the brain had the following structure:—They were composed, 1st, of an external envelope continuous with the membranes of the brain, and apparently formed at their expense; 2nd, of a transparent vesicle, of ovoid form, and presenting towards the small extremity a white spot, which was prolonged into the interior. On touch, this spot imparted the sensation of a solid body.

On microscopic examination, the walls of the vesicle presented a granular appearance. On a level with the spot which we tore, we found the head of the cysticercus characterised by its circlet of hooks and its four stomata.

The remarks on this case are valuable, as they give numerous references to the foreign literature of the subject.

On Non-paralytic Insanity with Exalted Delusions.

To this essay by M. H. Taguet was awarded the Esquirol Prize for 1872. In its first part it gives a pretty full *resumé* of the French literature of the subject. Under the head "Etiology," we have discussed the influence of nationality, sex, age, social position, hereditary tendency, physical constitution, hysteria, epilepsy, education, and political events in producing this form of insanity. The definition and diagnosis of the disease are then discussed.

In M. Taguet's opinion, the "délire des grandeurs" must be considered as an epiphenomenon, requiring no special therapeutic treatment, and disappearing with the affections which produced it.

Treatment, it cannot be too often repeated, ought to be individual, and addressed equally to the physical and mental condition of the patient. This manner of procedure has found adversaries who, more desirous of being facetious than useful, have, for want of arguments, attacked it with derision. Ought the derangements of the mind, they ask, to be corrected by diluting atrabilious blood and by liquifying the blood detained in the portal vein? Shall we combat mental affliction by hellebore, and derangements of thought by enemata?

The partisans of somatic treatment deny the influence of work, discipline, and seclusion; and make pharmaceutical preparations play a considerable part, more especially opium and camphor. This latter drug is the sublime panacea for all ills, and they have exalted it to a degree to make Raspail jealous. The adversaries of this mode of treatment refuse it, in their turn, all efficacy. Lastly, there are others who reject completely all physical and all moral treatment. Doubtless experience teaches us that many mental diseases are cured by the efforts of nature alone, but does it follow that physicians must play a purely passive part? Because we have seen pneumonia cured by tepid water and rest, is it necessary to banish the therapeutic, the antiphlogistic and opiate treatment, and to reject antimonials?

At the top of all rational treatment we place confinement in an asylum, which has the double advantage of making the patient harm-

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.19.88.628 Published online by Cambridge University Press

less to himself and others, and of exciting, frequently, new impressions which lead to beneficial diversion of thought. It is in this manner that travelling is so advantageous at the beginning of the disease. It is necessary, however, to remember that confinement is not equally useful in all cases. It is true that the isolation, the change of surroundings, the discipline and regularity have brought about a rapid improvement which is evident, pretty often, from the day following admission, in a certain number of patients; whilst in others, the care which has been bestowed upon them, the constant supervision of which they have been the object, and which they have erroneously interpreted, have only strengthened their ideas of grandeur and ambition, when these have not become complicated by delusions of persecution. In these latter cases it is impossible to leave at large the unfortunate patients who are generally subject to violent impulses, which the too easy indulgence of the relatives cannot restrain.

We find in hydrotherapeutics powerful adjuvants to medical treatment, if they are employed intelligently. A bath of too short duration is, generally, without any influence upon the lunatic. The patients, according to Brierre de Boismont, should remain six hours and more in their baths. It is impossible to give any precise indication as to the duration, which should be left to the discretion of the physician. It is not unusual to find that in Germany patients remain a whole day in a bath. Great care is necessary that the temperature be constant; it should range from 28° to 32° cent. To avoid congestion, we would strongly recommend the application, to the head, of a sponge soaked in cold water, which must be frequently renewed. Vapour baths have been found more hurtful than useful, and inapplicable in cases where there is a special predisposition to congestion. It is chiefly in lypemania that good results follow the use of the shower bath. It is less useful in cases of mania.

Hallucinations, which are inseparable from "délire des grandeurs," disappear occasionally under the influence of baths, opium, chloroform, belladonna, and stramonium. For some months we have employed, with success, chloral and cannabis indica. In the treatment of insanity, these drugs should be employed in much larger doses than in other diseases. Indeed, it is not unusual to see the innocuousness of these agents upon lunatics, whilst they cause all the symptoms of poisoning in those in a state of health.

On Locomotor Ataxy. By J. M. Charcot, Physician to the Salpétrière, &c., &c.

This small treatise is composed of four lectures, and forms the first part of the second series of Professor Charcot's "Lectures on Diseases of the Nervous System." It cannot be said that it contains much that is new, but the information is conveyed in a pleasant, easy style, and is up to date.

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.19.88.628 Published online by Cambridge University Press