

management of the lunatic asylums, and he had no doubt that before long some plan would be devised by which their management would be given to these County Boards. But long familiarity with the Public Lunatic Acts had convinced him of the very great difficulty of dealing with those Acts by means of a few clauses in a Bill of this kind. It would be most unsatisfactory, without a review of those Acts, to place the administration of the lunatic asylums in the hands of the County Boards."

---

#### HEREDITARY SUICIDE.

The son of M. Prevost Paradol, the eminent publicist and Minister of France to the United States, has committed suicide by blowing out his brains in the rooms of his tutor in the Rue Douai, Paris. No cause has been ascertained for the extraordinary act of the youth, who was only 17 years of age. It will be remembered that his father put an end to his life in the same manner some years ago.

---

#### Obituary.

##### DR. FOVILLE.

The death of this distinguished physician, at Toulouse, on the 22nd of July, 1878, demands a brief notice of his life and works. We feel this to be the more necessary because his pen has been so long sheathed that there is some danger of the present generation being ignorant of the good work which it once accomplished, and of the important position which he who wielded it, once occupied. As a man, also deservedly respected and beloved, his memory will long be cherished by those who knew him. For many years he was an Honorary Member of the Medico-Psychological Association.

Born at Pontoise, though of a Rouen family, Aug. 6, 1799, Achille Louis Foville was the only son of an only son, and was left an orphan at an early age. Having chosen the medical profession, he pursued his studies in the Paris Schools of Medicine. These completed, he soon distinguished himself by his original researches into the anatomy and physiology of the brain and cord, and the pathology of mental disorders. Thus, when he was only 21, he wrote a *mémoire*, entitled "Sur les Causes et la Siége des Maladies Mentales," which obtained the prize given by Esquirol. The substance of this treatise was used in the "Traité de Ramollissement du cerveau," of Rostan, and in the article "Folie," by Georget in the "Dictionnaire de Médecine."

The functions of the brain possessed a great attraction for young Foville, and so early as 1823 he published the "Recherches sur le siége spécial de différentes fonctions du système nerveux," in conjunction with Pinel Grandchamp. If any one wrote now-a-days to establish the fact that the brain is the seat of the intelligence, he would be ridiculed for asserting a platitude, but it was not so 58 years ago, and we find the author's first position is that intelligence and motion are functions of the encephalon. Going further into detail in regard to the latter, he surmised that the corpus striatum presides over the movements of the leg, and the optic thalamus over those of the arm; also that the cerebellum is the centre of sensation.

If these conclusions show how much advance has been made in the physiology of the brain since this treatise was written, they show also how early an investigator Foville was in this field of inquiry.

How, one asks, came such views to be held in regard to the functions of these ganglia? Were they without foundation? Certainly not. In the light of more recent researches, and following Ferrier, the explanation may be thus expressed. Inasmuch as in cerebral paralysis the most volitional movements are most affected, the arm is more paralysed than the leg. Hence, in a lesion causing paralysis more by functional interference than direct destruction of the motor tracts, the arm would be more affected than the leg; but in a lesion directly invading the motor part of the internal capsule, the leg as well as the arm would be affected. Now a lesion in the optic thalamus would be more or less outside the motor tracts, and would, if causing paralysis, cause a greater degree of paralysis in the arm in accordance with the foregoing generalisation; while a lesion in the corpus striatum would be more likely to cause paralysis of the leg also. And if the lesion invaded both corpus striatum and optic thalamus, of course both would be affected. Apparently, then, the view entertained by Foville, that the corpus striatum is more connected with the leg, was grounded on the greater degree of paralysis of the leg in such cases, and not on the absence of paralysis of the arm. Foville would have said in such cases that both ganglia were affected, but that other facts would show that if the lesions were exactly confined to the corpus striatum, then we should have paralysis exactly limited to the arm—of which, however, proof has not been forthcoming. It is possible that in the lesions described by Foville there may have been many limited to the medullary fasciculi which have been shown to be differentiated, and to have each their own special connection with the motor apparatus, whether of arm, leg, face, &c.

The view that the cerebellum is the centre of sensation appears to have arisen, speculatively, from the relation in which it stands to the sensory tract as enunciated by Bell, rather than upon, as in the former instance, clinical and pathological research.

In 1824 Foville published his Thesis "Observations cliniques propres à éclairer certaines questions relatives à l'aliénation mentale."

