

among infants, but in the occurrence, as the numbers of the stock increase, of more numerous cases of adult epilepsy and insanity.

On the paternal side the father, grandfather and great-grandfather were all insane, yet, among the whole 350 members, the number of cases of insanity was only 17 all told. Several of these were of a schizophrenic type; concerning the nature of others the information is vague. The predisposition transmitted in this family is not sufficient to produce a psychosis unless other noxious factors co-operate, important among which is convergent heredity. Nor is the predispositional factor such as can give rise to a psycho-pathological state of any sort indifferently; it has a quality that is specific. Although, as the psychoses tend to show themselves at earlier ages in successive generations, a progressive degeneration in Morel's sense is apparent, by the side of it there is incontestably a regenerative process; for we find on review of the generations successively descending from a single psychotic ancestor, in the second generation, 2 insane and 6 not insane; in the third generation, 7 insane and 28 not insane; in the fourth generation, 7 insane and 91 not insane; in the fifth generation, 151, none as yet insane; and in the sixth generation, 60, none as yet insane. Such figures make it questionable how far the fecundity of mentally tainted persons should by any legal measure be restricted, for this would appreciably diminish the procreative forces of the nation.

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*The Investigation of Forms of Mental Disorder [Die Erforschung psychischer Krankheitsformen]. (Arb. für Psychiat., München, Bd. i, December, 1919.) Kraepelin, Emil.*

Kraepelin describes a system of case-cards that he has been using for over twenty-five years past. For each case he fills up a card, giving—besides the patient's name and other personal details—the most important data, in as concise a form as possible, respecting the causes of the illness, its mode of onset, its phenomena, course, and result. To the observer who has the case fresh in his memory and can quickly pick out essentials from the records, the preparation of such a card is very little trouble; and he will find that, apart from its usefulness for the future, the mere act of summarising thus briefly the main features has great immediate value. Kraepelin has long made it his practice to write up these cards himself. They are of different colour for the two sexes, and from the start of the procedure are type-written in duplicate. One set, arranged in order of admission, is bound in yearly volumes, each with an index of patients' names; the other set is kept loose, and can be sorted in any desired manner according to the particular phenomenon to be investigated. Before every such use they must be checked to see that none has gone astray; if any is lost, a fresh copy can be made from the bound one. In investigating forms of disorder the cards save much delving in voluminous records; and many a valuable observation that, however striking at the time, would, if recorded only in the case-sheets, be inevitably buried and forgotten, can, if noted on the card, maintain its rightful place in the psychiatrist's experience.

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