William S. Carpenter

Principles of Mental Physiology (1875)

pp. 48-51 'Mollusks'

pp. 650-675 Mania and Monomania
altogether voluntary, inasmuch as we only swallow when we choose, yet it is not so in reality. For what the Will does, is to carry back the particle to be swallowed, by a movement of the tongue, so as to bring it into contact with the membrane lining the pharynx; and this contact serves to call the muscles of the pharynx into automatic action, whereby the particle is grasped and carried downwards into the gullet. It has several times happened that a feather, with which the back of the mouth was being tickled in order to excite vomiting (another form of reflex action), having been carried down a little too far, has been thus grasped by the pharyngeal muscles, and drawn out of the fingers of the operator.—In sucking, again, there is a combination of respiratory movements, producing the vacuum which draws forth the milk, with the movements by which it is swallowed; and the whole combination is a purely reflex action, performed by the instrumentality of a ganglionic centre which forms no part of the Brain proper, and called-forth by the contact, either of the nipple of the mother, or of something which produces the like impression, with the lips of the offspring (§ 66).—This last act is sometimes spoken of as instinctive, and has been even taken as a type of that class of operations; and in the broad sense of the term instinct, it may doubtless be so regarded. But, in common with the ordinary and extraordinary movements of respiration, with swallowing, and, with many other actions that are immediately concerned in the maintenance of the Organic functions, it may be executed unconsciously; requiring nothing for its performance but an automatic Mechanism of nerves and muscles, which, in its normal state, responds as precisely to the stimulus made upon it, as the Locomotive steam-engine does to the directing actions of its driver.—The actions to which it seems preferable to limit the term instinctive, are those to which the prompting is given by sensations. These are not less "reflex" than the preceding in their essential nature, being the automatic responses given by the

Nervous mechanism to the impressions made upon it, in virtue of its original or acquired endowments; but the Nerve-centres concerned in them being of a higher order, their reflex activity cannot be called forth without affecting the consciousnes of the Animal that executes them (§§ 57, 77, 78).

49. In ascending through the Molluscan series, we find the Nervous system increasing in complexity, in accordance with the increasing complexity of the general organisation; the addition of new organs of special Sensation, and of new parts to be moved by Muscles, involving the addition of new ganglionic centres, whose functions are respectively adapted to these purposes. The possession of a distinct head, in which are located the organs of Vision, the rudimentary organs of Hearing, and the organs (if any such exist) of Sniff and Taste, constitutes the distinction between the two primary divisions of the series,—the cephalodous and the acephalodous; the Snail and Whelk being typical examples of the former, the Oyster and Cockle of the latter. In the Cephalodous Mollusks, we always find a pair of ganglia situated in the head; which pair, termed the cephalic ganglia, is really made up of several distinct ganglionic centres, and is connected by cords that pass round the esophagus, with other ganglia disposed in various parts of the trunk. Still, generally speaking, the Nervous system bears but a small proportion to the whole mass of the body; and the ganglia which minister to its general movements, are often small in proportion to those which serve some special purpose, such as the actions of Respiration. This is what we should expect from the general insensitiveness of the character of these animals (typified by the term sluggish), and from the small amount of Muscular structure which they possess.

50. Again, we find no other multiplication of similar centres, than a doubling on the two sides of the body; excepting in a few cases in which the organs they supply are correspondingly multiplied,—as in the arms of the Cuttle-fish, which are furnished with great
numbers of contractile suckers, every one possessing a ganglion of its own. Here we can trace very clearly the distinction between the reflex actions of each individual sucker, depending upon the powers of its own ganglion; and the actions prompted by Sensation, which are called forth through its connection with the Cephalic ganglia.