In the following year, at the early age of 26, he was, on the recommendation of Esquirol, appointed Medical Superintendent of the Asylum at Rouen. This important post he held nine years, and was also Professor of Physiology in the Rouen School of Medicine. Nor were his scalp and pen idle. He pursued his favourite researches with great zeal, and published (in 1825) "L'Anatomie, la physiologie et la pathologie du Système nerveux cérébro-spinal," a Memoir crowned by the Academy of Medicine; then followed (in 1826) "Mémoire sur l'encephale, adressé à l'Académie des Sciences;" many special articles in the "Dictionnaire de Médecine et de Chirurgie pratique" (1828); in 1833 "La Déformation du crâne par l'usage de certaines coiffures employées pour les nouveaux-nés;" a work which drew attention to a most remarkable custom in some parts of France, that, namely, of compressing and deforming the heads of children in their cradles, a custom which, as the author remarks, one would have supposed peculiar to savages. Now his health unfortunately broke down, and he was obliged to give up his appointment at St. Yon, and travel south in pursuit of health. For three years he lived either at Toulouse or in the Pyrénées, but with only partial restoration of his powers. Then he went a voyage, being appointed to accompany the Prince de Joinville, as a naturalist, to Africa, Brazil, and the United States. Happily, his health was restored, and on returning to France he settled in Paris, and practised as a physician. Several years afterwards, an opening occurred, which induced him to return to asylum work. Esquirol resigned his post at Charenton in 1840, and Foville succeeded him. Here he remained, and increased his reputation, until the year 1848. He published while at Charenton, "Mémoire sur le système cérébro-spinal et spécialement sur les connexions de la moelle avec le cerveau et sur les rapports entre le cerveau et le crâne" (1839). The Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Medicine decided to print this memoir in the reports of M.M. Blainville and Blandin. In 1841 and 1842 he presented three other memoirs to the Academy.

We have next to speak of his classic work on the brain—the last which he published, after being engaged in scientific research and in preparation for the press during a period of about a quarter of a century. The title of this work was "Traité complet de l'Anatomie, de la Physiologie, et de la Pathologie du Système nerveux cérébro-spinal." He says—and his remarks are autobiographically interesting—that among the parts whose lesion appeared to him to determine particular effects upon movement the cornu Ammonis figured with the corpus striatum and optic thalamus. "It was easy," he says, "with the anatomical knowledge introduced by Gall, which then prevailed, to conceive the influence of lesions of the corpus striatum and optic thalamus upon the spinal cord. There was no theory of this kind which was applicable to the cornu Ammonis, and it was with the object of recognising the connexions of this part with the cord that I undertook my first anatomical investigations. It is in the School of Gall that I have learnt to separate without the aid of a sharp instrument the delicate fibrous parts of the Encephalon. Commencing with the brain, my anatomical labours have been limited during many years to this organ. It was only after being able to separate distinctly the different elements of which it is composed, that I saw some unite, in a particular region of each hemisphere, with the prolongations of the posterior columns of the cord, and others with the anterior. A remarkable circumstance increased the importance of these conclusions. The region of the brain in which I saw a complete set of encephalic fibres join the posterior column of the cord, was the meeting-place of the optic and olfactory nerves. The first motor nerves arose from the other fibrous system prolonged into the anterior column of the cord. It was then that my own labours, united with those of Sir Charles Bell, derived thence a fresh importance. But we do not only find in the brain a system of fibres, of which some combine with the sensory nerves and the posterior column of the cord, and others with the anterior column and the motor nerves; between these two systems, the termination of the one and the origin of the other, exists on the surface of the hemispheres, a cortex whose lesions are indicated by intellectual disorders. This cortex, with the circumference of which the fibrous expansion of sensory nerves and the posterior column unite—on the deep surface of which arise the fibrous systems prolonged into the anterior column, and consequently the motor nerves—must be alone the material instrument of intelligence."

Foville proceeds to define his position in relation to materialism. "If," he says, "to arrive at a conclusion, this question only demanded the verification of the reasons upon which the materialists and the spiritualists (i.e. pneumatists) depend, it would be simply a problem of clinical observation and pathological anatomy. The solution would depend upon the presence or absence of cerebral maladies in the bodies of those who have manifested intellectual derangements. This mode of arguing may seem vicious. The materialists who deduce from the effect produced by lesions of the brain upon the intellectual manifestations, that the brain is the organ which produces the intelligence, reason as those would, who from the fact that the sense of light is injured or abolished by lesions of the eye, conclude that the eye is the organ which produces light and images."

