

assumes a parched character, and sometimes is effected by *erythema pellagrosa*, gradually restores the symptoms to a kind of uniformity. There is less heat at the head and under the axillæ, with less coldness of the extremities; the skin being generally arid, dry, pulverulent, and wrinkled." "The play of the nervous currents," he continues, "explains these variations. In mental derangement the passions are reflected in a more or less *bizarre*, disordered, and excessive manner. But, as is justly observed by Ch. L. Dumas, the celebrated professor of physiology, at Montpellier, some passions, such as anger, for instance, direct movement from within to the exterior; while others, such as fear, drive it back from the exterior to the interior, and thus by deranging the circulation vitiate the fluids, the blood, bile, saliva, perspiration, &c. H. Davy has also proved, by numerous experiments, that, under the influence of intense moral excitement, the temperature of the body may fall as low as 27 degrees (81° Fahr.). It is evident that both phenomena, eccentric and concentric, will produce the same consequences among the insane."

PART IV.—PSYCHOLOGICAL NEWS.

THE REV. MR. SPEKE.—The opinions of the medical attendants upon the Rev. Mr. Speke, published in *The Times* at the request of his family, amply bear out the views expressed by *The Lancet*. There can be no doubt that Mr. Speke had long suffered under morbid impressions, which attained their climax on the occasion of the marriage of his friend—"the marriage he could not bear to see." It is impossible to come to any other conclusion from the account of his case, drawn up by his physicians, we believe, Dr. Gull and Dr. Tuke, than that Mr. Speke has suffered under that most common form of nervous irritability which, under proper treatment, is quickly remediable; but which, if neglected, or, as it would seem to have been in this case, treated by advertising quacks, may lead to melancholy, to temporary insanity, or even to suicide. We are glad to find that Mr. Speke has a fair prospect of restoration to health; but it is sad to think that his case is only one of many. How much misery might be avoided, how much mental anguish escaped, if sufferers like Mr. Speke would but place themselves at once in the hands of their usual medical advisers.—*Lancet*, March 7.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CLINIQUE AT CAMBRIDGE.—The medical school of the Cambridge University is to be congratulated on a recent addition to its attractions—namely, the establishment of a *clinique* for the study of mental diseases. Dr. Mackenzie Bacon, the superintendent of the County Asylum at Fulbourn, lately offered to receive a class at the asylum, once a week, for the purposes of clinical study, and to give a more or less systematic course of instruction in the subject of insanity—an offer of which a good many have availed themselves. These

meetings, of course, correspond with the academical terms. The proximity of the asylum to the University enables the men to take advantage of this opportunity; and in this way they are more fortunate than the London schools, which can find lecturers but not patients for illustration and observation.—*Lancet*, March 7.