For the Nervous-trunk which proceeds to each arm may be distinctly divided into two tracts; one containing the ganglia which pertain to the suckers and are connected with them by distinct filaments; whilst the other consists of fibres that form a direct communication between these and the Cephalic ganglia. Thus each sucker has a separate relation with a ganglion of its own, whilst all are alike connected with the Cephalic ganglia, and are placed under their control; and we see the results of this arrangement, in the mode in which the contractile power of the suckers may be called into operation. When the animal embraces any substance with its arm (being directed to this action by its Sight or some other sensation), it can bring all the suckers simultaneously to bear upon it; evidently by a determinate impulse transmitted along the connecting cords that proceed from the Cephalic ganglia to the ganglia of the suckers. On the other hand, any individual sucker may be made to contract and attach itself, by placing a substance in contact with it alone; and this action will take place equally well when the arm is separated from the body, or even in a small piece of the arm when recently severed from the rest,—thus proving that when it is directly excited by an impression made upon itself, it is a reflex act, quite independent of the Cephalic ganglia, not involving Sensation, and taking place through the medium of its own ganglion alone.*

51. In the Articulated series, on the other hand, in which the

* A very curious example of the independent activity of the ganglial cord is the arm of the Cuttle-fish, and of its similarity, both in structure and action, to the central cord of Articulata, is presented in the detached Hemocelopus-arm of the male of the Argonaut (Pteranomia), which, when first discovered, was mistaken for a Worm.
Of Insanity.

... many forms of Insanity, in which extreme dejection is a prominent symptom, but which may also include intellectual delusions, are solely dependent upon this cause. So, a functional disturbance of the Cerebrum is often induced by the irregular action of other parts of the Nervous system, especially those connected with the reproductive apparatus. Of this we have examples in certain peculiar forms of disordered mental action, which are connected with "hysteric states of the female system,—in particular, mutability and irritability of temper, and disposition to cunning deceit; and it is a singular fact, well known to Medical Jurists, that girls about the age of puberty, and suffering under functional irregularities, are sometimes "possessed" by a propensity to set fire to their dwellings. It frequently happens that agencies of both classes jointly contribute to the result: some long-continued defect of nutrition (very often arising from hereditary constitution) serving as the "predisposing cause;"—whilst violent mental emotion, or deprivation of the blood by noxious matter of some kind, acts as the "exciting cause;"—the two together producing that effect, which neither would singly have brought-about.

553. The state of Mania is usually characterized by the combination of complete derangement of the Intellectual powers, with passionate excitement upon every point which in the least degree affects the Feelings. There is, however, a considerable amount of variety in the symptoms of Mania, depending upon differences in the relative degree of intellectual and of emotional disturbance. For there may be such a derangement of the former, as gives rise to complete incoherence in the succession of ideas, so that the reasoning power is altogether suspended; and yet there may be at the same time an entire absence of emotional excitement, so that the condition of the mind is closely allied to that of Dreaming or of rambling Delirium. On the other hand, the intellectual powers may be themselves but little disturbed, the trains of thought being coherent, and the reasoning processes correctly performed; but there may be such a state of general emotional excitability, that nothing is felt as it should be, and the most violent passion may be aroused and sustained by the most trivial incidents, or by the wrong ideas which are formed by the mind as a consequence of their misinterpretation (§ 541). Between these two opposite states, and that in which the disturbance affects at the same time the intellectual and the emotional part of the mental nature, there is a complete succession of transitional links; but, underlying all phases of this condition (these often passing into each other in the same individual), there is one constant element, namely, the deficiency of Volitional control over the succession of thought and feeling. This deficiency appears to be a primary element in those forms which essentially consist in Intellectual disturbance; whilst in those of which Emotional excitement is the prominent feature, it results apparently from the overpowering mastery that is exercised over the Will, by the states of uncontrollable passion which succeed each other with little or no interval. It seems probable, however, from the phenomena of Intoxication (§§ 537, 544), that the very same agency which is the cause of the undue emotional excitability, also tends to produce an absolute diminution in the power of volitional control.

554. It is chiefly (but not solely) in those cases in which the Cerebral power has been weakened by a succession of attacks of Mania, Epilepsy, or some other disorder which consists in a pervaded action of the whole organ, that we find the Intellectual powers specially and permanently disordered; the succession of thought becoming incoherent, and the perception of those relations of ideas on which all reasoning processes depend, being more or less completely obscured. The failure usually shows itself first in the power of volitional direction, and especially in the faculty of recollection. In proportion as the mind is unable...
Of Insanity.

