

affairs, what circumstances, personal or otherwise, would induce you to suppose that he has an insane diathesis?

4. Distinguish between the erroneous beliefs of a sane, and the delusions of an insane man.

5. Contrast the mental characteristics of the idiot with those of the insane.

6. What perversions of healthy sensation (common and special) are frequently met with in the insane?

The Lunacy Bill.

As we write, the Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill, which was ordered to be printed January 31st, 1887, has passed through Committee in the House of Lords, several amendments having been accepted by the Lord Chancellor. What alterations the House of Commons may introduce, it is impossible to foresee.

As is well known to our readers, the new Bill closely resembled that introduced by Lord Herschell, but a new clause, upon which Lord Halsbury specially prided himself, in reference to the notice served upon every patient before he could be placed under care, giving him power to appeal to and appear before a magistrate, has been withdrawn, and a less perilous provision substituted for it. A more objectionable enactment could scarcely have been devised by the wit of even a Lord Chancellor. Happily, both Lord Herschell and Lord Selborne perceived its mischievous character. Lord Grimthorpe, in moving the substitution of other words for Clause 3, pointed out that it would facilitate the escape of alleged lunatics from the country, or even from the world. The noble lord had received a letter from a medical practitioner stating that he had never known so many suicides of alleged lunatics as had occurred during the last two years; the result, he believed, of the fear of publicity. Lord Selborne maintained that the clause as it stood in the Bill would be absolutely destructive of its main object, namely, the prompt placing under restraint and supervision the alleged lunatic before he could injure himself or others. To proceed against such a person as a criminal and to put him upon his defence would be a perversion of the whole law of lunacy. He considered the proposal a most ingenious device to defeat the objects of the Lunacy Act. Lord Herschell, with every desire to support the Bill, was unable to do so in

regard to the proposed alteration. He did not think they were justified in running the risk of the alleged lunatic putting an end to his life, or assaulting those around him, or escaping, in consequence of the serving upon him the notice proposed by the Lord Chancellor, who, in reply, observed that he did not know why an examination before a magistrate should be more injurious to the lunatic than that of medical men before signing a certificate. His lordship was at a loss to understand why a magistrate should not be quite as competent to decide the question with a judicial mind as a medical man! This is quite consistent with the general style of lawyers, and notably of Lord Bramwell, who, as we know, thinks that it does not require a surgeon to decide whether a man is lame or not—in oblivion of the fact that Sir James Paget would be more capable than Lord Bramwell of deciding whether lameness, in a particular instance, were real or feigned.

Lord Monkswell moved an amendment, which was very properly accepted and added to the Bill, providing that a justice upon information that a person within his jurisdiction, not a pauper and not wandering at large, is deemed to be a lunatic, and is not under proper care or control, or is cruelly treated or neglected, shall “either himself visit the alleged lunatic, or, whether making such visit or not, shall direct two qualified medical practitioners to visit and examine the alleged lunatic.” This is a valuable addition to the Bill, which will be one of its good points to set against a good many which are either uncalled-for or positively detrimental. Among the clauses of the Bill which will meet with the approval of medical men engaged in lunacy, is the provision in Clause 39 for commitment of the estate only and not of the person of the lunatic, to which in Committee the Lord Chancellor made some important additions. With regard to private asylums, although new licenses will not be granted, existing asylums can be transferred, and the vested interests of the proprietors are studiously respected. Although they will still have to compete with registered hospitals, they will not have anything to fear now from the establishment of other private asylums, and in this sense they will enjoy a very valuable monopoly. Thus the fear which at one time weighed heavily upon the minds of the proprietors of licensed houses is fortunately removed, and they will in future enjoy unmolested that position of happy tranquillity and assured rest, for which they will no doubt feel

deeply thankful after the troublous times of agitation, disturbance, and attack to which they have been subjected for several years—that is assuming that the Bill passes into law, and that the clauses providing for the future regulations for private asylums remain in their present form. Other clauses in the Bill advantageous to medical men, but clauses by which those who sign certificates in lunacy in good faith are protected from legal action will prove very beneficial, and will restore the confidence lost by the numerous actions brought in recent times against members of the medical profession in consequence of signing these certificates.

As we have pointed out in the first "Occasional," Lord Monkswell succeeded in introducing an amendment, good as far as it goes, in regard to the pensions of superintendents.

PART II.—REVIEWS.

The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley. By EDWARD DOWDEN, LL.D. 2 vols. Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co. London, 1886.

Surely, if there ever were a subject for psychological study, it is to be found in the mental organization of Shelley. Standing in the first rank of poets, even if inferior, as Matthew Arnold says, to Wordsworth, he is a great deal more than a poet in the estimation of large numbers; and in this character he attracts the interest and excites the admiration of many who have but little taste for poetry, and do not really admire Shelley because he was a poet. The fact is, Shelley's mental constitution finds a response in organizations similarly constituted, *quoad* his peculiar temperament, but destitute of his poetic gift. It is, we must admit, a misfortune that a nature like his magnetizes many whose dispositions do not require to be fed with the food which Shelley's restless nature supplies, but require, on the contrary, precisely opposite aliment.

Some, we suppose, will experience a sort of repugnance to subjecting so transcendent a genius to the cold analysis of psychological science. But what if it be found that such a study throws great light upon Shelley's career?

The grandfather of the poet, Sir Bysshe Shelley, was a handsome gentleman, clear-witted and wilful. When of