

In the case of loss of memory due to age, it is the recollection of recent events that suffers most. Events of many years ago are well remembered in most instances, and it is not uncommon for events to come back to memory that had been apparently forgotten. It would seem that in this way the memory for past events may become even exalted.

Dissolution of the mind is influenced by its evolution. Sex plays an important part; men often become egotistical, while women show an altruistic spirit. In youth dissolution soon shows itself in decay and dementia, while older persons are more resistant. Education plays an important rôle also. The ignorant person soon reaches his lowest levels, whereas the educated one may show many gradations from the first symptoms to those of complete loss of mental balance. In the dissolutions of age there is a return to the conditions found in the child. The imagination becomes active, and he talks to himself about things he thinks he has just done, etc. In this respect the dissolutions of the aged, of youth, and those due to toxins, have very kindred forms of hallucinations. In the aged there is often a concentration of past life, so that the person worries over all his losses, all his misdeeds, or sings his own praises over his fortunate ventures, as if they were all recent and cumulative. The typical termination for dissolution would be dementia.

In dementia præcox there is a feeble resisting power and their nervous system fails when exposed to the wear and tear of life. They are like the plant grown indoors that cannot withstand exposure. These cases are on the increase in neurotic families. There are forms of insanity with much disorder and little decay, and there are instances where the tendency is to grow wrong, rather than that of mere dissolution.

As the outcome of this perversion of development many become cranks, eccentrics, mental and moral freaks, and simple monomaniacs. These phases of mind may cause trouble only to their possessors, or they may cause trouble to society. They may pass into uncontrollable conditions, and become true insanities. A man may be perfectly rational and trustworthy in every way, but may believe that he is the son of the German Emperor. A physical defect may lead to mental distortion or wrongful evolution. Thus a boy with a squint may avoid company rather than have his companions jeer him. This may cause him to shun all society until he becomes a hopeless recluse. Anxiety may lead to suspicion and finally to profound jealousy. The gradual evolution of a depressing idea may drive one insane. A person may think he has some disease, and consults many persons about it. He finally becomes melancholic over it and finds his way to an asylum.

It is difficult to separate cases in which simple invasion takes place from those in which there is invasion with destruction, as in their earlier