various establishments for the insane. The reports of these superintendents concerning the efficiency of provision made for the insane in the asylums revised by them are to be referred to the Committee, which annually publishes a general report of the provision made for the insane throughout the empire.

For to enable this Committee to carry out more efficiently its lofty aims, and to impart to it greater authority in the sight of all the various social establishments and the administrations which are entrusted with the management and the care of the insane, it must be composed of a staff of our best scientific specialists in psychiatry, jurisprudence, architecture, and so forth; and at its head there ought to stand a person who is universally revered and beloved.

With such a Committee the system of providing for the insane will be placed on a sound basis, and will obtain regular advancement and gradual efficient development in the future.

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2. *French Retrospect.*

By D. Hack Tuke, F.R.C.P.

L'Automatisme Somnambulique devant les Tribunaux. Dr. Paul Garnier.

Resuming our notice in our last number of this pamphlet we proceed to give a sketch of the interesting case which Dr. Garnier reports (*vide* "Journal of Mental Science," January, 1888, page 627). Prolonged and minute examination showed that a criminal act was committed in a state of somnambulistic automatism. The patient was twenty, a dentist's pupil, and one evening entered a curiosity shop opposite his own residence, and proceeded quietly to remove a number of articles in a leisurely manner, as if he was quite at home. He carried to his own house various articles of furniture, and was only prevented by the arrival of the shopkeeper, who easily apprehended him. Stupid and dumfoundered, he at once stoutly denied the charge, and acted in a very eccentric manner. At the police-station it was observed that he had momentary fits of absence. When spoken to he no longer replied. When his name was called he did not move, and the strongest appeals did not arouse him from his torpor. He had a succession of attacks of somnambulism, and when before the magistrate was in one of them. He had been subject to similar attacks. He was the only son of a neurotic mother, who was extremely impressionable and subject to hysteria. Healthy till eleven, he then manifested grave cerebral symptoms, which were attributed, rightly or wrongly, to sunstroke. For some weeks his life was in danger; he had several convulsive attacks, and for a long after this period he was subject to attacks of somnambulism. After a time, however, he appeared to have recovered, but he retained an unhealthy condition of the nervous

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system, especially mental instability. At last he aspired to a great fortune, and was full of confidence in his powers. He was placed with a dentist, but he never properly applied himself to his work. In 1884 he had typhoid fever, and although it was a mild attack, its effect upon his organization was marked. His moral feelings underwent an evident change. He entirely neglected his work, became fantastic in his appearance, and was by turns exalted and apathetic. In the middle of 1885 there was much nocturnal agitation. He started up in his bed, groaned, and sometimes shouted with terror, and spoke incoherently. After a while he was seen to rise from his bed in the middle of the night, and wander about mechanically in his room. He displaced articles of furniture, or he occupied himself as if engaged in his customary occupations. He generally returned to his bed without anything happening, but at other times he had convulsive seizures. One night his parents observed him walking in his sleep, but they were afraid to interfere. Suddenly he went towards the window, opened it, and attempted to jump out. He was, however, prevented. A hystero-epileptic attack followed, and after a few minutes he awoke, without the slightest remembrance of what had occurred. After a while these attacks appeared in the day time, being characterized by strange absences or dreamy attacks in which consciousness was suspended. He would fall asleep at table, or in the middle of his work; his immobility being readily mistaken for mere apathy and idleness. He was spoken loudly to, he was shaken, etc., but all to no purpose. One day during an excursion into the country, he was found in a strange attitude, and when spoken to made no answer. They were obliged to bring him back to Paris in this state, and it was only on the morning afterwards that he became himself, when he was astonished to hear what he had done. About this time the mode of life, conversation, and conduct of X— showed that he had true mental disorder. Seized with feverish excitement, exuberant, versatile, and ambitious, he no longer attended to his duties. His excited brain became the seat of impracticable projects. He announced that he would become a great musician, at another time a doctor of eminence. For some weeks he occupied himself in attempting to carry out these projects. He suddenly quitted his family without any other motive than to escape their oversight. His extravagances increased, and criminal acts followed. At last judicial proceedings were taken against him. Such was the state of affairs when he was arrested under the circumstances already mentioned. It should be stated that he was a youth of middle stature, and fairly robust, with well-developed muscles. His step was firm, and there was nothing in his appearance to suggest a feminine temperament. He, however, was markedly emotional; he blushed easily, and there was a mixture of astonishment and vague apprehension in his expression. His conversation was inconsecutive, his explanations very confused. He complained of having been jeered at when examined at the dépôt, and

