

patient, who is an intelligent and serious man, avers that he has not the slightest consciousness of what occurs.

Upon questioning patient as to his history he states that at 18, while a student at college, he suffered from epileptic seizures of the convulsive form, and that they disappeared after two years of treatment. They did not interfere with his general health; and he attributed them to fatigue after severe study. Patient belongs to a healthy family, and there is no trace of any neurotic disposition.

The pathology of epilepsy came to my aid in the diagnosis of this case.

Assuming, with modern authority, that epilepsy is the result of sudden and acute anemia of the cortex, with congestion of the medulla, we may presume that in this case there is simply acute anemia of the cortex, without notable congestion of the bulb.

As it is probable that the conscious centres are located in the cortex, and moreover that all mandates of the mind are communicated to these convolutions, it is easy to explain the absence of conscious control, and the occurrence of mechanical actions. The cortex—the bond of union between mind and matter, so to say—paralysed, and the great ganglia in perfect condition, the movements are simply like the reflex spinal movements, and are called on in precisely the same manner. The diagnosis of this case seemed at first rather difficult, and I was at first inclined to believe it a case of *catalepsy*. The absence of rigidity however, and the history of the patient led me to class it among those cases termed *partial epilepsy*, and in a late number of the *New York Medical Abstract* several such cases are cited, and thus named.

The treatment employed ultimately was based upon my pathological ideas, and then alone was it successful.

I tried at first the anti-epileptic mixture of Brown-Sequard for two weeks, and the attacks were of frequent occurrence.

I then thought of treating the cerebral anemia, and gave the patient  $\frac{1}{2}$  gr. nitro-glycerine thrice daily. I followed in this the idea of Hammond of New York.

The results were excellent. The fits ceased, and patient passed 3 weeks without a single seizure. At the end of that time he noticed a copious deposit of lithates in the urine, with a

diminution of that secretion, and the following day two seizures occurred; both were very brief in their duration. I prescribed a mixture of pot. bicarb, and all went on well as before.

The patient left shortly afterward for Boston. At last accounts he was still well, and whenever the urine became loaded he had recourse to the potash mixture, and so the fits were averted.

#### ATMOSPHERIC MATERIES MORBIS.

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(Read before the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Montreal.)

GENTLEMEN—We don't know, and perhaps we never will know, what were the characteristics of primordial matter, whether if atoms or molecules or both atoms and molecules.

But this, physical science teaches us that matter, as it now is, is one, only differing in degrees, and that it is indestructible; that mineral matter furnishes the material for the vegetable matter; and that the vegetable furnishes the material for the animal. This evolution of matter shows how it is that all matter is one, only differing in degree, both structurely and chemically, and as it differs in degree so must it necessarily differ in its various phenomenon or forces or functions.

Mineral matter in itself differs in degree, structurely and chemically, and the same can be affirmed of all vegetable and animal matter; and it is because of its phenomenon that we judge of the different degrees of matter, and that we place the nervous system of man as the highest degree of matter because of its phenomena, mind and consciousness, which we find to be of a higher degree than is mind and consciousness in any other animal.

We find, then, that physical science teaches us, that all the different degrees of matter have their own peculiar structure, consequently, that each has its own peculiar phenomenon or force or function, such as psychic, motor, and sensorial phenomenon.

Under the foregoing circumstances let us consider what do we mean by the term atmospheric materies morbis. Do we mean that there is matter floating in the air, either mineral, vegetable, or animal, which is of itself a morbid or destructive matter, when coming in contact with either animal or vegetable organisms, or with both animal and