On Idiocy.


March. 1856
On Idiocy

There is no rank of society in which we do not find this unhappy state of the human mind. It is said, and doubtless with truth, that no town is without one of these wretched beings cut apart from his fellow-creatures, either a confirmed Idiot, or a harmless imbecile, a human being without human reasoning powers. Speaking to two clergymen who have the pastoral care of two not very extensive parishes in the east of Fife, I once heard one tell me that he had three Idiots, and the other two within his bounds. But who has not seen the “Daft Wullies” and “foul Kets” in every town of Scotland and England, who are almost encouraged as appendages to the place, and live by the liberality excited by compassion? Often, too, at the cottage door, we see the more dreadful form of Idiocy, the helpless paralytic, strapped in his chair, in summer basking in the sun, or vegetating in the “ingle near” in winter. This class in particular seems to be looked upon with a kind
if respect and awe by the lower orders, as if some charm hung about them.

But it is not to the lower classes of society alone that this awful ailment is confined; amongst the highest of the land it is by no means uncommon to hear of such cases, generally carefully kept in the background, beings to whom it would make no difference whether they lived in a palace or a poor's house.

In the case of the idiot we find the most inexplicable, not only medical, but moral phenomena. In the shape of humanity, the creature yet wants that intellectuality to which all men are heirs; deprived of this birthright, the idiot might be esteemed on a level with the brute creation, were it not that he seems to want the instinct which minister to the preservation of these animal life.

Under the head of idiocy I propose to consider, firstly, Amentia or Congenital Idiocy; and secondly, Amentia or Acquired Idiocy, with its modification Imbecility.
I. Amentia, or Congenital Idiocy.

Pinel makes Amentia the fourth class of mental alienations. He defines it as "une sorte de stupidité plus ou moins prononcée, un esprit très borné d'idées, et une nullité de caractère." In another part he calls it a partial or total abolition of the intellectual and active faculties. He means it is "that condition of the human brain, which from a sounder cause in the bodily organization, remains doubtful or undeveloped, so that the person is incapable of self guidance, or of approaching to that degree of knowledge usual with others of his age."

Dr. Yatichaud makes the following distinction between Idiocy and Mania: "The idiot cannot reason, the madman reasons falsely: the idiot acts from animal appetency, he has no will: the madman wills, but his reason being vitiated, his actions are not suitable to the actual relations of society. Idiocy is defined in the hypomnesia francia to be a defective perception and recognition of objects."
In every case of congenital Idiocy some defect in the shape or size of the head is perceptible, rendering a full development of the moral and intellectual powers impossible; nor can we describe the various shades of imperfect intelligence by which the defective organization of the brain is indicated.

Not only the mental, but also the bodily perceptions are frequently imperfect; touch is by no means so delicate as in the case, and even in the case of Idiots blind from birth. The lowest class of Idiots is certainly far below the level of the beasts; for a dog forms an attachment to his master, and understands orders conveyed by signs and even by sounds; but in the Idiot no vestige of intelligence can he discovered; very frequently paralytic, the power of speech is either wanting, or so slightly developed as to be of no service, and the senses of taste and smell are equally imperfect; he depends on another for everything, even the most animal offices. This, of course, is the picture of the very lowest class of these unfortunate. But congenital Idiocy is met with in shapes by no means so revolting—Many, in fact, the greater proportion, speak and hear although imperfectly; some are active and can be persuaded to work; they recognize friends, and
avoid persons disagreeable to them: I have met with some who have an idea of time. In some but the very lowest class do you find the knowledge of the existence of a God altogether wanting. If you address them on the subject it is curious and affecting to see the effect produced. If, but the moment before, they have been in high spirits, laughing and pleased, yet if the subject be broached, the face suddenly assumes a serious aspect, and an undefined feeling of awe seems to pervade them. In the most complete dress I ever saw, there seemed to have grown an affection for his muse; and several evinced sorrow and concern on the death of Mr. Christie, late governor of the East Side of the Edinburgh poor-house, whose invariable kindness to those under his charge seemed to have endeared him to many. How many, who are deprived of reason, attach themselves to dumb creatures? Chumming their fellow creatures whom they feel are inferior to them; they associate with birds and animals, entering into all their peculiarities and habits, and seemingly even establishing a means of communicating their wishes to each other.
Although it is difficult to classify Idiot patients by the intensity of their symptoms, yet such a division as the following might not be unsensible—

1. Those who have no idea of a Supreme Being.
2. Those who have an idea of a Supreme Being.
3. Those who are capable of instruction.

1st. Those who have no idea of a God. This doubtless, may be taken as a criterion of the lowest class of Idiots. Although I have never had an opportunity of examining an Idiot so low in the scale of humanity as that described by Pinel &c., yet those excited in the Workhouse of Edinburgh, till within the last few months, a patient who may be taken as a very fair example of the class.

Francis Mc Luc, Oct 34, (A.D. 1854). This poor creature came of a family in which the taciturn tendency was very well marked. His lower limbs were perfectly paralytic and atrophied, the hips drawn up to a right angle with the knees, his usual position was leaning on the right arm, swaying the upper part of his body too and fro with a kind of see-saw motion, sitting a seeming to stare at the fire. He was quite dumb, and hearing very imperfect. His eyes were never fixed on one object for any length of time. Bi-sight was not more than five minutes. The measurements
of his head were as follows—Circumference, 18¼ inches; from meatus auditus externus of one side to that of the other side, across corona, 9 inches; from root of nose to occipital protuberance across the skull 11½ inches. Occipital region from meatus to meatus 6½ inches. Frontal region from meatus to meatus 8½ inches. Long diameter 6½ inches. Short diameter 4½ inches. He required to be fed, and all animal duties were performed for him. Yet, he seemed to feel a kind of affection for the nurse of his ward, crying when she left the room; and fear for the man who used to shave and wash him. He was very subject to epileptic fits. A sketch of a cast of his head taken after death is annexed.