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he demanded that an end should be put to the annoyances from which he suffered. The attendants reported that he did not sleep during the night, but got up and walked about, and when requested to lie down he did not reply, but continued to walk about. "He seems like a man," said one of the attendants, "who seeks something that he cannot find." M. Garnier then found complete cutaneous analgesia, except two hyperæsthesic spots, about the size of a franc piece, situated symmetrically upon the back of each wrist. There was narrowing of the visual field, gustatory and olfactory anæsthesia. Circular pressure exerted upon the forearm easily caused contraction of the hand. On many occasions M. Garnier observed X— at the time of his attacks of somnambulism. The transition to morbid sleep came on instantly without warning. The return to his normal condition was different, there being frequently a violent convulsive attack with opisthotonos, contortions, frightful hallucinations, and sobbings, which terminated the attack. Sleep sometimes came on quite spontaneously, without any sensorial excitement. Sometimes it was the brilliancy of a lamp, or other brilliant object, which the patient could not look at without going to sleep. As is common with persons during somnambulism, he then becomes the prey of the automatic action of his brain, induced by the remains of impressions or ideas which had occupied him when awake. He goes, comes, and acts in a co-ordinate manner, but he is only *en rapport* with the external world on one side. A question without direct relation to the idea which is for the moment dominating his mind will not be heard. But if the interrogation strikes this precise point it becomes possible to enter into communication with him upon this very limited subject. X— walks in that slow and measured way peculiar to noctambules. The eyelids are half-closed; he is agitated by a continual shudder; the head is rather inclined as if watching his movements. It was to be expected that a person offering such functional troubles of the nervous system would be easily hypnotized. And, moreover, it was not without interest in the present case to institute a comparison between the symptoms of spontaneous somnambulism, and those developed under somnambulism artificially induced. As was expected, he was thrown very easily and rapidly into the condition of hypnotism by means of the usual methods. If in the attack of spontaneous somnambulism X— was master of himself (as much so as a man can be who is impelled by a blind force), and obeyed an impulse which was his own, he was artificially sent to sleep, he was at once at the mercy of the hypnotizer. From numerous experiments, conducted with every necessary precaution, he was shown to be in a state of passive obedience to suggestions of the most varied kind.

On December 19th X— fell into a state of catalepsy, and his condition of insensibility and inertia being prolonged for many hours, he was removed to the Hôtel-Dieu, where he arrived without having awoke from his torpor. At that moment his eyeballs were convulsively

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directed upwards and outwards. About 48 hours after the commencement of this cataleptic phase, a convulsive attack marked its termination.

Two examples are given of his attacks of automatism and unconscious cerebration. One of them is as follows: X— was already known as a very able musician, and could lead an orchestra. It was this circumstance in his past life which revived the following mimicry in him. X—, in a state of spontaneous somnambulism, rose; he did not walk without care; everything shows that his mind, suddenly roused by some idea or remembrance, urges him in a very definite manner. With perfect co-ordination of movement he is occupied in placing in the middle of the room a great number of chairs, which he proceeds to take successively, and places them by the neighbouring beds. He forms a circle with them, in the centre of which he places himself. With a slight gesture he appears to command attention; then his arm is alternately raised and lowered; he marks the time, quickening or slowing the movement, indicating by an appropriate gesture the passage of the piece that ought to be played with force or with sweetness. Sometimes in the midst of this he precipitates himself towards a point in the circumference traced by the chairs; his contracted physiognomy expresses discontent or anger. It is evidently one of his musicians who has incurred his reproaches on account of a false note. The piece ended, he bows repeatedly to an audience, whose applause he doubtless hears.

