

clearness and precision. No less than thirty-five members of the Thomsen kin were known to have been affected with the disorder. Of thirteen children of his mother, seven were found to present it. Hereditary transmission would therefore seem to underlie this morbid form, and it is by no means improbable that it has not been exclusively confined to Germany and France, though, from its rarity and its apparent triviality, it may have failed to attract particular attention. The writer of this notice believes that he has seen, at least, one distinctly marked case in Canada, within the last two years, and it may be that the perusal of the following notice of an article by Longuet, in a *Revue critique*, in the *Gazette of Military Sanitation*, will lead some of the readers of the LANCET to recall some observances, which at the time of their occurrence wore an anomalous aspect.

The notice above-mentioned is presented in the *Revista Medico-Quirurgica* of Buenos Aires, for May, 1884, of which the following is a translation from the Spanish.

THE DISEASE OF THOMSEN.—In the critical review by Longuet, we have found the following historic details respecting the disease of Thomsen. The subject observed by Leyden was a discharged soldier, who was unable to open his fist when he had shut it; when reading, he was often unable to follow out the lines; the movements of his tongue were impeded; he could not dance or run. In the same year, 1876, Thomsen and Seeligmüller published the first two memoirs on the subject, which were remarkable for their clear and precise conception of the disease. Thomsen, who was not only an observer of the infirmity, but also a sufferer under it, and furnished the first description of it, has given origin to the name by which it is commonly designated in Germany. His own family presented several examples of it, coming down through five generations, in various degrees, and all presenting some form or other of neurotic character. Of thirteen of his mother's children, seven were affected with it. His own children also were affected, though in a mitigated form.

The case recorded by Seeligmüller was that of a recruit, who was a desperation to his drill instructors, because of the slowness and sluggishness of his motions, in spite of his own earnest desire, in the execution of the orders given him. At a later date, Peters, a surgeon major, published his obser-

vations of a soldier, 20 years old, who was affected similarly. At the command, "march," he remained immovable, as if rooted to the ground; afterwards, having moved his arms and legs disordinately, he succeeded in starting, but he vacillated for ten or twelve paces before he could attain free movement. He was absolutely unable to run, and if he persisted in the attempt he fell; his tongue and the maxillary muscles shared in the impotency; he could not raise his arms above the horizontal direction.

Westphal presented to the Medical Society of Berlin two patients, one of whom was a student of medicine and a nephew of Thomsen; he had been affected from his infancy. The symptoms are always the same; the functional anomaly may be presented in any of the muscles of the body. One of Westphal's cases showed that after sneezing, the patient could not again open his eyes without great effort, and when eating he could not always shut his mouth when he desired. The subjects of the affection have an athletic appearance, but their muscular force is only moderate. Westphal thinks there is a special congenital muscular perversion, coupled with an exaggerated muscular development.

Another recruit has recently attracted the attention of the assistant surgeon major Schonfield. This soldier was sent to hospital because, in his exercise, he suddenly fell to the ground, without any apparent cause. After a rest of ten minutes it was impossible for him to resume the march, at the word of command. He moved with great difficulty, and tottered and fell, rising again only with much difficulty. He had to proceed ten or twelve paces before he could move freely. When he sat down for any time, he could hardly rise again; the torpor, at such times, invaded the upper limbs, as the result of violent exercise. The speech was slow and drawing.

Mobins is the latest writer on the subject. He has published in *Schmidt's Jahrbücher* a very complete analytic review, having personally observed a young student of theology, who was a military volunteer, sent in by surgeon major Sane, who appeared to regard the case as a mimic form of the affection. This youth, after severe fatigue, suddenly became subject to cramps in the calves of his legs, and a stiffness of his limbs which left him powerless for many days. His father presented