This was the lowest specimen of human nature I have met with; at least, I have had the opportunity of carefully examining. Indeed it must be seldom that a fellow creature is found so debased as to possess not one spark of human nature.

The lowest idiot, even one of this class, is often seen to be contentious, or amatory, or fond of making acquisitions of imaginary value: his desire for food is usually great and indiscriminate. In that "lazy discourse, looking before and after", he is utterly wanting.
Those who have an idea of a God - I cannot but think that this might be taken as the leading symptom of the second class of Idiots. This class often exhibit vanity and cunning, but seldom seem to attain the higher faculties or qualities of benevolence or attention. Their perceptions are generally feeble; some of the faculties by which man forms ideas and communicates them to others, abandons the idea of phenomena, and reasons upon them, almost wholly deficient. Indeed, they differ but little from the first class except in the possession of the simple idea above mentioned. They are, however, very widely separated from the next class, as it is perfectly impossible to instil into them the simplest instruction, mental or manual. There are three cases of this nature in the Pond's house, one of which follows.

Elizabeth Ojilvy. Oct 36. (A. D. 1854.) is of a very happy temperament, so much so that she has acquired the name of "Topsey." She knows some of the people about her, by name and sight, and says that she believes in a God and a Saviour, seemingly becoming and at the mention of either name even during one of her fits of movement. She was taught the alphabet, or the simplest lesson either manual or mental. - The measurements of her head are...
as follows. Circumference, 19 inches; across crown, 9 ½ inches; from vertex to occipital protuberance 11 ½ inches; occipital region from vertex to vertex, 7 ½ inches; frontal ridge, 9 ½ inches; long diameter 6 ½ inches; short diameter, 4 ½ inches. Since these measurements were taken, she died; the weight of her brain was.

This patient, though certainly very low in the scale of humanity, seemed to show a higher organization than the last case cited, which I cannot help associating with the idea of a supreme being, right as that idea must have been.

3. Those who are capable of receiving instruction.

In this class we frequently meet with curious instances of memory, knowledge of time &c. By patient and experienced teachers the pupil may be taught to read and write with tolerable precision. It is usually more difficult to teach them arithmetic, or any other branch of instruction which requires a train of reasoning, accurate attention, comparison, and judgment. The members of this class generally recognize their friends, and seem much pleased by any slight attention or notice. As an instance of their section I may mention the case of Margaret Stewart, Oct. 31 (A.D. 1857) residing in the Edinburgh Provinthouse. She has been in the house since she was ten years of
In this class, the knowledge of the existence of a Supreme Being is of course present.
She has been taught to read and write, and to count a little; but hesitates, and seems undecided when she attempts either; she has been trained to housework, and assists in many household duties; she has also a wonderful memory, at one time being able to repeat the whole of the 119th Psalm without great correctness; she sings well, and occasionally conducts the psalmody in chapel. Her head is remarkably small and ill shaped. The measurements are as follows: circumference, 19 ½ inches; from ear to ear across corona, 11 ½ inches; from root of nose to occipital protuberance across the skull, 11 ½ inches; occipital upon from metatars to metatars, 9 inches; frontal ditto, 11 ½ inches; long diameter, 7 ½ inches; short ditto, 5 ½ inches.

A very promising case is that of Jessie Jamieson, Oct. 17 (A.D. 1876), who was admitted three years ago; she had had no instructions previous to entering the workhouse; since then she has attended the school of that establishment, and learned to read, write, and count. The improvement is good, but slow; her memory is tolerable. Her head is ill shaped; its dimensions are as follows: circumference, 20 inches; from ear to ear across corona, 12 inches; from root of nose to occipital protuberance, 11 ¼ inches; occipital upon from metatars to metatars, 9 ½ inches; frontal ditto, 10 ½ inches.
Long diameter, 7/2 inches; short diameter, 6/2 inches.

I am well aware that many objections may be raised to a division like this; but still the above seem the leading features in the symptoms of the different grades of Sti век, and the only ones by which you can divide the subjects of the malady.

Pindel recommends that the head of the Apollo Belvidère should be taken as a model of the perfectly formed human head. Although it is very seldom that such perfection is met with, yet you will generally find in the same a completely different configuration from those who suffer from a congenital deficiency of intellect. This applies more particularly to the frontal region; for it is not very uncommon to meet with an idiot with a round, or what is vulgarly called a "bullet-head," resembling in every respect the occipital and parietal region of many cases. In his remarks, "there are a great number of beings brought into the world so deformed, that it is apparent they must be idiots, and so feeble that they do not live through infancy.

The following are the more general malformations:
all of which I have noticed amongst the patients of the Edinburgh Poors' house.  

1st. The head is contracted laterally and in front. This is the most common, and along with the 2nd malformation characterizes a very low class of idiots.  

2nd. The forehead is more or less depressed - the sketch on the line instance this malformation. The plates of Spurinck, Pintel &c. figure it to an extent I never saw. L.  

3rd. The occipital region depressed, so as to form nearly a right angle with the base of the occipital bone.  

4th. The apex of the head frequently presents a conical shape.  

5th. The apex is occasionally found very flat and depressed.  

6th. The head rarely approximates to the normal shape. When this is found, the degree ofidity is low, and generally the animal passions are strong.  

7th. The head is nearly spherical. This also denotes a low degree of idiocy.  

Inserted are two drawings, No. 1, very well exemplifying the depressed, low, and contracted forehead, with the conical apex. This is the case of the head of Francis McTune, whose case has been already mentioned.
On the inside of the calvarium, at the internal point corresponding with the extreme apex externally, a considerable depression was found, with a corresponding elevation outside, caused by a Pacchionian gland, as large as a full sized pea. This are the casts of the head of Elizabeth Gravetter, which is of great size, in fact Dr. Gowers says it is the largest head he ever saw.

