

Periscope.

Rivista mensile di psichiatria forense, antropologia criminale e scienze affini.

(Vol. V, 1902, No. 1, January.)

1. Tattooing of Neapolitan Criminals. A. DEBLASIO.
2. Restricted Responsibility. P. PENTA.

1. *Tattooing of Criminals.*—A highly suggestive sketch touching upon tattooing as expressive of the psychology of the criminal; shedding, *en passant*, some interesting light on the well known Camorra, an organized body of Italian criminals. The four individuals who constitute the subject of the study are brought forward as a proof of the author's contention that in many cases tattooing tells the story of the individual, certainly to those who are able to decipher it. Moreover, tattooing very often presents in figures and letters the criminal's aims and intentions as to the future, and may thus assist the authorities in preventing him from carrying the latter into effect. This refers especially to tattooing expressing revenge (*vendetta*).

2. *Diminished Responsibility.*—According to a great number of prominent alienists, among them Schrenck-Notzing, diminished responsibility is to be charged in cases of even slight mental affections, in incipient stages of others (as that of general paralysis), in simple psychic degeneration without delirium, in cases on the border line of insanity, those of sexual perversion, chronic alcoholism, neurasthenia, general epilepsy, etc. According to Mercier there is a certain sphere of activity in which every insane individual is to be held irresponsible, but outside of which any act of his may be punishable by law; so that but a few insane can be held entirely irresponsible. The author inclines to the idea that the physician should not be permitted as such to decide on the degree of responsibility in these cases, but should simply and clearly describe the patient's mental state, leaving to the judge the application of the law.

(Vol. V, 1902, No. 2, February.)

1. Examination of Four Crania of Insane Criminals. G. ANTONIUS and M. FALCIOLA.
2. Asylums for Criminals and Departments for Insane in Penitentiaries. P. PENTA.

1. *Examination of Four Crania.*—This is a minute and accurate examination of four crania from a collection of skulls of insane in the Voghesa Museum, whereby the author intends to prove not only the existence of degenerative stigmata morphologically, but that of a real anthropological type in a homogeneous group of criminals. The latter all committed homicide, and their skulls present such a remarkable similarity that they can easily be mistaken one for another. The author adds the results of this examination to the numerous proofs of the fact that Lombroso's theory as regards the criminal rests on a solid anatomical basis.

2. *Asylums for the Insane.*—The unprecedented crowding of the asylums for the insane of late years is ascribed by the author chiefly to two facts: the terrible increase of insanity as proven statistically, and the better as well as the more diffuse knowledge of the nature of insanity

itself. To the new school of criminology is due the merit of pointing out the relation between insanity and crime. The asylums for criminals should be restricted only to such insane criminals whose pernicious tendencies, through a certain complexity of circumstances, can never be eradicated; so that their liberation will be fraught with danger to the community; the others, such for example in whom insanity develops during their detention, or those with slight forms of imbecility, may be left in penitentiaries, there to be watched and treated. For these latter special departments should be established in the various detention houses (such are already to be found in some jails in Germany), under the care and guidance of physicians more or less skilled in the problem of treating the insane.

(Vol. V, 1902, Nos. 3, 4 and 5, March, April, May.)

1. The Neapolitan Gypsies. A. DE BLASIO.
2. The Criminal Soldier. F. SAVORITO.
3. Tuberculosis and Insanity. A. GRIMALDI and F. SCOTTI.

1. *The Gypsies*.—An interesting article on the comparative anthropology of the gypsy.

2. *The Criminal Soldier*.—This is a series embracing observations and histories of eighty-five subjects, classified in certain anthropological categories.