THE METROPOLITAN POOR ACT.—We have already proofs enough before us of action being taken under the Metropolitan Poor Act; and it must be admitted that the great changes in Metropolitan Poor-law administration, are many of them, of a kind which require time for their full development. Large establishments are not to be built, nor great schemes brought into play in a day. We may, however, refer to a few facts to show that Metropolitan Poor-law administrators have not been idle during the past year; and that the progress shadowed forth in Mr. Hardy's Bill is now becoming an actual fact. The Metropolitan District Board formed under that Act have already claimed sites for two imbecile asylums, each of which is to contain accommodation for 1500 inmates; and we may conclude (as architects have already been selected to compete for the designs) that before the summer is over these grand buildings will be rising out of their foundations. The sites are in the neighbourhood of Watford and of Caterham. Large plots of land have been purchased on each site, in order that the sewage of the asylums may be disposed of by irrigation, &c., on the land itself. More difficulty has naturally been found in obtaining sites for the Fever and Small-pox Hospitals. For them it is necessary that land should be obtained in the vicinity of London. Fever and small-pox patients cannot be transported, like the imbecile, far away into the country. The energetic committees of the Metropolitan Board, with Dr. Sibson and Mr. Holmes as their respective chairmen, to whom the obtaining of proper sites for the Small-pox and Fever Hospitals is intrusted, will doubtless ere long accomplish their duty; indeed, one site on which, we understand, both a small-pox and a fever hospital will be erected, has already been obtained for the northern district of London. As our readers are already aware, sites are also to be provided for similar hospitals in the east end of London and south of the Thames. Thus, under Mr. Hardy's Bill—ere it is yet twelve months old—provision of the most perfect kind is being actually made for the fever and small-pox cases occurring amongst the poorer classes of the metropolis; and for 3000 of its imbeciles. In addition to these, the groundwork has been laid for the effectual separation of the sick poor from the ordinary inmates of the workhouses. We fear it would frighten the timid ratepayer were we to offer an estimate of what we believe to be the outlay which must be made by the metropolis in order that guardians may set their houses in order. And the work is all in hand, either *in esse* or *in posse*. In several cases it is already begun. Nor has that part of the Bill which provides dispensaries for the sick poor been forgotten. Some dispensaries are already in existence; and arrangements are, we understand, being made for their establishment in all those districts where they are required. That these great alterations must eventually result to the benefit of medical officers of workhouses we cannot doubt. We believe that it has already done so in several instances; where, for example, guardians now provide the drugs without diminishing the salaries of the officers who had agreed to provide them. We may safely anticipate that the medical men selected to manage the imbecile asylums and fever and small-pox hospitals will be men of standing in the profession, and that their salaries will be equivalent to their standing. This, again, will tend to elevate generally the status of Poor-law medical officers. We might, also, in this catalogue of facts, set down the changes which have taken place in the management of existing metropolitan workhouses; the earnest attempt made by some of the boards to meet the existing pressure of poverty by hiring and fitting up temporarily large buildings for the accommodation of their poor; and their liberal treatment of the sick. The past year has undoubtedly been in great part a year of deliberation, how best to carry into action the provision of Mr. Hardy's Bill. Those on whom devolved the duty of resolving all the many difficulties of the various cases may be well

excused if they hastened gently to their conclusion. This is a matter in which there is no stepping back. But action must now soon follow counsel on a still larger scale; and we may venture to guess that before another year is past there will scarcely be an union or parish in the metropolis which will not have recourse to the good offices of the medical inspector, the architect, and the bricklayer.—*British Medical Journal*, February 1.

PROPOSED NEW ASYLUM FOR IDIOTS.—At the late quarter sessions for the county of Warwick it was determined to erect an Asylum for that county to accommodate not more than 200 idiots. This is the first county in England in which special provision is determined to be made under the Lunacy Acts for pauper idiots as distinguished from lunatics; but it is decided by the magistracy that the new Asylum shall be under the government of the same committee as the County Lunatic Asylum, and that it shall be erected, if possible, on land contiguous to that of the Lunatic Asylum, so as to be also under the general supervision of Dr. Parsey, the Medical Superintendent of that Asylum. The county of Warwick has already the honourable position, with regard to its insane poor, of providing in its County Asylum for a larger proportion of them than any, except two, other English counties (80 per cent. of those subject to the inspection of the Lunacy Commissioners); but among the inmates are about 60 idiots, some of them under ten years of age. There are also about 100 in the different Workhouses; and, in addition to these, it has been ascertained, by careful inquiry instituted throughout the county, that the proportion of idiots and imbeciles of the poorer class living with their friends, and very few of them under any supervision, average one to about every 1000 of the population. The population of the county of Warwick, exclusive of Birmingham, which makes independent provision for its insane poor, is in round numbers 260,000; its present Lunatic Asylum will accommodate 460 patients, or one in 565 of this population; and it is supposed that the additional two hundred beds given by the Idiot Asylum will enable all the wants of these two unfortunate classes to be amply provided for, as it is not to be expected that nearly all the idiotic and imbecile poor will require the special care of an Asylum. It is very satisfactory to find that the magistrates adopted the enlightened course of separating the idiots from the lunatics, thus giving facilities for their independent special treatment, instead of converting the present County Asylum into an unwieldy size by unsatisfactory enlargements.—*Medical Times and Gazette*, January 18.