The general rule is that the Idiot's head is smaller than those of ordinary beings, the facial region having a very large proportion to the cranial; still they may be small with equal and superior in eye to the same head. Dr. Gowers has stated in general terms that the results of his experiments and measurements show that there are no dimensions of the head, except extreme diminutiveness that can be relied on as a criterion of idiocy; indeed a few of his cases are those in which the head approaches to the normal size and shape. Judging from the cases in the following table this opinion seems well founded as with the exception of Dr. Lure, there with the smallest heads by no means exhibited the worst symptoms of the malady; Dr. Gravetter who has without doubt the largest, is inferior to some of
The test is intellect.

The following is a tabular view of the measurements of the heads of twelve congenital idiots in the Edinburgh Workhouse.

1. indicates the circumference. 2. from metatis orbis of one side to that of the other across the skull.
3. from root of ear to occipital prominence across the skull. 4. occipital region from metatis to metatis.
5. frontal sphen. 6. long diameter. 7. short sphen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Measurements in Inches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Francis McLean</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18 1/4 9 11 1/2 11 3/4 8 1/2 6 3/4 4 3/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliza Violette</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>19 9 11 3/4 11 1/2 9 1/2 6 1/2 4 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac Williamson</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22 11 13 8 11 7 3/4 5 1/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Jamieson</td>
<td></td>
<td>18 1/4 10 11 1/2 7 1/2 9 6 4 1/2</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. M. Lee</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23 11 1/2 14 8 1/2 11 3/4 7 3/4 5 1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliza B. Sprutten</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20 11 1/2 13 9 11 1/2 7 1/2 6 3/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Stewart</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19 1/2 11 1/2 9 10 1/2 7 1/2 5 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary O'Hara</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19 1/2 11 1/4 8 1/2 11 7 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliza Forest</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>19 11 11 10 11 1/2 7 1/2 5 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessie Jamieson</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20 11 1/2 11 3/4 9 1/2 10 1/2 7 1/2 5 1/2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jean Blair</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>18 1/4 13 12 1/2 8 1/2 11 1/2 7 1/2 5 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessie Blair</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>19 1/2 11 1/2 12 1/2 9 10 1/2 7 3/4 5 1/2</td>
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</tbody>
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Average: 19 1/2 11 1/4 12 1/2 8 1/2 10 1/2 7 1/2 5 1/2.
It is not so much the size as the shape of the head which should be taken as a criterion; for although it has been stated that patients having heads approximating to the natural form are very low in the scale, yet these cases are so very few and so very far between, as to form no comparison with the ultimate forms of dwarfism, with those with ill-formed heads. Indeed in one case in which the head was opened, although the exterior presents nothing very odd in its appearance in shape or size, yet the calvarium was entirely thick and dense, particularly at internal points corresponding with the temples externally; so much so, that if at these places, the line had been traced to the thickness of the rest of the skull, a very ill-shaped head would have been produced. As with the large head, hence, it will be found that the calvarium is very thick and dense, forming a receptacle for the brain by no means large, there a skull measuring an inch or an inch and a half more in circumference would there be doubt but that the Edict head in general is smaller than an animal, but appears little less than it really is from its peculiar shape and the proportion of the cranial parts to the face.
Dr. Gull has laid it down as a rule that when
the first measurement is less than seventeen
inches, and the third less than eleven, the Amentia
is almost always complete. Of the twelve cases
in the table of 331 cases in the Edinburgh Poorhouse,
there are some the circumference of whose head
is less than than 18 3/4 inches, nor the third less
than 11 inches; still most of these are very
low in the scale. Dr. Gull also states that when
the measurements are less than the figures mentioned
above, the case is sure to be one of the very lowest
classes.

Some of the measurements of the cases I have cited
are as small as those laid down by most writers
as certainly productive of Idiocy; but this may,
to some extent, depend on the thickening of the
skull which is so frequently found in cases of
Amentia. This is supposed by Landal to be
caused by Chronic Hydrocephalus, which acts on
the bones of the skull in two ways: either con-
deressing them soft and their: or causing increase
in thickness. The latter result is brought about
by the cavity, left between the internal surface
of the calvarium and the membranes, by the absorption
of the fluid, gradually becoming filled up by a
Deposition of new bone, membranous interspaces being left between the laminae of new bone, which, if the patient arrive at adult age, are filled up by osseous bone, as has been shown by Rudolphii and Brechet. The bones in such cases are of ivory hardness. Encephalium and opisthocranion are said to produce the same effect, but these diseases could hardly interfere with the internal surface of the calvarium so as to affect the brain.

There is no doubt then that deformity of the skull is almost invariably accompanied by disease. This deformity, principally affecting the anterior regions, the seat of the intellectual faculties, is of course most affected. In some few cases of which post-mortem examinations were made in the Edinburgh Workhouse, the brain presented very various appearances. In some the cerebral substance was of abnormally consistence, in others a firmness was present. In the case of Mr. E the brain was abnormally firm, the convolutions were and regular, the anterior lobes small; the cerebellum not out of proportion to the cerebrum, and the optic thalami and corpora striata natural. In other cases the
convolutions have appeared small and flat, whilst others have presented nothing abnormal, with the exception of diminutiveness.

Spurzheim says, "the brain of the idiot never resembles that of a sane person." Various lesions have been noticed; some authors laying great stress on the appearance of flatness of the convolutions, others on the diminution of their number.

Brechet mentions the case of a girl in whom the anterior lobes were wanting. Esquirol examined a brain of which the cortical substance was absent, and irregular granulations took the place of convolutions; the white substance of the right hemisphere was normal, that of the left was represented by a sac containing fluid. In this case the head was not smaller than natural, and normal in shape; the limbs of the right side were atrophied, and paralyzed.