M. Mesnet, in whose service at the Hôtel-Dieu he was placed on the 25th January, suddenly fixed his eyes upon those of the patient with all the intensity and penetration possible. In less than a minute the state described as hypnotic fascination was induced, and a striking spectacle was witnessed by M. Garnier. Irresistibly attracted to him who has taken entire possession of his being, his eyes fixed upon his, X— never quits his hypnotizer. He walks with him, runs with him, follows all his movements, and, however rapid these may be, he is helplessly attracted to him as if by magnetization of the look which always regards him face to face, eye to eye. He is insensible, on the other hand, to all external solicitations, totally analgesic, in sole and exclusive communication with him who has performed the *prise du regard*, and completely under his orders. Strange as these phenomena appear, it may be affirmed that they are not opposed to what is known regarding functional and nervous disorders in hystero-epileptics whose disorders are better studied and interpreted every day.

With regard to loss of memory, the energetic denials of the crime imputed to him must be noted. Strange to say, in answer to one of the questions put in the court, he related successively how he had proceeded. "I have carried successively," he said, "the articles of furniture into the court of the house, and it was at the moment when I was going to carry the second footstool that I was arrested." This declaration appeared to contradict all his previous protestations. But

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subsequently when he was reminded of this he was astonished, appeared to believe that he was ridiculed, and he affirmed, as before, that he had no memory of the theft with which he was charged. How account for these contradictions? The loss of memory, which is in the present instance an all-important fact, ought it to be rejected? and the contradictions of the accused, ought they to be regarded as proofs of the groundlessness of his allegations? M. Garnier does not think so, and it seems to him possible to give a scientific explanation of this fact by connecting it with certain examples, well known, of double consciousness in analogous neuroses—a double consciousness—the consequence of which is the creation of two entirely distinct existences with this remarkable feature; that all the fragments of the one are so bound together as to overlap the fragments of the other. Observation has for a long time proved that the somnambule remembers during one attack the events of a previous attack, although he has no remembrance whatever of the normal condition. According as X— was in the state of the primary normal condition, or in that of the secondary pathological condition, he was able, without any insincerity, alternately to deny and admit an act which, in consequence of its having been performed during an attack of somnambulism, only recurred to his memory in a subsequent similar attack. His strange attitude when brought before the magistrate, his singular somnolence, certainly corroborates, as M. Garnier says, this interpretation. The moral shock produced by his arrest, his accusation, numerous interrogations, were so many circumstances calculated to unhinge his already unstable organization. It is not surprising that they had the effect of accelerating the nervous phenomena to which he was so subject, and as a consequence to induce, at short intervals, periods of unconsciousness and loss of memory. In describing the intellectual condition of this prisoner before the act with which he was charged, in showing that during life he suffered from frequent absences of mind, we have, to a large extent, been able to connect this act with somnambulistic automatism. Committed with the dominant unconsciousness which already indicated a morbid condition, it was but a link in the unbroken chain of various disorders, an episode in a long pathological history. Everything then conspires to prove that X—'s whole mental equilibrium had for a long time been upset, and that he was on the 25th of November under the domination of a vertiginous condition of a special nature; that he had experienced, in short, one of those eclipses of the conscious *ego*, comparable to those which had been previously observed in his case, and which were subsequently induced in M. Garnier's presence.

In a social point of view, the gravity of the act is of the utmost importance, its scientific aspect being of only secondary interest. Whether it has reference to theft, a public outrage, arson, suicide, or homicide, the medico-legal fact is at bottom the same. In any case it is always the same automatism, which presides over the deed, which

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hands over the individual without any safeguard and without distinction to all the risks of temptations spontaneously arising, and freed from every counterbalancing force or conflict of motives.

To prove that an action charged against anyone is dependent upon an unconscious impulse, is to propound at the same time the principle of absolute irresponsibility, a fact to which we are led by rigorous deduction. It is M. Garnier's entire conviction that X— is a hystero-epileptic, subject to grave convulsive attacks, and to somnambulism leading to automatic acts, among which must be reckoned the theft with which he was charged. It is impossible to hold a man responsible for the acts he commits, whose will undergoes such suspensions and even complete effacement.

