

OCCASIONAL NOTES OF THE QUARTER.

Professor Griesinger.

Ich erfülle die schmerzliche Pflicht, Freunden und Verwandten den gestern Abend 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ Uhr erfolgten Hingang meines innigst geliebten Gatten, des Geheimen Medicinal-Rath Professor **Griesinger**, anzuzeigen. Er starb, 51 Jahre alt, an Vereiterung der Nierengegend und hinzugetretener diphtheritischer Lähmung. Unermüdet der Wissenschaft und seinem Berufe ergeben, durfte er hoffen, dass die Saat seiner Arbeit reifen werde; in dieser Ueberzeugung nahm er Abschied von diesem Leben.*

Die tiefgebeugte Wittwe

Josephine Griesinger,

geb. von Rom.

BERLIN,

den 27. October 1868.

THERE are few among the readers of this Journal who will not mourn with almost a widow's sorrow the heavy loss of which they are informed by this announcement. Alas! it is

* I fulfil the painful duty of announcing to friends and relatives the death of my dearly beloved husband, the Medical Privy Councillor, Professor Griesinger, which took place at half-past seven yesterday evening. He died, aged 51, from iliac abscess and diphtheritic paralysis following it. Unwearied in his devotion to science, and to his profession, he might well hope that the seed of his labour will ripen. In this conviction he departed this life.

Berlin, 27th October, 1868.

The deeply afflicted Widow,
JOSEPHINE GRIESINGER.

beyond expression sad: that he who towered so high among us in scientific eminence and moral worth, and whom all honest men who knew him loved, has died in his prime, "and hath not left his peer."

But, oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return.

What boots it with incessant care to toil in the arduous pursuit of truth, to contrive great schemes of progress, to cherish high aspiring aims, to "scorn delights and live laborious days," when labour, and honour, and aspirations lead but to the grave? As we think of this great and noble-minded man now laid low in his narrow bed, with the shroud "at rest on his pulseless breast," a feeling of despair at the littleness of life overwhelms us for the moment, and the bitter exclamation rises involuntarily to the lips, On earth there is nothing great but death. "For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun? For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath: for all is vanity."

We can do little more on this sad occasion than give hearty expression to our sense of, and sorrow for, the loss which medical science, and medical psychology in particular, has sustained by the death of Griesinger. For the real history of the work and the events of his life, we must trust to those of his own country who knew and appreciated him, and who doubtless will not fail to place on record what may justly be told of his career. This much may be said from personal knowledge: that he assuredly had that deep sincerity of nature which is the only foundation of high excellence in any department of human activity. He was emphatically a genuine man: there was nothing of pretence, nothing spurious, nothing superficial in his character; what he did was the earnest expression of his highly gifted nature—was instinct with the genius of the man. From the beginning of his scientific career unto that fatal hour when, to our great loss but to his gain, he passed away to the silent land, truth, and truth for its own sake, was the object of his pursuit, the guiding star which determined the course of his labours. The same sincerity distinguished him in personal intercourse: courteous, and even gentle in manner, his conversation was marked by a grave earnestness which produced the conviction

of one who neither paltered with his own conscience, nor pandered to the prejudices of others. Earnest and constant in his desire to learn, conspicuous for his quick apprehension, for his originality and grasp of thought, of a noble and generous zeal in the cause of progress and humanity, and with a calm, unwearied energy in action, he has gone to his everlasting rest, and no man can say how much medical psychology has suffered by the ill-fated dart which laid him low. For he has been struck down at a most inopportune time; he has fallen just as he was beginning to impart the fruits of his large stores of experience, and of his ripened reflections. The noble ship, laden with the priceless produce of unknown lands, that "all her way across the sea ran straight and speedy," has gone down at the last, even in the haven's mouth.

One of the earliest contributions to science by Griesinger, and one which still has a remarkable value, is an article in the *Archiv für Physiologische Heilkunde* of 1843, entitled "Ueber psychische Reflexactionen, mit einem Blick auf das Wesen der psychischen Krankheiten." It was followed in 1854 by another article, entitled "Neue Beiträge zur Physiologie und Pathologie des Gehirns." Both these articles, the first of which must have been written when the author was not more than twenty-five years of age, are well deserving of study at the present day; and if we bear in mind the date at which they were written, we cannot fail to be surprised at the deep insight which they display into the physiology of mind and the nature of mental diseases. They bear the evidence of great originality and sagacity of thought, as well as of patient and conscientious industry; moreover they contain many suggestive reflections in which will be found much of what has since been incorporated in the general body of received doctrine. These contributions were followed by many others on different diseases; for although Griesinger's earliest labours show the bent of his inclination to the study of nervous diseases, he was nowise a specialist in his studies. He particularly distinguished himself by enquiries into the nature and pathology of cholera, and was selected as the Prussian representative in the medical congress which assembled a few years ago at Constantinople, in order to investigate and report upon the nature and mode of propagation of that disease.