Hypertrophy and atrophy of the brain seem to occur in some cases. In the latter the ventricles are narrowed, and the convolutions irregular, bunched and discoloured (Esquirol). Pott also considers that the last results are caused by softening, followed by absorption.

The microscope has as yet shown no light on
the pathology of Idiocy; several proved insane cases were examined by its aid, but nothing abnormal could be discovered.

When examined chemically the Idiot's brain is found to contain less phosphorus than that of the sane. Carpenter considers that the contents of the nerve cells and tubes consist of phosphorized fats, and that the amount of phosphorus increases in proportion to the amount of mental activity exhibited. In the case of the Idiot the phosphorus amount to about one half the quantity found in the sane brain. (Mr. Combe)
With the exception of the malformation of the head, it is impossible to state a direct cause of idiocy; so that we must be content to consider those circumstances which more particularly present themselves as associated or co-existent with that condition.

In this subject Dr. Howe has given particular attention, and has collected much valuable information tending greatly to throw light on the subject.

The first thing the observer is "the lax condition of the physical organization of one or both parents." Dr. Howe, from his researches, has come to the conclusion that parents can transmit to the offspring only such qualities and powers as actually belong to them; and that a peculiarity of organization in either parent may be, and probably will be, transmitted when the germ, or element, or principle is given to the child. He says, "if ever the race is to be relieved of the terrors of the bodily ills which flesh is now heir to, it must be a clear understanding of, and a willingness obedience to, the laws which enables parents the blessing or the curse of the children; the powers of strength, and vigor, and beauty, or the dispensers of debility, and
disease, and deformity. — A great many Idiots have one parent, at least, idiotic. It is found so Idiots, where parents were one or both idiotic or insane. If no mental impairment exist, it is all probability some cachexia can be traced, which though not very evident in the parents, becomes fully developed in the child. The hereditary taint may be looked upon as a predisposing cause, which may be productive of no effect, until called into action by an exciting cause. Idiocy, like most congenital diseases, may be dormant for one or two generations, or may be much modified, but sooner or later it is almost due to reappear, in some cases in awful strength. Dr. Stone found forty-five parents each with two idiotic children, thirteen with three, eight with five, one with seven, one with nine, and one with eleven.

The near blood-relationship of the parents may be looked upon as an undoubted exciting cause. In most families some congenital peculiarity of temper is observable; which, although it does not amount to more than peculiarity in the parent, will be very likely to be increased to actual Idiocy in the offspring, from the fact of the
Idiosyncracies of two individuals being concentrated in one. Dr. Howe made inquiry into the parentage of 359 idiots; in 17 families the parents were blood relations. In one of these families there were five idiotic children born; in five, four each; in three, three each; in two, two each; and in one, six. In these seventeen families ninety-five children were born; forty-four idiots, twelve scrofulous and puny, one deaf, and one a dwarfish, fifty-eight in all of low or imperfect health, and only thirty-seven of even tolerable health.

Intemperance of Parents. The weakness of constitution and laxity of frame induced in such parents is transmitted to the unhappy offspring, who are deficient in bodily and vital energy, and predisposed by their very organization to have a craving for alcoholic stimulants.

The parents of 145 out of 300 idiots were known to be habitual drinkers. (2nd report.)

The condition of the mothers during gestation seems to have some influence on the future of the child. Dr. Howe found that during gestation two mothers of idiots had become, two habitually intemperate, sixteen sickly and feeble, seven suffered from fright, one had
fits and received a blow on the abdomen, and another suffered from violent parturition. Attempts to procure abortion may affect the child's intellect; at least seven children were rendered idiotic, says the report, by these unsuccessful attempts. Young women thus sometimes try to get rid of their burden, or conceal their shame; not succeeding, they afterwards marry, and the child is born at the proper time, though idiotic. Other children are successively born of the same parents, and give no evidence of ill-health or unsoundness of mind. Several cases are among those alluded to; one woman had seven round children, and another had six, born in quick succession, though the eldest child of each of them, upon whom abortion had been attempted, was idiotic. (2nd Report, 94.)

These are the principal so-called causes of idiocy. In some instances the result may be looked upon as more the misfortune than the fault of the parent; but in what multitude of cases do we find the impiety, the licentious habits, and long continued and disgusting vices of the parents, the cause of endless misery to their unhappy offspring? In truth, the sin of the fathers is visited on the children, unto the third and fourth generation.
I have purposely omitted speaking of that particular form of Idiocy, called Cretinism, as it would be difficult to do so without appearing to pirate from the admirable prize thesis of Dr. Blackie, lately published. As my subject, however, would be very incomplete without some notice of it, I beg to make a few observations on some statements of Dr. Blackie, with which I can only partially agree. He seems inclined to think that Cretinism is not so rare in this country as is generally supposed, but that many, which have been considered cases of Idiocy, are in fact Cretins, and produce a few instances to support his assertions. The case of the boy living amongst the Braed Hills, (p. 1748) seems well made out; but that the idiot residing at Droaffat is a Cretin I cannot allow. I have seen the case myself, and have obtained further information on the subject from a medical man residing in the town. The head is very much deformed, very much resembling that of Dr. Linke, but it has been so from birth, and the rachitic condition which prevails most of the other bones of his body has not affected the bones of the head.

