

on the return of consciousness, the person awakes as from a dream, having no sense of the time which has elapsed since the moment of the attack. All causes which disturb the healthy condition of the brain, such as alcohol, opium, and other narcotic drugs, or which disorder more especially the circulation in that organ, such as those inducing fever, or inflammation, produce corresponding derangements of the intellectual powers; modifying the laws of the association of ideas, introducing confusion in the perceptions, irregularity in the trains of thought, or incapacity of reasoning, and leading to the infinitely diversified forms of mental hallucination, delirium, or insanity. Even the strongest minds are subject to vicissitudes arising from slighter causes, which affect the general tone of the nervous system. Vain, indeed, was the boast of the ancient Stoics that the human mind is independent of the body, and impenetrable to external influences. No mortal man, whatever may be the vigour of his intellect, or the energy of his application, can withstand the influence of impressions on his external senses; for, if sufficiently reiterated or intense, they will always have power, if not to engross his whole attention, at least to interrupt the current of his thoughts, and direct them into other channels. Nor is it necessary for producing this effect that cannon should thunder in his ears; the mere rattling of a window, or the creaking of a hinge will often be sufficient to disturb his philosophical meditations, and sever the whole chain of his ideas. "Marvel not," says Pascal, "that this profound statesman is just now incapable of reasoning justly; for, behold, a fly is buzzing round his head. If you wish to restore to him the power of correct thinking, and of distinguishing truth from falsehood, you must first chase away the insect, holding in thralldom that exalted reason, and that gigantic intellect, which govern empires, and decide the destinies of mankind."

Although we must necessarily infer, from the evidence furnished by experience, that some physical changes in the brain accompany the mental processes of thought, we are in