THE MEDICAL STAFF IN THE IRISH DISTRICT ASYLUMS.—The attention of Government ought certainly to be directed to a complaint which is very reasonably made by our Irish correspondent in his letter published in *The Lancet* of last week. It appears that the Irish public lunatic asylums are very ill provided with resident medical officers. Whatever may be the number of inmates—and this, it appears, varies from 740 in the Richmond down to 130 in the Carlow Asylum—and whatever may be the number of visiting physicians appointed to attend upon them, by some unaccountably perverse rule, no more than one resident physician is ever allowed to each establishment. There is no need to discuss the propriety of this arrangement; the common sense of the profession, and one would suppose of the public equally, must condemn such a state of things. It is plain that upon the resident medical officer, far more than on the visiting physician, must fall the responsibility of treatment in difficult cases, and that on his skill and hourly watchfulness must mainly depend the chances of cure in critical, and especially in acute, cases. To overburden the resident physician with work and responsibility is, therefore, to do the maximum of injury to the patients. And, certainly, to suppose that any one medical resident can effectively supervise 750—or for that matter 350—insane persons, would be to go a long way towards proving one's own lunacy. Undoubtedly, in all but the very smallest asylums at any rate, there should invariably be an assistant, as well as a principal resident medical officer. To say the least of it, there must be times when an active asylum physician must need relaxation, or must needs be absent on private

business, and it is absolutely indispensable to the good management of a large medical establishment that some one should be on the spot to assume his duties, who is already familiar to some extent with the cases of the patients, and is also accustomed to the routine of the asylum, and able to make the wheels of discipline work smoothly. For this purpose an assistant, trained under the eye of the principal resident physician, is exactly what is wanted. But besides this there is another and most practical point suggested by our correspondent—namely, that if we are to keep up the supply of men who shall be properly qualified to take the supreme charge of any of these public asylums—even of one with only 150 beds—we must have such posts as that of Assistant resident, in which men may be gradually trained into fitness for the responsible office of managing the whole medical discipline of such places. It is of supreme importance, as regards the scientific education of young alienist physicians, that they should not commence active practice by being pitchforked suddenly into a place of irresponsible power (medically speaking), where the fullest liberty would be allowed them for airing those *à priori* notions to which all young men are liable, but which specially beset young men who have to deal for the first time with a very difficult and mysterious subject. And we may add one more consideration—namely, that if the day is ever to come when the obvious and common sense step of utilising public asylums as schools for the study of lunacy shall be adopted, it will be found utterly impossible to employ the resources of these establishments for clinical teaching so long as they are insufficiently supplied with resident officers. Nothing but a sufficient supply of resident medical officers, to ensure that individual patients are *closely watched*, as well as cleverly treated, can make the histories of their cases sufficiently accurate to be really valuable in teaching men who have yet the alphabet of alienist medicine to learn.—*The Lancet*, January 11.

Appointments.

P. M. COOKE, L.A.H. Dub., has been appointed Apothecary to the New County Wexford Lunatic Asylum at Enniscorthy.

T. E. CRALLAN, M.A., has been appointed Chaplain to the Sussex Lunatic Asylum.

T. G. CRANFIELD, M.D., has been appointed Visiting Physician to the new County Wexford Lunatic Asylum at Enniscorthy.

P. M. CULLINAN, M.B., F.R.C.S.I., has been appointed Consulting and Visiting Physician to the District Lunatic Asylum for the County of Clare.

G. S. ELLIOT, L.R.C.P. Ed., has been appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the County and City of Worcester Lunatic Asylum at Powick, vice G. J. Hearder, M.D., appointed Medical Superintendent of the Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, and Cardiganshire joint Lunatic Asylum at Carmarthen.

J. H. HATCHELL, L.K.Q.C.P.I., has been appointed Resident Medical Superintendent of the Maryborough District Lunatic Asylum, vice T. W. Shiell, M.B., appointed to the District Lunatic Asylum at Enniscorthy.

J. TREGELLES HINGSTON, Esq., has been appointed Medical Superintendent of the Isle of Man Lunatic Asylum.

HENRY HAWKINS, M.A., late Chaplain of the Sussex Lunatic Asylum, has been appointed to the Middlesex Lunatic Asylum at Colney Hatch.

G. MICKLEY, M.A., M.B., Cantab., has been appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Three Counties Asylum, Arlesey, Beds.

R. H. HEURTLEY SANKEY, M.R.C.S., has been appointed Superintendent and Medical Officer of the County Asylum, Littlemore, near Oxford, on the resignation of Mr. William Ley.

DR. SIBBALD, Medical Superintendent of the District Asylum for Argyleshire, and Dr. MACKINTOSH, Medical Superintendent of the District Asylum for Perthshire, have been elected "*Membres Associés étrangers*" of the *Société Médico-Psychologique*.