Dr. Blackie considers that the "cause of Cretinism
is to be attributed to a cachectic state of the body, which, inducing convulsions of the cranial bones, and causing them to press on the nerves at their origins, produces the phenomena of Idiocy. Now out of nearly thirty cases of Idiocy in the Workhouse of Edinburgh I am not aware of one case in which the bones of the skull were diseased, nor did I ever see a case of Idiocy complicated with pitioc. Although there are cases of Rachitic Idiots, still none of them agree with Dr. Blackies description of Catriniism. Dr. Blackie gives no distinctions between Idiocy and Catriniism, and indeed seems to think that hardly any exist; yet the great mass of Idiots in this country could only be placed under this class of congenital Idiots, as in there alone is the deformity of cranium independent of the sickness cachexia. Few, I have never found or heard of a case of Idiocy proper, true amentia, in which congenital causes could not be traced. If this be the case then all our Idiots must be looked on as congenital Idiots. But do we find the symptoms of Catriniism as described by Gegenhdi and others amongst British Idiots? By as means many, indeed the great proportion have the use
of their limbs, and, amongst those who have it, the loss much more frequently depends on paralysis than rickets. Idiocy depends on imperfect cerebral development; Cretinism, on a cachexia affecting the spine, and, though the spine affects the origin of the nerves. Indeed, it seems more than probable that Cretinism is one way in which the insidious diathesis shows itself, the general appearance of the patient, as to complexion, features, and proportions, vividly pointing out a lymphatic temperament. Another point of difference is that the deformity of Idiot crania is generally confined to the anterior and superior regions, in the Cretin exclusively to the occipital. Again, goitre, which certainly has a mysterious, but ill defined connection with Cretinism, is seldom, if ever, met with amongst Idiots of this country, except in districts where goitre is common, and by no means more amongst them than amongst the same inhabitants.

It Blackie also considers that Cretinism is found more frequently in some districts than in others; Idiots, on the other hand, are distributed far and wide, irrespective of the geological confirmation of the soil.
I doubt but that the two diseases are different, and although some few isolated cases of Cretinism may be discovered amongst the ill fed and ill clad inhabitants of the mountainous districts of Great Britain, yet in the lowlands we may be thankful that no such horrible spectacles are met with as the deformed and deformed Cretin.
2nd. Dementia, or acquired idiocy.

The general symptoms of this class of mental impairment are very much the same as those of dementia, perhaps, however, seldom, if ever, falling so low in the scale of humanity as the worst forms of congenital idiocy.

The patient suffering under dementia, very frequently has delusions of various kinds, and is liable to fits of maniacal paroxysms. Like the congenital idiot, their states are variable, but in all there is an oppression & gradual declension of the faculties. They are inattentive to surrounding objects, irritable in temper, apt to be gloomy. They may be seenrambling themselves, although seldom speaking to anyone.

The most common cause of dementia is mania, the paroxysms of which gradually lessen and lessen, the lucid moments also becoming shorter & shorter, until the patient's mind seems to settle down into hopeless idiocy. This is particularly the case in young females, afflicted with mania, which is very frequently found to degenerate into dementia. In such cases as these, however, the mind sometimes recovers its strength, as if it had been suffering under
some temporary debility of the brain. A state of this kind is induced in delicate women by menstruation and miscarriage, when temporary dementia seems to issue, which frequently disappears on the return of bodily strength. This, however, is not always the result; for the mind, in some cases, after excessive attempts at recovery followed by renewed oppression, settles into confirmed dementia. This form is very frequently confounded with melancholia; but grief and despondency have nothing to do with its production: it is merely the result of diminished power.

Melancholia, however, is frequently a cause of dementia, or rather dementia supervenes on it. The patient after the first attack of melancholy seems to sink, without any violent paroxysm, into a state of entire mental feebleness. Attempts at restoration seem to be made, lasting sometimes for hours, sometimes for a day, or at regular intervals; but every slight excitement, physical or mental, throws them further back.

A more fertile cause of dementia than melancholia is Paralysis. In cases of Paralysis the mind is variously impaired; frequently those who least physically, having mental...
liberration and vice versa. Suddenly, in the midst of his usual employments, the patient is attacked by paralysis so slight that it is hardly visible at first; but, in a short time his whole appearance is changed, and the faculties of his mind and body are seen to be much impaired; his walk becomes shambling and unsteady, somewhat resembling that of one intoxicated, the joints of the legs seem loose, and those limbs are almost dragged after him. The muscles of the face become flabby and flat, the tongue sometimes is protruded from the mouth, and speech is much impaired. At the same time all determination of character is lost; the formation of a will of his own, or the carrying out of the slightest wills seem equally impossible. There is frequent by a curious exaltation of ideas in such cases. It is thus described by Dr. Conolly. "Remembering most of the transactions which have formerly occupied his attention, retaining his family and social attachments, he cannot comprehend why he has been removed from home, and is often irritable and angry on account of the supposed injustice done to him. He even fancies himself fitter for business than he was before, and calculates the great loss he sustains by being deprived of..."
his customary employment. Every morning he
requests to be supplied with pen, ink, and paper,
and he writes letters, perhaps very well expressed,
referring to past undertakings, making statement
of accounts, and, from partial loss of memory,
claiming money as due which has long been paid.
The same letter will be written by some patients
thus affected again & again, week after week,
for months, and nearly word for word each time;
but neither in the letters, nor in conversation, is any
incoherence for a time exhibited. Subsequently, the
usual exaltation of ideas in these paralytic cases
emerges on the first, & fatal impairment, the
patient being, even from the first, disqualified
from all future efficient exertion. Pure external
delusions follow; phlegmatism passes into incoherence,
and the indecency of the mind extends onwards
to the dementia in which life closes." — This, of
course, is a picture of the very worst form of the
disease. Many paralytic patients although unable
to take part in the ordinary active duties of life,
still act and speak sensibly on most subjects,
and the impairment remains slight for a lengthy
period if they be carefully protected from anxiety
and turmoil. The principal symptoms seem to
be in decision of character, quickness of temper, & a peculiar kind of hesitation which seems to pervade all their actions.

