

wound was dressed with iodoform, moist bichloride gauze and absorbent cotton, and the limb put on a posterior splint, with a foot piece, extending from the upper third of the thigh to the heel.

April 23rd. Temp. 100½, pulse 100, very little pain, bowels regular, light diet given.

24th. Temp. again reached 100, but soon fell and has not reached the same elevation since. No pain, only a feeling of discomfort in knee. The patient's condition continued most favorable, and on the 29th the dressings were removed and some of the stitches taken out. The swelling and extravasated blood had nearly disappeared and there was no sign of tension or of pus.

31st. The rest of the stitches were removed and the wound was found entirely healed.

May 16th. There is no pain or discomfort in the part; the knee is stiff, but there is no sign of inflammation. It is, however, deemed necessary to allow union to become a little more firm before using the limb, so it is still kept on the posterior splint. The general health is excellent.

### Selected Articles.

#### GENIUS A DEGENERATIVE EPILEPTOID PSYCHOSIS.<sup>1</sup>

From anatomico-biological analysis of the careers of sane geniuses and those neurotic or insane, of their geographical distribution, of the causes, often pathological in character, of their appearance, and of the evil inheritance discernible in their descendants, naturally arose the suspicion that genius has a degenerative origin. This suspicion, whose audacity at first repels, becomes more and more justified by the phenomena exhibited by genius. If the lives and works of the historically great morbid minds, be examined, it is found that they, as well as the men who have passed through the glorious parabola of genius without demonstrable mental taint, are distinguishable by many traits from ordinary men.

At the outset, it may be stated that the insane geniuses have no decided character. The complete character which does not bend with every breeze, distinguishes the mentally complete from them. Tasso,<sup>2</sup> declaimed against courtiers as mendicants, yet became an obsequious courtier. Rousseau,<sup>3</sup> despite his seemingly exquixotic sensi-

tiveness, abandoned his cherished mistress and his children, calumniated his friend, and was thrice an apostate, from Catholicism, from Protestantism, and, most significant of all, from Deism. Swift,<sup>1</sup> albeit an ecclesiastic, wrote the coarse chanson of "Strephon and Chloe," blackened the religion of which he was a dignitary,<sup>2</sup> was proud to the height of folly, yet was addicted to horseplay in taverns. Lenau, while devout to fanaticism,<sup>3</sup> in "Savaronola," was extremely sceptical in the "Albigenses." He recognized his own inconsistency and jested at it. Schopenhauer abhorred women and manifested a desire for the nirvana of the Buddhist, yet claimed he would live a century.

Genius exhibits extreme pride to a degree which often passes the limits of credibility. The simplest criticisms are regarded as the bitterest, most malicious persecution. Nature was leagued against Cardan, and Newton resented opposition as a mortal affront. Rosseau claimed that mankind, and even the elements, were leagued against him, and resorted to painful manoeuvres seemingly to avoid contact with men. Swift,<sup>4</sup> humiliated the ministry and wrote haughtily to a duchess. Lenau,<sup>5</sup> who had inherited his mother's patrician pride, announced that he was king of Hungary. Wezel,<sup>6</sup> believed he had founded a bank and had issued bank notes, and finished by claiming divine honors. He published works by the "God Wezel."

Schopenhauer boasted that one of his disciples enshrined his portrait as that of a saint. Some geniuses are precocious. Tasso spoke at six months and knew Latin at seven years. Lenau as a child improvised sermons and was an admirable fife and violin player. Cardan at eight years heard from an apparition prediction of his future genius. Ampère at thirteen was a mathematician. Pascal at ten devised an acoustic theory from hearing a gong; at fifteen he composed his "Treatise on Conic Sections." Haller preached at four, and at five was a student of books.

Many geniuses are addicted to alcoholic and narcotic abuse. Haller<sup>6</sup> dosed himself with opium. Rousseau swilled coffee. Tasso<sup>7</sup> was a notorious drunkard, as were Kleist, Gerard de Nerval, Musset, Murget, Mailath Praga, Lorani, and the Chinese poet, Li-To-Kai, who was killed by excess in alcohol whence he drew his inspiration. Lenau<sup>8</sup> latterly abused wine, tobacco and coffee, and Baudelaire,<sup>6</sup> tobacco, wine and opium. Car-

1. Swift was in these particulars on a level with most Anglican clergymen of the eighteenth century.

2. He sprang from a family of imbeciles, was gloomy, alternating, with brief exaltation, and defended pederasty.

3. Lombroso contradicts this later on.

4. Rattled to a Tory because of lack of patronage by the Whigs, like the clerical politicians most of the upper Anglican clergymen then were.

5. Paranoiacs both.

6. Suffered from renal calculi, whence opium.

7. Antecedent to his cyclothymia only.

8. Alcoholicism due to praise or to genius, not *vice versa*.

1. Translated, with comments, by James G. Kiernan, from Lombroso's "Men of Genius."

2. He was a periodical lunatic.

3. He was a hebephreniac, whose misanthropy originated in a desire for notoriety combined with suspicious delusions.