"On the other hand, the pneumatists, who deny the influence of cerebral lesions upon intellectual manifestations, commit an error, the consequences of which appear to be equally dangerous. We may say, indeed, that from the moment we are able to prove the coincidence between the changes in the intelligence and those of the brain (and in my opinion this is not difficult to establish in the majority of cases) the cause of the pneumatists is lost. But it is precisely because the intellectual disorders find their explanation in the disorders of the organs necessary to the manifestations of the intelligence, that we are compelled to regard the principle of intelligence as unalterable in itself. If we refuse to explain these disorders by those of the instruments necessary to their manifestations, one of two things is necessary; either to deny its alterations, which is contrary to the evidence; or rather, while recognising them without explaining them by the derangement of the organs, to admit that the intelligence is directly alterable."

This is not, then, to rehabilitate the moral of man as it is pretended to do; to admit that the moral is in itself susceptible to alterations to which the substance of the brain remains a stranger. It is, on the contrary, to degrade and debase this moral. Thus, on both sides, the question is badly supported." Foville himself held "that the principle of the intelligence ought to be conceived as independent of matter. It is no more produced by the cerebral substance than light is developed by the substances of the eye. The manifestations of the intelligence require a bodily organ as the manifestations of light do; the brain in one case, the eye in the other." Foville maintained the same doctrine throughout life. He was a pneumato-somatist—opposed to exclusive spiritual or material views—a firm believer in the independent future existence of man after the destruction of the body. Foville's attitude towards the doctrine of Gall, which was the "burning question" during the period of his physiological and anatomical researches, is thus expressed. He held that "the theory which the genius of Gall, and which his disciples continue to profess under the name of phrenology, is not an indifferent conception which can be treated lightly, whether we adopt it or oppose it. It imposes as a duty upon all who are seriously occupied with the study, to seek to render an exact account of the relations between this organ and its bony envelope; and perhaps these relations have never been perfectly understood." Before leaving the work from which these citations have been made, it is impossible not to express admiration of the lucid manner in which the structure of the brain, and especially the disposition of the convolutions, are described, and also beautifully drawn in the plates which accompany the letter press. Up to the period when Gratiolet produced his remarkable work (1854), Foville's classification of the cerebral convolutions was the most distinct and useful.

Unfortunately this work was never finished, or rather the remainder, though written, was not published, and the MS. was destroyed in an inundation at Toulouse.

From the date of Foville's quitting Charenton he practised in Paris until 1869, when he went to reside at Toulouse, where he became the physician in a *Maison de Santé*. Here he spent the remainder of his lengthened life, dying at the age of 79, leaving, among other children, his son, Achille Foville, the well-known Superintendent of Quatre Mares, as his successor and representative—one who has already shown that the mantle has descended upon shoulders worthy of his father's name and fame.

In person, Dr. Foville was a large-made man, with cubical head, strongly-marked features, and remarkably blue and keen eyes. He was considered to have the Norman type of figure and features.

His character was marked by power rather than brilliancy, by good judgment and solid qualities rather than those which shine on the surface. The English poet who describes the Frenchman as "gay" would have found an exception in Foville, for he was eminently sober-minded, and spoke little except to discuss important topics. He was simple in his tastes, and cared little for general society; and though much at the Court of Louis Philippe, being his physician, he was not exactly in his element as a fashionable Paris doctor. Much more to his taste was his domestic life, where, in the midst of his family, he could unbend and laugh heartily over the jokes of his children while watching their play. His passion for little children was, indeed, quite a feature in his character. His friendships were lasting when once made. His most intimate friend was an English physician, Dr. Hodgkin, whom he met first in the wards of the Paris hospital as a fellow-student. The friendship thus formed between the two young doctors was a lifelong and very cordial one. The ardent pursuit of pathology was common to both; and not less attractive to each were the sobriety and kindness of heart of the other, associated with a firm but liberal faith.

*Requiescat in pace.*

D. H. T.

### Correspondence.

#### ERYSIPELAS AND POST-MORTEM EXAMINATIONS IN COUNTY ASYLUMS.

*To the Editors of the Journal of Mental Science.*

GENTLEMEN,

It is peculiarly fortunate for my argument that Dr. T. McDowall did not maintain his resolution expressed in your July number, wherein he says—"This is the only communication with which I shall trouble you on the subject." He now supplements his opinions by statistics, which corroborate in each respect my statement that erysipelas has been rife in several well-conducted county asylums, and that the increase of late years in the number of post-mortem examinations has been followed by an increase of that disease; thus strongly supporting my hypothesis that some close relation exists between the two.

(1.) With regard to the prevalence of erysipelas in county asylums in England and Wales, Dr. McDowall writes—"One gratifying result of this correspondence is the proof that asylums are exceedingly satisfactory in their general hygienic arrangements. In each 1,000 of their population, only one death per