Such was the report on X— made by M. Garnier, with the result that the accused was found "Not guilty." Then follows a quotation from M. Mesnet's "Communication to the Academy of Medicine," March 15th, 1887. When, under this physician's observation, he passed into the somnambulistic condition, M. Mesnet, pointing out to him one of his internes, said, "Observe the chain of M. ——. Do you see it?" The patient answered, "Yes." "Well! I order you to seize it during my visit to-morrow, and then immediately escape." The patient looked surprised; his limbs shook, and there was a very evident expression of discontent, but he did not reply. I said to him, "I command you, I tell you." He responded, "Yes," with a quick, jerky gesture. I then awoke him. He was absolutely ignorant of what we had just done and said. The next day, on coming into the ward, I found him chatting freely with the medical students. I asked him various questions, to which he replied satisfactorily. He said he was waiting for M. Garnier's arrival, &c. During my visit he accompanied the students, and talked to them, but with less spirit than usual, and voluntarily approaching M. ——, the interne, whom he seemed to regard with special interest, soon fixed his eye on the chain visible in the half-open coat, and he became more and more absorbed in its contemplation. His pupils became dilated, his face assumed a singular and very painful expression; respiration and pulse became rapid, and his face red in patches. After having several times inclined his head and body towards M. ——, he slowly made a step forward; then after some hesitation he rapidly removed the watch and chain, and ran out of the ward. I found him immediately afterwards arrested by the attendant, who had followed him. He was in a state of complete mental aberration. I blew upon his eyes, and immediately he returned to his previous state. I asked him what he had been doing. "Nothing that I know of." I drew from his pocket the watch he had taken, saying that he had stolen it from M. —. He exclaimed, "I am not a thief," and began to cry.

The medico-legal importance of these indisputable facts must be obvious to everybody.

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We do not believe that in our days a forensic physician would endorse so singularly severe a judgment as that which Fodéré enunciated in regard to the acts of somnambulists. "Far from considering these acts as insane, I regard them as the most independent that can be performed in human life. I see somnambulism as a crucible, in which thought and intention are absolutely separated from their material conditions." The formula "dormiens furioso aequiparatur (Tiraquean)" is certainly nearer the truth, and it is necessary to acknowledge that the jurist has here much more reason on his side than the above physician.

Since M. Garnier's report, X—'s attacks of spontaneous somnambulism have been very frequent, in spite of the sensible improvement in his moral disposition ; in spite, also, of a marked decrease in his nervous excitement under the influence of treatment by large doses of valerianate of ammonia.

He scarcely passes a day or night without having automatic impulses and corresponding movements. There happened quite recently a most exciting scene. At half-past six a.m. on the 19th of March, X— rose and went out of the ward, going over the balustrade of the gallery which surrounds the garden of Hôtel Dieu. Thence he descends on the cornice, whose line of inclination seemed as if it must throw him upon the ground from the second story. He remained there, however, without apparent difficulty, and slowly advanced upon the edge of the wall towards the façade of the court of Notre-Dame. A crowd soon collected, and was alarmed to see the somnambule, who, having arrived at nearly the end of the cornice, tried to return by feeling his way on the wall. For an instant the anxiety was extreme among the crowd, for he seemed to hesitate in his movements, and to be surrounded by insurmountable difficulties. At last he was able to turn round and avoid the fall, which seemed to all the spectators imminent. He then returned ; from the cornice he easily regained the balustrade, upon which he walked like a gymnast, counting "1, 2 ! 1, 2 !" and he thus passed over it twice in an opposite direction. In going he had avoided with care the flower-pots arranged on the platform, and which were removed immediately after his first walk. In returning, and at the moment when he arrived at the point where he found what hindered his course, he stopped. His expression indicated astonishment, and immediately he was seized with nervous tremors. Without loss of time some one seized hold of him. A convulsive crisis occurred, and rendered it necessary for five or six persons to master him. He then became calm, and awoke. He knew nothing of the perilous exploit he had performed.

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