Epilepsy is a very ripe cause of Dementia; the stapes and symptoms of the disease being exactly the same as those noticed when Dementia ensues on Mania.

Blows on the head, fractures or depressions of the calvarium, and loss of cerebral substance induce Dementia characterized by great irritability of temper.

In Mr. Syme's words I saw a case of a man a whose head a heavy iron weight had fallen from a considerable height, the sharp edge causing fracture and depression of the bone. The epipodes were extracted or clipped off with the cutting forceps, and the membranes found to be uninjured. The wound of the scalp healed well, leaving an opening in the substance of the left parietal bone about two inches and a half in length, and three quarters of an inch in breadth, which, of course, being closed, the brain being protected by strong divisions of the surrounding scalp. Although exhibiting no very positive signs of Dementia, still a peculiarity might be observed, especially in the rapidity of his actions, the limbs seeming
to part when called into play. He, also, would not look you straight in the face, but his eyes were always wandering and unsteady. The nurse told me that his temple had become very irritable and overheating, and that he often gave way to violent passions. It would have been very interesting to have watched this case, but the patient, on leaving the Infirmary, went to a distant part of the country, and, of course, was lost sight of. The same symptoms have frequently been observed in the cases of soldiers wounded in the head. Epilepsies in living, dizziness, unnatural voices, old age, and extreme intensity tend to produce dementia.

Esquirol divides dementia into two species, simple and complicated, each species having four varieties. The proportions of poor women to affected in La Salpêtrière, and of those in his private establishment, who are persons of in good circumstances, and of both sexes, he has thus arranged...
Table of the species of Dementia.

Simple Species.

1. Acute Dementia ................................ 43 11
2. Chronic Dementia ................................ 32
3. Senile Dementia ................................... 2
4. Intermittent Dementia ............................... 2

Complicated Species.

1. Melancholic Dementia ............................... 20
2. Maniacal Dementia ................................ 8
3. Convulsive Dementia ................................ 6
4. Epileptic Dementia ................................. 30 in 284 Epileptics.

Table of Ages when Dementia occurred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>La Salpêtrière</th>
<th>En Esquirov</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>La Salpêtrière</th>
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In relation to the causes Esquirov has them thus divided.

1. Acute Dementia proceeds from transient excesses in diet, feces, hemorrhages, or to great evacuations.
of any kind, mental, organic, suppression of an habitual discharge, or debilitating treatment of insanity.

2. Chronic Dementia proceeds from the various forms of insanity, epilepsy, apoplexy, paralysis, intense study, dementia, masturbation, and abuse of sensual gratifications.

3. Senile Dementia may proceed solely from the progress of age, or may be the consequence of a declining mentality, that period of life when the intellect has a natural tendency to decay. This class of patients is designated by the French physiologists.

4. Intermittent Dementia is connected with any of the first three conditions. It is likewise complicated with melancholia, mania, epilepsy, convulsions, especially with paralysis, and also with a state of cachexia. Perhaps the most lamentable and distressing form of dementia is that resulting from an overtaxed brain. Many of the highest men are by no means exempt; indeed most of the literary men of this century have ended their days in mental oblivion. The cases of Walter Scott and Professor Wilson will serve to illustrate this statement. The diminution of the activity of the brain has been noticed and commented on by men of genius as they remarked it in their own cases—James when 72, in a letter to a friend,
remarks, "I rise in the morning tolerably active and disposed to work with mind and muscle," though I boast of my strength in a morning yet evening comes before its time—my afternoon is all evening and my evening mid-night." There is not a better instance of the degeneration of a mind of great genius than in the case of Robert Southey. In an address to him a few months before his death there are the following beautiful lines, which seem to illustrate the usual fate of men:

"We hurry to the river we must cross,
And wander downwards every footstep we take,
Never who reach it—see they count the loss
Of half their faculties and half their friends."

The subject of this particular form of the melancholy is also usually one unhappy and despairing character: friends and relations long since dead are conjured up, and circumstances occurring in youth present themselves to his imagination. The loss of memory is not always complete, for, although he forgets what has happened within the previous day, week, month, or year, still the most vivid recollections of scenes, persons, and incidents, almost forgotten when the mind was completely healthy, suggest themselves, and are spoken of as if they
are present, or had occurred a short time previous. In fact all idea of time is lost. Frequently fear, agitation, and restlessness are observed, and a whole house is made restless by the unnatural excitement and rage of a frantic helpless old man. After some months this state is happily succeeded by a degree of insensibility, and life draws near quietly to its close. But, sometimes, these embittered agitations continue to the hour of death.

Females are not so liable to this form of dementia as males, as the tenure of their way in life is usually less exciting, and their faculties are rarely called into such active employment. When, however, it does occur, the symptoms are general debility, frequently complicated with religious despondency, and an apprehension of ruin. She accuses herself of failing in her religious duties, of hypocrisy, and fears that she is beyond redemption. With all this her usual composure does not betray an impaired mind, until the subject of one or other of her delusions is touched on.

There is still another cause of dementia, viz., old age, which gives rise to the form of the affection called senile dementia. Although the individual...
may have passed a life of ease and comfort, surrounded by all the elegancies of life, by attentive relations and friends, till as time advances his faculties give way, memory departs, and complete indifference is evinced even to the nearest and dearest. This is the last stage of existence, so finely treated by Jenner.

— Omnia

Memorandum semper major dementia, quem uel dominus semper, quem vestris agris at animi, cum quibus pretiosa renovat urbe, nec illis dum penitus, quout ad vitam.

Sal. X.

