

The Medical and Surgical Monitor.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

In the department of Original Communications no effort will be spared to obtain articles both authoritative and practical.

An earnest invitation is extended to the members of the profession to assist in making this department interesting, instructive and indispensable. While some space will be given to matters speculative, it is desirable that contributors limit themselves, as much as possible, to the details of personal observation and experience.

The editors assume no responsibility for the views of contributors.

MENTAL DISEASES OF CHILDREN.

BY

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It is only within the past century that mental diseases were regarded as affecting any but adults. Esquirol was among the first to give the subject of mental diseases of children much attention, but it is only within the past twenty-five years that the matter has been taken up as a special study; this special study has been induced first, from the greater interest developed in the pursuit of the science of psychiatry, which must have for its basis the very first dawning of the infant mind—and careful observation and notation until psychical maturity is reached. Second, the study of heredity and criminality in all its phases as manifest in children. Third, the great increase and the great number of juvenile criminals and the relation of crime to mental defectiveness.

Idiocy, of course, is nearly always congenital or is produced by disease or traumatism before mind manifestations have occurred.

Feeble-mindedness is an arrest of development at various periods—from disease or accident. Thus a child may be healthy and normally developed in mind until three, four or five years of age—and then from meningeal disease or traumatism have the power for development cut off—and no matter how the body may develop in human perfection, the child mind remains at its place of cutting off.

A child mind so cut off—say at two to three years of age—would, at from ten years old and upwards, be regarded as idiotic by the world at large and one whose mind is arrested at from two to twelve would be called feeble-minded—simpleton or fool at adult age.

I saw in this city in the month of February, 1902, a family of three idiots, of ages ranging from eighteen to twenty-five. There were three

other children said to be perfectly sound in mind, although one of them I know to have occasional attacks of epilepsy. I could not find a trace of hereditary tendencies upon either side in the parents, but be it remembered there is nothing more uncertain than the vouched for purity of blood.

An instance of feeble-mindedness was well illustrated in the case of Hazel Orme, a child whose history shows an arrest of development at about five years—she is now fourteen years of age. Her parents were either unable to keep her, or so avaricious that they hired the girl out as a baby attendant and dishwasher for thirty cents per week "and found." Such children continue to think and act like children of the age at which the mind ceased to grow. The result was the girl required constant watching and her word was not considered of any more value than that of a naturally stupid child five years of age.

The parents of Hazel Orme and the parties who employed her had once been neighbors but had removed some distance apart since employing her. Hazel's peculiarities soon attracted the women gossips of the neighborhood, and the poor girl was actually "pumped" by them regarding her employers' (Mr. and Mrs. Martineck) household affairs. Now, it was proven in court that the Martinecks were absolutely honest and temperate people, who were evidently surrounded by a very bad lot and, therefore, inclined to "not be neighborly." So, to make a long story short, the neighbors soon had it spread abroad that the child was beaten and abused and once had been seen to take something from the garbage can and eat it. The child became ill about this time and after much persuasion her parents were induced to take her home. Then the newspapers took the matter up and for about two weeks public excitement ran rampant. Carriages with liveried drivers stopped at the door, and silk and ribbons fluttered in the cottage. People came in the cars or walked by hundreds. Fruit, candies and flowers filled the room of Hazel Orme. Fond mothers petted her and old fools wept over her. But one thing all had to hear was the child answer the same question, "Did they starve you, Hazel?" "Yes." "Did they whip you and make you work?" "Yes." "Did they make you sleep in the kitchen?" "Yes."

The Martinecks were arrested. There was a popular cry to hang, burn or destroy them; then the law was allowed to take its course, and after a prolonged trial in the police court, the employer of Hazel was fined and imprisoned.

I examined Hazel Orme twice. Upon my first visit she was quite feverish, bowels tympanitic, tongue red, pulse 130; various scars over forehead which her mother says were from falls; various macula between shoulder blades, which had been called stripes from a "strap," but which clearly were not.

I interrogated the child at length and found she did not know her own

age (which is fourteen). She could not count beyond three. She had never been to school, did not know a letter of the alphabet. She answered the following questions. "Did they (no name mentioned) starve you?" "Yes." "Did they burn your eyes out with a hot iron?" "Yes." "Did you take all your meals from the slop pail?" "Yes." "Did they feed you good things?" "Yes." "Did they treat you kindly?" "Yes." "How old are you, Hazel?" "Don't know." "Why did you not go to school?" "Don't know," etc.

Now, I heard persons on the witness stand swear that this "little girl," who is approaching womanhood, was a bright truthful, intelligent child. Yet see what mischief did arise—and more might have arisen—from the sickly sentimentality of an over emotional community.

I have personally known of the imprisonment of one man for several years in the penitentiary, and one negro burned at the stake in Georgia and heard of many others, upon the evidence and testimony (aided by designing or over emotional neighbors) of such mentally affected children as we see in Hazel Orme. Who cares for the poor girl now that sensationalism is taken out of her life. She probably has resumed her former occupation of carrying the "growler" between the saloon and her father's house. But the saloon-keeper has not been punished for selling to minors nor have the parents been fined or imprisoned for selling the labor of this feeble-minded child.

(Insanities of Children will be continued in the next issue.)

A STUDY IN THE EVOLUTION AND PSYCHOLOGY OF SEX.

BY

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(Continued from page 44, Vol. V., No. 2., February, 1902.)

In the female—

External organs of generation.

The transformations taking place in the external organs of reproduction are less marked than in the male. The genital protuberance gradually increases in size and becomes eventually converted into the *clitoris*. Enlargement of the genital folds ensues with the formation of the *labia minora*. The urogenital sinus remains as such, giving rise to the *vestibulum vaginae*. The latter harbors the aperture of the *urethra* and the *introitus vaginalis*.

The genital ridge hypertrophies and acquires adipose tissue, projecting beyond the surface without undergoing union, ultimately giving rise to the formation of the *labia majora*. The clitoral *prepuce* is developed by folds of integument which envelopes the *glans clitoridis*.