

The Insane Poor in Private Dwellings and Licensed Houses.
By J. F. SUTHERLAND, M.D., F.R.S.E., Deputy Lunacy
Commissioner for Scotland, &c. Published by Living-
stone, Edinburgh, 1897, pp. 60. Price 1s.

This brochure is an extension of a pamphlet founded on two articles in the *Poor Law Magazine and Local Government Journal*.

The author in his preface professes that it is not merely an historical précis of the forty years' history of the movement in Scotland, but also "an 'up-to-date' statement of the position of the system in this and other countries," chiefly intended for those whose interest is a direct and intimate one.

Commencing with a brief sketch of the state of lunacy in the 18th and early part of the 19th centuries, up to the passing of the Lunacy Act of 1857, which he appropriately describes as the *Magna Charta* of the Insane, he describes the establishment of the General Lunacy Board, with the resulting revelations as to the condition of the insane in private dwellings, reported in 1862 by Sir Arthur Mitchell.

Dr. Sutherland dwells with entirely justified satisfaction on the very striking fact that during the forty years since the passing of the Act an average of 2,000 pauper insane have resided in private dwellings with the occurrence of only one homicidal incident. No higher testimony than this could be given to the principles on which the system is worked or to the skill, care and judgment of those to whom its working is and has been intrusted. Such a record of thoroughness and care is a justifiable source of national pride.

The writer displays his adhesion to the national motto, however, in his criticism of a critic who had the temerity to allude to this one casualty, and to the occasional occurrence of sexual accidents under the system. Even if these latter accidents, as the author seems to suggest, were as frequent in asylums this would be no answer to the criticism. The system has so much in its favour, that it can afford to invite criticism on disadvantages which are as nothing compared with its advantages. Its most strenuous upholders and most experienced exponents would be assuredly averse to shunning or resenting temperate criticism.

If any statistics on this point were given they also

would probably by the smallness of their numbers be equally strong evidence of the general care.

Dr. Sutherland makes four epochs in the boarding-out development, viz., the Act of 1857, the Act of 1862, the Act of 1874, giving the Parliamentary grant, and the Parish Councils Act of 1892. The direct action of the first three is obvious, of the last the relation is less manifest.

Some statistical data of the present and past distribution of boarding-out are next given, in regard to the nature of which opinions might possibly differ, but the sketch, which follows, of the main features of the system, must be of interest and value to those unacquainted with the reports of the central authority, the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy.

The concluding portion of the work is devoted to boarding-out in other countries, and of this a much more detailed account would have been acceptable, especially of the boarding-out in large towns, such as Berlin.

We must congratulate the author on the clearness with which he has expressed his views, and the details of procedure, &c., thus constituting his work a very useful reference on this important subject, both to those already engaged in its practical working, or who wish to become definitely acquainted with it.

L'Epilepsie. Par le Dr. JULES VOISIN, Médecin de la Salpêtrière. Paris, 1897: Félix Alcan. Pp. 420. Price 6fr.

This book consists of lectures delivered at the Salpêtrière, and contains a systematic exposition of the etiology, symptomatology, prognosis, pathogenesis, and treatment of the various forms of epilepsy. There are some original observations on post-paroxysmal albuminuria, and upon toxicity of the urine and the condition of the blood in epileptics. The studies of Voisin and Péron as to urinary toxicity show (1) that post-paroxysmal albuminuria exists in one-half of the cases; (2) that it is found in all varieties of epilepsy; (3) that the *status epilepticus* appears to be always accompanied with albuminuria; (4) that albuminuria is constant in the same patients, but it is very temporary and very variable in quantity. They found a *hypo*-toxicity in the urine before and during the attack, and a *hyper*-toxicity following it, this showing a veritable elimination of toxins;