Dr. Conolly gives two curious instances of passions arising in the minds of these patients quite inconsistent with their advanced age. He quotes from Aseinel the cases of two women, one aged sixty-four, the other eighty, who both fell desperately in love with two young men. Their conduct was that of two sick girls, excited, excited, gay, sorrowful, impatient, and extravagant, forming schemes for the future, imagining various obstacles, and in fact past themselves up mind and body to men who could only laugh at and pity them. They both sunk into melancholia and died.
The same authority gives a curious instance of another phase of the malady—"he says, "I knew a retired man of business, of tranquil life and easy fortune, who, as well as his attached wife, had attained the age of eighty years. Both became affected with senile dementia. Both were occasionally violent. Neither seemed to recognize the other. The old lady was the most restless; she did not know her own house; she would insist at night upon being taken home; so that her family was obliged to put her into a chair, and let her lie down round the corner, and brought into the house again which satisfied her. She knew all her friends and relatives, except her husband, whom she always treated as a stranger, speaking of him as of an absent. After dinner with him, she would give orders to the maid to prepare his—"s dinner, meaning her husband's, as he would probably, she said, return rather late."

It would be useless to multiply instances which are but only too common. The beautiful descriptions of Sir Walter Scott in his "Antiquary" of the old heraldess Elspeth must realise the case to every mind. I conclude with an extract from one old play which beautifully exemplifies the subject.
Life ebb's from each old age, unwrinkled & silent, at the slow swell take leaves you surrounded galley. late she worked merely at the last impulse that wind or wave could give, but now her keel is settling on the sand, her mast has taken on ample with the sky from which it shifts out. Each wave receding, shakes her less & less, till bedded on the sand, she shall remain wireless and motionless.

On account of theory intervening on Science, in Children, more consequent on Science, As pathological anatomy. Electrosmarhis generic.
Prevention and Treatment of Idiocy.

This is a subject which has been brought very strongly before the public within the last few years, and much has been done by private charity. But much still remains. More, indeed, than private energy could possibly accomplish. Public legislation is urgently called for—only to ameliorate the condition of the idiot himself, but (looking at the subject in a larger, but at the same time very important light,) to remove a nuisance from the public at large. The expense attendant on the ward of idiots within as workhouses, of course swells the amount of poor rates, calls for measures to prevent, as much as possible, the propagation of idiocy. The following are some remarks of Dr. Pitchford on the subject: "In adverting to the inquiry whether any means could be adopted that would tend to diminish the extent of this evil, we are struck by the obvious consideration that the number of the deranged persons in the community might be very much lessened, if it were possible to regulate or establish any surveillance over the marriages of the lower orders, or if some measures could be adopted to prevent the
propagation of idiocy, and our hereditary tendency to madness. Idiots who are at large wander about the country, and the females often bear children. I have frequently seen inhere, a female idiot, who was said to have borne several children by unknown fathers. Sir Andrew Halliday has made similar observations. We should bear without surprise of the permission of such things in Turkey or Russia, and having police regulations, it would not be expected. All insane idiots and lunatics ought to be kept in proper asylums, where every possible alleviation of their calamitous lot should be afforded them, and the public should be protected against such evils as those just pointed out. But perhaps, the propagation of mental disorders might be prevented in other ways by some restrictions on marriages. Intermarriages between near relations should be prohibited, and the known prevalence of idiocy or madness in a family should be noted, if possible, what at present it is not, at least among the lower classes, a bar to its propagation. The fact that insanity prevails as much in agricultural districts indicates that its development is favoured by some of the circumstances connected
with the condition of agriculturalists. The labouring
of women in the field during pregnancy, perhaps
as Halliday suggests, may be one cause; hard
labour and low diet, to which males are subjected,
may, perhaps, have an influence on the offspring
propagated by them; and in Wales and Scotland,
particularly, this may enter into the number
of causes, which render idiocy so prevalent. (Pritchard
on Insanity).

The Medical Treatment of Idiots resolves
itself almost always into mere regulations for
diet and exercise; except in such cases where a
compulsive cachexia shows itself; the treatment in
such cases is of course constitutional, as well as in
those afflicted with epilepsy, chorea, &c. When
maniacal paroxysms are met with, the exhibition
of antimonial, cathartics, and opiates seems to lower
the attack. Light restraint is also necessary;
as, if left altogether to himself even in a padded-room,
his violent exertions might reduce the strength, so much
as to make rallying doubtful. The cold shower-
bath is much used in the WWE, and with the
best effects. Some idiots are in the habit of
scratching the skin of their hands, and thus
establishing ones which are very difficult to heal on account of their continuing the irritation; in such cases, the "mufflers" are necessary, as likewise when the patient is prone to self-abuse.

From the state of dirt many idiots live in, various skin diseases are by no means uncommon; indeed it is not found more difficult to overcome these diseases in idiots than in others. Epilepsy and convulsions are the most frequent afflictions, especially the former which frequently proves fatal; of course the treatment does not differ from that of sane cases. Bed sores are very intractable in bedridden paralytics. Dr Armand Jobert narrates a curious case in which an idiot afflicted with eclampsia was cured by accidental poisoning by stramonium, after all the usual remedies had been tried. The patient had eaten some of the thorn apples, and with difficulty was recovered from their effects.

For the moral treatment of the idiot, experience, patience, perseverance and enthusiasm are the chief articles of the pharmacoepoica. The world must hold in everlasting honor and esteem such men as Legris, Voisin, Valleré, Guggenbuhl &c
where enduring enthusiasm has been the means of rescuing numbers of human beings from mental oblivion, not only making them of value to themselves, but them of value to society. In justice, however, to a living British psychologist, the name of Dr. Poole, author of the articles "Mental Diseases," and "Education" in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, and Encyclopaedia Edinensis, ought here also to be mentioned. In the latter article, published in 1827, he brought the subject strongly before the notice of the public, and assisted, if he did not originate, a scheme which may be looked on as one of the noblest ever proposed.