The whole series presents first of all a variegated collection of hereditary mental defects, including insanity, epilepsy, hysteria, criminality, alcoholism, consanguineous marriages, etc.—a rich pabulum for the future criminal to grow on. And, as a matter of fact, the subjects themselves show in their anamnestic data the full effects of the hereditary influences, what the author calls an "aberrant" organic development; among these data we find most predominating abnormalities of the nervous system: such as "convulsibility" in the early years, nocturnal enuresis extending even into adult life, somnambulism, vertiginous attacks, etc. Their moral nature, the way "they thought, felt and acted," is fully in accord with what could be expected from their heredity and personal anamneses. Indeed, the personal observations and a detailed classification of their defects, show that the series ran the whole gamut of degeneracy, vice and crime: habitual alcoholism, general dissolution, extreme irascibility, marked precocious criminality, etc. Special attention is drawn to the fact that both the insanity and the delinquency were of a precocious nature. Finally two tables containing the morphological and functional stigmata of the subjects complete the picture of the series. Among the first are found cranio-facial asymmetries of various forms,—acrocephaly, clinoccephaly, prognathism, prominent zygomata, precocious calvities, asymmetrical ears, etc.; then, gynecomastia, disproportionate genitalia, and so on; among the latter, various tics, tremors, nystagmus, strabismus, exaggerated reflexes, ankle clonus, dermatographia, hyperesthesia cutis and the like.

The subjoined detailed personal observations of individual subjects of the series are of great interest, but do not lend themselves to abstraction.

3. *Tuberculosis and Insanity*.—The frequency of mental decay among phthisical patients had been observed by many investigators. Féré had long ago found phthisis quite prevalent among epileptics, while in tubercular families nervo-psychic degenerations are far from being rare. One of the present authors presented some time ago the genealogical tree of a paranoiac of a greatly tainted family, whose decadence dates from a tuberculous forefather. Tuberculosis may well be placed in the same cat-

egory with syphilis, alcoholism, and pellagra among the pernicious factors in the development of the race. The present investigation is based on statistics supplied by several asylums which were addressed on the question of insanity and phthisis. (A procedure which would be of great value if instituted by the proper authorities here.) Out of a total of some sixteen thousand insane there were over nine hundred phthisical sufferers of whom eight hundred died during the last half decade. Unfortunately no definite data could be obtained as to the period when tuberculosis developed (before or after the appearance of insanity), although it may be stated in a somewhat general way that in the majority of cases phthisis developed while in the institution. It was shown clearly that hereditarily there was in the majority of cases a neuro-psychopathic tendency in the family; the phthisical process exerted generally a very deleterious effect on the course of the mental malady; while some few cases showed some amelioration and even mental lucidity in the last moments of life. In view of the fact that the unfortunate insane in his search for a remedy for mental rehabilitation falls a prey to a far more terrible physical malady, the author recommends that insane asylums should be provided with special isolation wards for phthisics, and even that special asylums be founded for the care of phthisical insane.

In connection with this it is interesting to compare the Report of the Tuberculosis Committee of the Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland, abstracted in the November issue of the JOURNAL.

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Neurologisches Centralblatt.

(1902, Vol. 21, No. 15,, August 1.)

1. An Unusual Case of Facial Spasm (Myokymie) Occurring in the Distribution of the Left Facial Nerve. M. BERNHARDT.
2. On Insanity Following Experimental Autointoxication. Thyroid Psychoses in Dogs. F. BLUM.
3. On the Subcortical Origin of Isolated Muscular Spasms. J. SORGO.

1. *Facial Spasm*.—The presence of persistent hypertonicity of the facial muscles of the left side, associated with constant fibrillary tremors in the same distribution, in a woman of twenty-eight years, disappearing after two months, led the author to class this under those already reported as myokymie. The distribution affecting the face is unique.

2. *Experimental Psychoses in Dogs*.—Blum, after an extensive series of experiments on dogs comes to the conclusion that the thyroid is a toxin-destroying organ, the toxin being removed from the circulation and destroyed by its activity. He further believes that the toxin is elaborated in the intestinal canal from albuminous products. Animals deprived of their thyroid glands often manifest peculiar psychical symptoms, including hallucinations, character changes, loss of attention, etc. The tetanic attacks vary considerably in different animals; in some simple extensor cramp, in others clonic movements, etc., were observed. The psychic disturbances lasted from a few days to many weeks, and in some were distinctly periodical in character.

3. *Isolated Muscle Spasms*.—To be continued.

(1902, Vol. 21, No. 16, August 16.)

1. Pupillary Inertia in Accommodation and Convergence. J. STRASBURGER.
2. Multiple Neuritis and Basedow's Disease. T. DILLER.