to bring the results of past experience to bear on its present operations, do these lose their connectedness and consistency; and at last all the ordinary links of association appear to be severed, and the succession of ideas seems altogether disconnected, as in the most incoherent kinds of Dreaming. All this may take place with or without emotional excitement; not unfrequently the latter occurs in paroxysms, which interrupt the otherwise tranquil life of the subjects of this form of Insanity; and it is not at all incompatible with this condition, that there should be a special excitability upon some one point, which, owing to the annihilation of the Volitional controlling power, acquires a temporary predominance whenever it is called into play. It is the general characteristic, however, of this type of Insanity, that there are no settled delusions; the mind not being disposed to dwell long upon any one topic, but wandering-off in a rambling manner, so as speedily to lose all trace of the starting-point. Such patients are unable to recollect what passed through their thoughts but a few minutes previously; if any object of desire be placed before them, which it requires a consistent reasoning process to attain, they are utterly unable to carry this through; and the direction of their desires is perpetually varying, and may be readily altered by external suggestion. Cases of Intellectual insanity, depending (as this form of the disease usually does) upon structural disorder of the Cerebrum, are less amenable to treatment than are those of the other forms presently to be described; and their tendency is usually towards complete frenzy.

555. There may, however, be no primary disorder of the Intellectual faculties; and the Insanity may essentially consist in a tendency to disorderly emotional excitement; which affects the course of thought, and consequently of action, without disturbing the reasoning processes in any other way than by supplying wrong materials to them (§ 264). 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 recalled; 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, on excitement being (as it were) driven-out by another. Such patients are among those whose treatment requires the nicest care, but who may be most benefited by judicious influences. Nothing else is requisite, than that they should exercise an adequate amount of self-control; but the best-directed moral treatment cannot enforce this, if the patient does not himself (or herself) co-operate. Much may be effected, however, as in the education of children, by presenting adequate motives to self-control; and the more frequently this is exercised, the more easy does the excitement become. — This form of Insanity is particularly common among females of naturally "quick temper," who, by not placing an habitual restraint upon themselves, gradually cease to retain any command over it. The Writer well remembers that when going with Dr. Conolly through one of the wards on the female side of the Lunatic Asylum at Hanwell, Dr. C. remarked to him,—"It is my belief that two-thirds of the women here have come to require restraint, through the habitual indulgence of an originally bad temper."

556. 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 weakness 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.

557. 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. For whilst the Law of England only recognizes as irresponsible, on the ground of Insanity, those who are incapable of distinguishing right from wrong, or of recognizing the consequences of their acts, it is unquestionable that many criminal actions are committed under the irresistible dominance of some insane impulse, the individual being at the time perfectly aware of the evil nature of those actions, and of his amenability to punishment for them.

The following very characteristic example of the Homicidal form of impulsive insanity, was given in the Report of the Morning-side (Edinburgh) Lunatic Asylum for the year 1836. -The case was that of a female, who was not affected with any disorder of her Intellectual powers, and who laboured under no delusions or hallucinations, but who was tormented by a simple abstract desire to kill, or rather, for it took a specific form, to strangle. She made repeated attempts to effect her purpose, attacking all and sundry, even her own nieces and other relatives; indeed, it seemed to be a matter of indifference to her whom she strangled, so that she succeeded in killing some one. She recovered, under strict discipline, so much self-control as to be permitted to work in the washing-house and laundry; but she still continued to assert that she 'must do it,' that she was 'certain she would do it some day,'—that she could not help it, that 'surely no one had ever suffered as she had done,'—was not here 'an awful case,'—and, approaching any one, she would gently bring her hand near their throat, and say wildly and persuasively, 'I would just like to do it.' She frequently expressed a wish that all the men and women in the world had only one neck, that she might strangle it. Yet this female had kind and amiable dispositions, was beloved by her fellow-patients, so much so that one of them insisted on sleeping with her, although she herself declared that she was afraid she would not be able to resist the impulse to get up during the night and strangle her. She had been a very pious woman, exemplary in her conduct, very fond of attending prayer-meetings, and of visiting the sick, praying with them and reading the Scriptures, or repeating to them the sermons she had heard. It was the second attack of Insanity. During the former she had attempted suicide. The disease was hereditary, and it may be believed that she was strongly predisposed to mental impulses of this character, when it was stated that her sister and mother both committed suicide. There could be no doubt as to the sincerity of her moral desire. She was brought to the Institution under very severe restraint, and the parties who brought her were under great alarm upon the restraint being removed. After its removal, she made repeated and very determined attacks upon the other patients, the attendants, and the officers of the Asylum, and was only brought to exercise sufficient self-control by a system of rigid discipline. This female was perfectly conscious of her impulses, and was only brought to exercise sufficient self-control by a system of rigid discipline. This female was perfectly conscious of her impulses, and was only brought to exercise sufficient self-control by a system of rigid discipline. This female was perfectly conscious of her impulses, and was only brought to exercise sufficient self-control by a system of rigid discipline. This female was perfectly conscious of her impulses, and was only brought to exercise sufficient self-control by a system of rigid discipline. This female was perfectly conscious of her impulses, and was only brought to exercise sufficient self-control by a system of rigid discipline. This female was perfectly conscious of her impulses, and was only brought to exercise sufficient self-control by a system of rigid discipline.
Of Insanity.