The cause of the idiot is spreading far and wide, and with such institutions as those of Pârgate, Dundee, and Datis, much will be done to ameliorate the condition of this unhappy class in our own country.

It is an axiom of all who undertake the training of the idiot, that there is a mind hidden behind a cloud; and the gradual manifestation of mind becomes the leading principle. It is of importance for the teacher to observe and watch carefully for the exhibition of some particular like or dislike, upon which to work.
But, before any direct instruction is given, the health of the pupil should be carefully attended to, regular hours and exercise insisted on, and perfect cleanliness inculcated. An idiot, who, although he has the power, occasionally does not know how to use his limbs; in such cases, he should be placed in such positions as to cause him to do so involuntarily, such as placing him in an upright ladder, and, of course, proper precautions against accidents being taken, withdrawing support. Gymnastic exercises soon teach him the use of his limbs, which knowledge being acquired, he is generally found to be eager to make use of. Lessons in manual labour should be next given; some patients in the Edinburgh workhouse were easily taught to dig from a bed of clay which was discovered within the walls, and most willingly and easily did they work. Several, also, have been taught household work, and some even act as nurses in their respective wards. There is one imbecile who engraves neatly, and another, a poor German who has lost one arm, who cuts out very neat ornaments in wood, with the sole assistance of a pen-knife. Along with this kind of instruction
the patient must be taught to dress himself, and to take his food in a decent manner, which being acquired, he should be introduced amongst his pupils who are further advanced; by which means a feeling of self-respect seems to grow on him. — The next grand step is to teach him difference of form, colour, size and number. This may be done by placing before him pieces of wood of different colours, sizes, and forms, and making him take up one corresponding to that which the teacher holds in his hand; thus giving rise to imitation, which may be elaborated, by “line on line, and precept on precept,” to a train of reasoning. This should be accompanied by making him use his voice, if it be exercised only by shouting a unintelligible jargon. The manner in which the faculty of speech is modified in the various forms of mental impairment is worthy of remark; for in the insane, even more strikingly than in the sane, the tone of voice is a kind of index to the mind, and the mode of speech peculiar to the mental character. The long and loud talking, and the bursts of voice of patients affected with acute or chronic mania;
the low whisperings of the melancholic; and the
utter silence of those who have fallen into the state
of dementia; must have been noticed by all who
have visited a lunatic asylum. The power of
using this important gift is also almost always
defective to a greater or less degree in persons of
congenital inability of mind; less, probably in
many cases, from defective organization of the
organs of speech, than from the mental incapacity
to learn the uses of speech, or to connect
words with their limited ideas and perceptions.
When the fact is established that the voice exists
to a useful extent, the pupil should be placed,
before the teacher, and made to imitate the motions
of the mouth in speaking; at the same time attract-
ing his attention to some object, the name of which
must be repeated over and over until the word is
learned; next the use of the object should be shown
and explained; as, for instance, if he be in the
garden let him be shown what a apricot is,
then teach him to say the word, and lastly the
use, "the apricot gift." In this way along with his
manual, he also acquires a mental lesson.
By thus teaching him to understand and employ
artificial and natural signs for ideas, the
intellectual faculties are necessarily enlarged.
During this part of his course of treatment some
mental depravity will in all probability be
developed, which should be carefully worked on,
as the spark to be gradually fostered into a
flame.
It is important not only for the teacher, but also
for the medical jurisprudence, to remember that I Divider
and Imbecility may in some instances chiefly
affect the moral faculties. Dr. Rush, as early
ago as 1786, in a paper read to the American
Philosophical Society, pointed out that what
was called the moral faculty or moral sense was
influenced, no less than the faculty of the intellect,
by physical causes. He remarks that the state
of the brain as to consistency was as much con-
nected with the strength and powers of the moral
faculty in children as it was with their intellectual
powers; that the intellectual faculty was associ-
ated with a certain size of the brain, and a
peculiar cast of features; and that the moral
faculty was associated with certain qualities
of figure and temperament. He observed that
the moral qualities, like those of the mind, are
often hereditary, and that there were as remarkable
instances of the defects of moral susceptibility, as of intellectual capacity; adducing the instance of Lermouin, whose character is drawn by the Duc de Sully, and in whom, with various and extraordinary mental and bodily endowments, there appeared to be a complete moral incapacity, almost every crime blending in his compound character with every accomplishment and every kind of skill. On the other hand, Dr. Rush remarked, that the moral faculty might be conspicuously present, although the intellectual faculties were very feeble; and related, that he knew a man who discovered no trace of reason, yet spent his whole life in acts of benevolence. From these views and other observations of a like kind, few observers will now be found to dissent, daily experience showing modifications of character and temper which can in no other way be explained; sometimes congenital, sometimes resulting from temporary illness or from permanent disease; industry, honesty, truthfulness, delicacy, being impaired, in some cases, as uncleanliness of the memory, the judgment, the speech, or the power of locomotion in others.

It has been remarked by all teachers of the
Idiot, that the simple truths of religion are more easily appreciated by their pupils than any other subject—indeed, if they fail to learn these there is little hope. Idiots, it is remarkable, have generally a knowledge of time, which makes the teaching of singing the earliest part of their education. I have already mentioned the case of a female idiot who occasionally leads the psalmody in Chapel.

So much has been written and said of late years on this subject, that it would be quite superfluous to make longer mention of it. Various systems have been proposed and acted on, almost always with success. But no one system can succeed in every case, the teacher must modify it to suit the peculiarities of the pupil; and each and every of these would be useless without 'teachers not only trained, but teachers born, full of the enthusiasm of a noble spirit, love for the objects of their care, zeal for their laborious work, patience which years of perseverance cannot quench, earnestness of manner, unchangeable temper, unhounded fertility of invention, and complete faith in the ultimate issue of their endeavours.' (Libraries on Teaching the Idiot.)