The work, however, by which Griesinger is best known in this country is his treatise on mental diseases, the first edition

of which was published in 1845, when he would be thirty-two or three years of age. The second edition, corrected, remodelled, and much enlarged, appeared in 1861; it has been translated into French by Dr. Doumic, Médecin de la Maison Centrale de Poissy, and into English, for the Sydenham Society, by Dr. Lockhart Robertson and Dr. Rutherford. In the interval between the date of the first and that of the second edition Griesinger had, as he informs us, resided in Würtemberg, and been charged with the direction of the idiot asylum at Mariaberg; and for upwards of ten years he delivered lectures on medical psychology in Tübingen, admitting, as often as opportunity offered, cases of mental disease into his clinique, and making them, like any other disease, the subjects of clinical instruction and discussion. Indeed, it was through life a most earnest aim with him to obtain the acknowledgment of clinical instruction in mental diseases by the Universities; and he happily lived to witness and enjoy the fruits of his labour when he was called to Berlin as professor of clinical medicine and medical psychology in the University, and appointed directing physician of the department of the Charité devoted to nervous and mental diseases. The introductory lecture which he delivered on that occasion was translated by Dr. Sibbald, and published in the number of this journal for January, 1867. A former introductory lecture, delivered at the opening of the psychiatric clinique in Zurich, appeared in this journal for January, 1864. Philosophical in their spirit, they are yet characterized by that truly scientific and practical method of positive investigation which Dr. Skae has so well exemplified in his proposed new classification of mental diseases. *

Of the character of Griesinger's treatise on mental diseases it is not necessary to speak here; the acceptance which it has everywhere had is a sufficient testimony of its merits. Indeed, its benefits have been sometimes more freely accepted than acknowledged; so much so as to have drawn a quiet protest from the author on his own behalf. In the preface to the second edition he says: "Several of the most recent writers on insanity have been so well pleased with the first edition of my book that they have incorporated into their writings not only the ideas and doctrines, the arrangement and examples contained in it, but have even taken as their

* A Rational and Practical Classification of Insanity. By David Skae, M.D.—*Journal of Mental Science*, Oct., 1863.

own, without restraint, actual excerpts of whole sections. I quietly permitted this to occur, but now it would of course be disagreeable to me if any one were to think that it was I who, in this edition, had borrowed from these authors. I would therefore beg of the reader, wherever doctrines, pages, and even chapters, occur similar, or nearly similar, to what they may shortly before have read in books or journals, simply to compare them with the first edition of this work which appeared in 1845."

Notwithstanding this necessary reclamation of his property, we know that Griesinger was far from satisfied with his treatise; that he looked on it as being too psychological in its method, and as having too much the character of a compilation. When he was in England four years ago he expressed his intention or hope to publish before long a third and revised edition, incorporating in it the results of his later experience. This dissatisfaction was partly due to the natural modesty of his character, but it was partly due also to the continual development of his views by the teachings of experience, and especially to a systematic medical study of mental and nervous diseases as two improperly separated branches of one science. It was his strong conviction of the necessity of moving psychiatry from the position of a narrow specialty, of bringing it under the domain of diseases of the nervous system, and making it part and parcel of general medicine, presenting the same medical problems, and amenable to the same method of enquiry, as other nervous diseases—it was this conviction which determined him to establish a new quarterly Journal, which should deal with the whole domain of nervous and mental diseases. The first number of this Journal, *Archiv für Psychiatrie und Nervenkrankheiten*, edited by him in conjunction with Dr. L. Meyer and Dr. Westphal, appeared early in 1868, and contained, as the succeeding numbers have, some very valuable contributions. Two articles, one by Griesinger on the *Care and Treatment of the Insane* in Germany, the other by Dr. Westphal on *General Paralysis of the Insane*, have been reprinted in this Journal, the first having been translated by Dr. Sibbald, and the latter by Dr. Rutherford. Having regard to the plan of the new Journal, and to the successful manner in which the design of its promoters has thus far been carried out, we realise painfully the irreparable calamity which the death of its chief editor is. There is not a man so specially qualified by capacity and attainments for the high aim which he had set before him.

There is one more circumstance in Griesinger's life which it would be unjust to pass over without mention even in this brief notice. He abolished the use of mechanical restraint in the treatment of the insane in the Charité. While many of his countrymen were defending with passionate prejudice the system of mechanical restraint, and rudely condemning a system of which they had no practical knowledge, he visited the best English asylums, studied the non-restraint system in practical operation, recognised its success, and forthwith set himself earnestly to work to carry it into effect. The circumstance affords an illustration of his large and candid mind, ever open to receive and fairly examine new views, and capable of rising above the trammels of habits and systems of thought. In the same spirit of candid enquiry he personally studied the family treatment of the insane at Gheel; and his latest labours were given to the zealous advocacy of a larger measure of freedom for the insane than they have under the system of indiscriminate sequestration which is now in vogue. His last words are a noble testimony to the generous and enthusiastic spirit of an earnest reformer.

But we must bring to an end this short memoir, deeply conscious how lamely it exhibits the great merits of him whose loss we mourn. One comfort we have, that death which has robbed us of him, and of so much that he might, had he been spared but a little while, have done, cannot rob us of the good work which he has done; of this nothing can bereave us. The seed which he has sown will surely spring up and bear fruit a hundredfold, and he, being dead, will yet speak. He has put off mortality and has put on immortality: the mortal we have lost, but the immortal abides with us. Justly then may our mourning be turned into joy—joy that the true work of a good life never dies, that though death is great, life is still greater, “seeing that we die in a world of life and of creation without end.”

Mental Philosophy in Germany and France.

PERHAPS the most remarkable feature in the present state of mental philosophy is the rapid spread of materialism in Germany, which has attracted considerable attention in France, and has been noticed this year at the two scientific gatherings at Norwich and Oxford. There seems to be a general tendency to attribute this revival of materialism exclusively to the teaching of physiologists, which is natural,