uncontrollable impulse to do what she knows to be wrong, and deeply deplorable.

Such impulses may drive the subjects of them to kill, to commit a rape, to steal, to burn, and so on, without any malicious feeling towards the persons injured; and many instances have occurred, in which the individuals thus affected have voluntarily withdrawn themselves from the circumstances of whose exciting influence they were conscious, and have even begged to be put under restraint.

558. It is a remarkable fact, moreover, and one that strikingly confirms the view of the nature of Emotional states which has been previously advocated (§ 290), that the insane impulse appears to be not infrequently the expression of a dominant idea, with which there is no such association of pleasurable feeling as makes the action prompted by it an object of desire, but which operates by taking full possession of the mind, and by forcing the body (so to speak) into the movements which express it. The individual thus affected regards himself as the victim of a recently which he cannot resist, and may be perfectly conscious (as when the impulse proceeds from a strong desire) that what he is doing will be injurious to others or to himself. This state bears a close resemblance to that of the Biological "subject," who is peremptorily told, "You must do this," and does it accordingly (§ 454); and it is one that is particularly liable to be induced in persons who habitually exercise but little Volitional control over the direction of their thoughts, by the influence of suggestions from without, and especially by occurrences which take a strong hold of their attention.

a. To this condition are to be referred many of the Insane actions which are commonly set down to the account of "imitation." This term would be best restricted to that state of mind, in which there is an intention to imitate; for what is called "involuntary imitation" is merely the expression of the fact, that the consciousness of the performance of a certain act by one individual gives rise to a tendency to its performance by the other (§ 239 b, c), as in the case of the act of yawning. So, the commission of suicide or homicide, after an occurrence of the same kind which has previously fixed itself strongly upon the attention, is an idea-motor action, prompted by a suggesting idea. Thus, it is well known that after the suicide of Lord Castlereagh, a large number of persons destroyed themselves in a similar manner. Within a week after the "Pentonville Tragedy," in which a man cut the throats of his four children, and then hanged himself, there were two similar occurrences elsewhere. After the trial of Henriette Cornier for child-murder, which excited a considerable amount of public discussion on the question of homicidal insanity, Esquirol was consulted by numerous mothers, who were haunted by a propensity to destroy their offspring.

b. The following is a remarkable example of the sudden domination of an evil impulse, to which no tendency seems to have been previously experienced, and which appears to have been altogether devoid of any emotional character. Dr. Oppenhein, of Hamburg, having received for dissection the body of a man who had committed suicide by cutting his throat, but who had done this in such a manner that his death did not take place until after an interval of great suffering, jokingly remarked to his attendant, "If you have any fancy to cut your throat, don't do it in such a hasty way as this; a little more to the left here, and you will cut the carotid artery." The individual to whom this dangerous advice was addressed, was a sober, steady man, with a family and a comfortable subsistence; he had never manifested the slightest tendency to suicide, and had no motive to commit it. Yet, strange to say, the sight of the corpse, and the observation made by Dr. O., suggested to his mind the idea of self-destruction; and this took such firm hold of him that he carried it into execution, fortunately, however, without duly profiting by the anatomical instructions he had received; for he did not cut the carotid, and recovered.

