusion whatever; it being, as we shall presently see, a result of the generality of the affection of the emotional tendencies that no one of them maintains any

constant hold upon the mind, one excitement being, as it were, driven out by another."

"The more limited and settled disorder of any one portion of the emotional nature, however, gives an entirely different aspect to the character, and produces an altogether dissimilar effect upon the conduct. It is the essential feature of this state, that some one particular tendency acquires a dominance over the rest; and this may happen, it would seem, either from an extraordinary exaggeration of the tendency, whereby it comes to overmaster even a strongly-exercised volitional control, or, on the other hand, from a primary weakening of the volitional control, which leaves the predominant bias of the individual free to exercise itself. Again, the exaggerated tendency may operate (like an ordinary emotion) either in directly prompting to some kind of action, which is the expression of it, or in modifying the course of thought by habitually presenting erroneous notions upon the subjects to which the disordered feeling relates, as the basis of intellectual operations. The first of these forms of monomania is that which is known as *impulsive* insanity, and the recognition of its existence is of peculiar importance in a juridical point of view."

"Now, although the existence of any morbidly-exaggerated impulse, leading to the commission of acts which must be regarded as truly insane, may be fairly considered as constituting *Monomania*, yet that term is usually restricted to those forms of insanity in which there are positive *delusions* or *hallucinations*; that is to say, fixed beliefs which are palpably inconsistent with reality. These delusions are not attributable to perversions of the reasoning process, but arise out of the perverted emotional state. This gives rise, in the first place, to a misinterpretation of actual occurrences in accordance with the prevalent state of the feelings; but, when the disorder has lasted some time, ideas which the imagination at first presents under a very transient aspect, are habitually dwelt upon in consequence of the interest with which they are invested, and at last become realities to the consciousness of the individual, simply because he has not brought them to the test of actual experience. When the mind has once yielded itself up to the dominance of these erroneous ideas they can seldom be dispelled by any process of reasoning, for it results from the very nature of the previous habits of thought that the reasoning powers are weakened, and that the volitional control, through want of exercise, can no longer be exerted; and consequently, although a vigorous determination to get rid of the ideas which are felt to be erroneous, and to keep down the emotional tendency whose exaggeration is the essence of the disorder—in other words, a strong effort of self-control—may be effective in an early stage of this condition; yet when the wrong habits of thought have become settled, little can usually be done by way of direct attack upon them, and the most efficacious treatment consists in the encouragement of the general habit of self-control, and in the withdrawal of the mind, so far as may be possible, from the morbid state of action, by presenting to it other sources of interesting occupation."

I have shown in my second article, above referred to, that Moral Insanity and Impulsive Insanity were years before fully described by Pritchard.

"The late Dr. Pritchard perceived that these narrow definitions [of the English Law] did not square with the undoubted facts of experience; that many insane persons had no delusions; that they reasoned well upon right premises, and that in them the essence of the thing was *perverted emotion*: hence he established the existence of moral insanity."

In the same article I also mentioned that Arnold, of Leicester, had named and classified Impulsive Insanity, in 1782, and that even before him it was admirably delineated by the elder Munro. How far the early recognition of these emotional forms of certain cases of insanity are from my theory that *all insanity is in the first place emotional, and that disordered emotion is a necessary element in all cases of insanity*, with the exception of cases of mere weakness of mind, anyone who will take the trouble to read my articles above referred to will

at once perceive. I shall venture to make some very brief quotations, just sufficient as it seems to indicate my position.

"Excessive emotions overgrowing and dominating the mind cannot correctly be said to *cause* insanity, as sudden fright or grief will cause an attack of mania; properly speaking they *constitute* the disease."

"All medical men of experience now acknowledge the occasional existence of mental disease, without disorder of the intellectual faculties. *The problem now claiming attention is a more advanced and extensive one: namely, whether with certain admitted and well marked exceptions, Insanity does not invariably commence with, and consist in, emotional disturbance.*"

"We believe that, except in these cases [symptomatic of physical injury], convincing arguments can be adduced to prove that *insanity is always in the first instance emotional*; that intellectual disturbance is always secondary; and that Dr. Pritchard's cases were apparently exceptional, because in them the secondary part of the disease did not occur, from the unusual force of a conservative tendency in the intellectual faculties."

"A man may be an idiot from congenital deficiency of this faculty [the intellectual], or may become demented from decay of it; he may be crotchety from its imperfection; *but it appears to us improbable that any condition of the reasoning faculty can produce madness.*"

How far I was enabled to prove these important propositions I leave it to others to say. I venture, however, distinctly to affirm that they never were enunciated before I published them, and that they are in no way contained nor inferred in the pages of Dr. Carpenter's "Human Physiology."

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

John Charles Bucknill.

Hillmorton Hall, Rugby, August 6th, 1874.

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To the Editor of the "Journal of Mental Science."

Larbert, Stirlingshire, 1st September, 1874.

SIR,—I send two communications which have been made to me, on the subject of boys fostered by wolves.

The first is in reply to a letter sent to the Revd. Mr. Erhardt, about the two boys in the Secundra Orphanage, mentioned in my article "On Children fostered by Wild Beasts," in the last number of the "Journal of Mental Science." Mr. Erhardt states that what appeared in the papers from Mr. Seelye and others, were particulars furnished by himself. As to the question whether the boys had been turned adrift by their parents, he thinks such a thing as possible, but not likely. He says that the last boy was burnt out of a den together with wolves, and was such a complete animal, that he must have been a long time with the beasts. His taste was that of a carnivorous animal—meat and bones—nothing else. The older boy eats now vegetables, formerly he did not. He still smells at his food before eating; the other boy knew only animal food by his smell. Everything else he dropped with the greatest unconcern. The older boy looks an idiot by the formation of his head; but the other (who died after being four months in the orphanage), was the finest boy (I suppose physically) in the institution; his idiocy seemed only acquired. If he had only had time to find out his capacity, Mr. Erhardt has no doubt he might in time have improved more than the older one. The last few months the surviving boy has learned to speak several words, but he will never obtain full sense and power of speech. Mr. Erhardt does not know whether the older boy had marks upon his knees when caught, but the younger one had none; though he could not stand pro-