559. In most forms of Monomania, however, there is more or less of disorder in the ideational process, leading to the formation of positive delusions or hallucinations, that is to say, of fixed beliefs or dominant ideas which are palpably inconsistent with
Of Insanity.

reality. These delusions, however, are not attributable to original perversions of the reasoning process, but arise out of the perverted Emotional state. This gives rise, in the first place, to a mis-interpertation of actual facts or occurrences, in accordance with the prevalent state of the feelings (§ 264). Thus, a lunatic who is possessed with an exaggerated feeling of his own importance, may suppose himself to be a sovereign prince; and under the influence of this dominant idea, looks upon the place of his confinement as his palace, believes his keepers to be his obsequious officers, and his fellow-patients to be his obedient subjects; the plainest fare is converted into a banquet of the choicest dainties, and the most homely dress into royal apparel. His condition, therefore, closely corresponds with that of a Biologist subject, whose mind may become possessed for a time by similar ideas through the influence of external suggestion (§ 435), and who is now unacquainted with their discordance with objective realities, because the force with which the consciousness is impressed by the latter, is less than that with which it is acted-on by the former.

Now and then, perhaps, the Lunatic, like the Biological subject, is visited by a gleam of common-sense, which enables him to view certain objects in their true light, so that he becomes sensible of some inconsistency between his real and his imaginary condition; as when a patient in a Scotch pauper-lunatic asylum, after dilating upon the imaginary splendours of his regal state, confessed that there was one thing which he could not quite comprehend, namely, that all his food tasted of oatmeal! In a more advanced state of the disorder, however, ideas which have had their origin in the imagination alone, and which it has at first presented faintly and transiently, are habitually dwelt on in consequence of the interest with which they are invested; and at last become realities to the consciousness of the Ego, simply because he does not bring them to the test of actual experience.

Emotional Origin of Delusions.

a. The Writer remembers to have heard the following case from Dr. A. T. Thomson:—He was requested to see a gentleman whose friends were desirous of placing him under restraint, being well assured of his Insanity from the supervision of uncontrollable outbursts of temper (to which he had never previously given way), though they could find no estimable ground in his conversation or actions, which would legally justify the use of coercive measures. Several medical men had been consulted, who had failed to obtain any such justification, notwithstanding that they had employed all the means which their experience dictated for gaining an insight into the nature of his disorder. Dr. Thomson having been introduced to him as a scientific man in whose conversation he would feel interested, was struck, on entering the room, with the evidence of paroxysms of violent passion afforded by the shivering of a large pier-glass, the fracture of the arms and legs of chairs, and other damages to the handsome furniture of the apartments; and he felt convinced that there was some perversion of this gentleman’s feelings or intellect, which it was his business to discover. For this purpose he directed the conversation into a great variety of channels; and being himself a man of very comprehensive information and fluent speech, and finding a ready response on the other side, he ran through a great variety of topics in the course of a couple of hours. He said that he had never enjoyed a more agreeable or instructive conversation; his patient being evidently a gentleman of great attainments in literature, science, and art, and having a mind original as well as pleasing manner of expressing himself upon every subject that came before him. Dr. Thomson was beginning to despair of finding out the mystery of his disorder, when it chanced that Animal Magnetism was adverted to on which the patient began to speak of an influence which some of his relatives had acquired over him by this agency, described in the most vehement language the sufferings he endured through their means, and vowed vengeance against his persecutors with such terrible excitement, that it was obviously necessary, alike for their security and his own welfare, that he should be placed under restraint.

Here, it is obvious, the Emotional excitement was the essence of the disorder, and the Intellectual delusion was merely the expression of it.

560. This view of the Emotional source of most, if not all, of
Emotional Origin of Delusions.

671

Of Insanity.

The delusions of the Insane, occurred to the Writer in early life, through having had his attention strongly drawn to a case in which he had the opportunity of observing from its commencement the progressive formation of such delusions, and in which the varying tenacity of their hold over the intellectual belief (which sometimes appeared disposed to get rid of them) corresponded exactly with the varying degrees of intensity of the dominant emotion. His subsequent experience of other forms of Monomania, and the results of his inquiries among those who have made Insanity their special study, have fully confirmed this view.

That Dr. Skene remarks in the "Morningide Report" for 1833, that "nothing can be farther from the truth, than to believe that in every case of Insanity there must be some delusion, or some perturbation of the Intellect. Of all the features of Insanity, morbid impulses, emotions, and feelings, and the loss of control over them, are the most essential and constant. Delusions, illusions, and hallucinations are, comparatively speaking, the accidental concomitants of the disease. The former, perhaps, invariably accompany the invasion of disease: the latter are frequently only developed during its progress, and are sometimes never present at all."

It is not a little interesting, in this connexion, as well as in the additional relation which it indicates between Insanity and the various phases of Delirium, Dreaming, &c., that the particular delusions seem often to be suggested by accidental circumstances, the mind being previously under the influence of some morbid tendency which has given the general direction to the thoughts. Thus we find it mentioned in the "Morningide Report" for 1830, that the Queen's public visit to Scotland seemed to give a special direction to the ideas of several individuals who became insane at that period, the attack of insanity being itself in some instances traceable to the excitement produced by that event. One of the patients, who was affected with puerperal mania, believed that, in consequence of her confinement having taken place on such a remarkable occasion, she must have given birth to a person of royal or divine dignity. During the religious excitement which prevailed at the time of the "disruption" of the Scottish Church, an unusually large number of patients were admitted into the various asylums of Scotland, labouring under delusions connected with religious

given; the disorder having here also doubtless commenced in an exaggeration of this class of feelings, and the erroneous beliefs having been formed under their influence. Again, in the Report of the same Institution for 1831, it is stated that, as in former instances, "the current topics of the day gave colouring and form to the delusions of the disordered fancy. We have thus had no less than five individuals admitted during the year, who believe themselves the victims of Mesmeric agency (a sort of "Mesmeric mania" having been prevalent in Edinburgh during that period); "three of the inmates talked much of the diggings; and one of them arrived at the persuasion that his body was transmuted into gold."

561. Every one who observes the ordinary working of his own mind, must be aware how differently he looks at the very same occurrences, according to the state of feeling he is in at the time; and no judicious man will allow himself to act upon any conclusion he may have formed under the influence of emotional excitement. It is, in fact, in the prevalence and exaggeration of some emotional tendency, leading to an erroneous interpretation of everything that may be in any way related to it, that Insanity very frequently commences; and it is in this stage that a strong effort at self-control may be exerted with effect, not merely in keeping down the exaggerated emotion, but in determinately directing the thoughts into another channel. For there can be no doubt that while the tendency to brood upon a particular class of ideas and on the feelings connected with them, gives them, if this tendency be habitually yielded to, an increasing dominancy, so that they at last take full possession of the mind, overmaster the will, and consequently direct the conduct, there is a stage in which the will has a great power of preserving the right balance, by steadily resisting the "brooding" tendency, calling off the attention from the contemplation of ideas which ought not to be entertained (§ 271), and directing it into some entirely different channel.

The records of Crime abound in cases in which murder or attempt
to murder has been committed under the dominance of an idea or feeling, that ‘has taken such complete possession of the mind, as to render the Ego no longer morally responsible for his act at the time of its commission; but for which act he is nevertheless remotely responsible (like the drunkard, § 549), because he has allowed himself to become thus possessed, when the means of escape lay in his own power. And in the infliction of punishment, the same principle ought to be applied to both cases—that of bringing the strongest possible deterrent motives to bear upon the minds of those who are meditating such criminalities.

An extremely good example of the deterrent influence of a judiciously-devised punishment, was afforded by the step which was put to the repeated alarms to which the Queen was subjected, after the real attempt upon her life made by Oxford. The motive in his case seemed to be nothing else than morbid vanity; which was gratified by his being tried for high-treason, and made an object of public notoriety. Being found “not guilty” on the ground of Insanity (to which it was proved that he had an hereditary predisposition), and being placed in Bethlem Hospital as a lunatic, no corrective impression as to punishment was made upon the class from which he sprang; and the like morbid love of notoriety led one young fellow after another to threaten the life of the Queen, by presenting pistols or other weapons when she appeared in public. In order to protect her from the repetition of this outrage, a bill was carried through the Legislature in the shortest possible time, making the offence of possessing any fire-arm at the Queen (even if unloaded), a disgraceful one, to be punished with whipping; and no more was heard of such attempts for many years, the next attempt—that of Lieutenant Pate—being the result of “brooding” over some fancied injuries.

562. It is singular how closely the ordinary history of the access of Monomania corresponds with that of intoxication by Hachis. A man who has been for some time under the strain of severe mental labour, perhaps with the addition of emotional excitement, breaks down in mental and bodily health; and becomes subject to morbid ideas, of whose abnormal character he is in the first instance quite aware. He may see spectral illusions, but he knows that they are illusive. He may hear imaginary conversations, but is conscious that they are empty words. He feels an extreme depression of spirits, but is willing to attribute this to some physical cause. He exhibits an excessive irritability of temper, but is conscious of his irascibility and endeavours to restrain it. He has strange thoughts respecting those who are most dear to him, suspects his wife of infidelity, his children of wilful disobedience; his most intimate friends of injurious designs; but he has still intelligence enough to question the validity of these suspicions, and shrinks from giving them permanent lodgment in his breast. Dark visions of future ruin and disgrace fit before him; but he may refuse to contemplate them, may be reasoned into the admission of their utter baselessness, and may second the efforts of his friends to direct his thoughts and feelings into a different channel. It is in this stage that change of scene, the withdrawal from painful associations, the invigoration of the bodily health, and the direction of the mental activity towards any subject that has a healthful attraction for it, exert a most beneficial influence (§ 271-2); and there can be no doubt that many a man has been saved from an attack of Insanity, by the resolute determination of his Will not to yield to his morbid tendencies. But if he should give way to these tendencies, and should dwell upon his morbid ideas instead of endeavouring to escape from them, they come at last to acquire a complete mastery over him; and his Will, his Common sense, and his Moral sense, as last succumb to their domination. The visual appearances which he at first dismissed as unreal, become to his mind objects of actual sight; the airy words are conversations which he distinctly hears, and to which he gives full credence, however repugnant their import may be to his sober sense; his suspicions of wife, children, and friends acquire the force of certainties, although they may not have the slightest basis of reality; the conviction of impending ruin is ever
before him, and he makes no effort to escape from it; no reasoning can now dispel his delusions; no proof, however clear to the same mind, can demonstrate the groundlessness of his notions. His temper, now entirely uncontrolled, becomes more and more irritable; the slightest provocations occasion the most violent outbursts; and these are excited, not merely by the exaggeration or misinterpretation of actual occurrences, but by the fictions of his own imagination. No conception can be too obviously fallacious or absurd, as judged by the sound intellect, to command his assent and govern his actions; for when the directing power of the Will is altogether lost, he is as incapable as a Biologised or Hypnotised subject, of testing his ideas by their conformity to the general result of his previous experience (§ 451), or of keeping his emotions under due control.

565. But, it may be said, if Insanity be the expression of disordered physical action of the Cerebrum, it is inconsistent to expect that a man can control this by any effort of his own; or that moral treatment can have any efficacy in the restoration of mental health. Those, however, who have followed the course of the argument expounded in this Treatise, will have no difficulty in reconciling the two orders of facts. For whilst the disordered physical action of the Cerebrum, when once established, puts the automatic action of his mind altogether beyond the control of the Ego, there is frequently a stage in which he has the power of so directing and controlling that action, as to prevent the establishment of the disorder; just as, in the state of perfect health, he has the power of forming habits of Mental action, to which the nutrition of the Brain responds, so as ultimately to render them automatic (§§ 287, 288). And so, the judicious Physician, in the treatment of an insane patient, whilst doing everything he can to invigorate the bodily health, to ward off sources of mental disturbance, and to divert the current of thought and feeling from a morbid into a healthful channel, will solicately watch for every opportunity of fostering the power of self-control, will seek out the motives most likely to act upon the individual, will bring these into play upon every suitable occasion, will approve and reward its successful exercise, will sympathise with failure even when having recourse to the restraint which it has rendered necessary, will encourage every renewed exertion, and will thus give every aid he can to the re-acquaintal of that Volitional direction, which, as the bodily malady abates, is alone needed to prevent the recurrence of the disordered mental action. It is when the patient has so far recovered, as to be capable of being made to feel that he can do what he ought, if he will only try, that moral treatment becomes efficacious. And thus the judicious Physician, when endeavouring either to ward-off or to cure Mental disorder, brings to bear upon his patient exactly the same power as that which is exerted by an Educator of the highest type (§ 190, m). Each has the high prerogative of calling into exercise that element in Man's nature which is the noblest gift of his Creator, enabling him to turn to the best account whatever mental endowments he may possess, "for the glory of God, and the good of Man's estate."