

suffering from general paralysis. Dr. Joffroy considered this case, which had a morbid heredity (father died in an asylum, nervous mother), to be one of post-traumatic general paralysis.

GERMANY.

By Dr. BRESLER.

AN excellent example of the spread of psychiatric ideas and methods is to be found in the lectures held on the suggestion of Professor Sommer at the Psychiatric Clinic in Giessen on August 3rd to 6th, 1908, on family histories and heredity. The lectures were attended by fifty-seven people, which included twenty-one physicians, twelve teachers, seven jurists, seven parsons, four philologists, and others, coming from places as far apart as Switzerland, Holland, Russia and North America. Professor Kekulé von Stradonitz lectured upon the elements of genealogy, on descent, pedigree, and the so-called loss of ancestry (by marriages between relations). Dr. Strahl, professor of anatomy, spoke of the structure and qualities of the germinal elements, the process of fecundation and evolution, with demonstrations on anatomical preparations. Dr. Hansen, professor of botany, took the same lines as regards plant life, also illustrating his discourses by preparations and drawings. Dr. Sommer demonstrated the psycho-physic reactions and the psychic dispositions of individuals. In members of the same family similar specific reactions are observed which are characteristic. He showed original tabulated statements of reaction-times after simple acoustic and optical stimulation on their grouping in differently disposed individuals, and pointed out that by such simple comparative investigations the different expressions of the psycho-physic constitution and psychic dispositions can be established (by length of reaction time, maximum frequency and maximum dispersion of the reactions). He discussed the methods of education, the possibilities of correction by punishment, the question of natural nobility, of the selection of the fittest upon which rests the progress of culture. The professor of psychiatry, Dr. Dannemann, demonstrated by tables of heredity from the insane at the clinic, the facts of heredity and the dispositions in the insane and criminal classes, and discussed the prophylaxis of psychoses and neuroses and the treatment of psychopathically disposed individuals. It was resolved to found an association for the genealogical and physical investigation of families, especially as regards the phenomena of heredity, degeneration, and regeneration, and a committee was formed for this purpose. A detailed report of these lectures will appear in the *Clinic for Psychic and Nervous Diseases*, edited by Professor Sommer, Giessen.

At the general meeting of the German Association of Psychiatry, held on April 24th and 25th, 1908, at Berlin, the question of the terminal stages of dementia præcox was thoroughly debated. The reports of Professor Bleuler (Zurich) and Dr. Jahrmarker (Marburg) agreed, and formed a series of theses, the more important points of which

are the following : With regard to the characteristic symptoms, the name "schizophrenic" would be better than "dementia præcox." The criteria and classification hitherto used had proved unsatisfactory as regards stating a prognosis. Neither the quality of the initial states, the heredity, the classification, nor the age at which the disease began could be used to define the prognosis. Relapses could not be prognosed for cases in a state of remission, which is nearly a complete recovery ; the onset of a severe dementia could not be excluded. Katatonic symptoms, chronic or delayed until later, were bad signs. The paranoid cases did relatively better as regards dementia and the ability to work. There was no terminal state in the sense that at a certain period of the disease the disease could not become aggravated. All the groups of dementia præcox, as far as now classified, could stop at certain stages or freely progress further. A delineation of groups with regard to the degree of dementia was not possible. The primary symptoms were certain states of dulness, which resemble those of increased cerebral pressure and organic brain disease, while secondary symptoms were schizo-phrenic disorders of association, confusional states, katatonia, delusions, and states of excitement. The separation of the symptoms into primary and secondary was not identical with transitory or permanent characters. Professor Raecke (Kiel) said, at the conclusion of his paper on katatonia, that the disease did not always progress to dementia, and that the term "dementia præcox" was not correct. Professor Meyer stated that as regards the prognosis of dementia præcox, in several cases the morbid processes had come to a definite and permanent stop without reaching a considerable degree of dementia, so that at least a "social" recovery had occurred. He found that the cases which remained recovered for years comprised one-fifth to one-fourth of the katatonic variety, or one-sixth of the total cases of dementia præcox. Dr. Kreuser said that the term "dementia præcox" was much misunderstood.

Of the other papers read at this meeting the following should be mentioned : Professor Alt (Uchtsprunge) defended, in a fine discourse, the chances of recovery by asylum treatment against the extreme opinion expressed elsewhere by Director Dr. Scholz, that the curable mental diseases recover spontaneously, even under the most unfavourable circumstances outside asylums, and that the best asylum treatment can only secure the patient proper care. Dr. Brodman (Berlin) gave a report on the present state of the histological localisation in the cerebral cortex in mammals illustrated by photographs and diagrams. He showed complete topographical charts of the cerebrum in a great number of mammals corresponding to the evolution of the cortex. Dr. Fischer (Prag) demonstrated the changes in the cortex in senile dementia, the occurrence of patches, round in shape, 10-150 μ in size, consisting of a filaceous substance which is stained by the method of Bielschowsky. Dr. Reich (Berlin-Herzberge) read a paper on the symptomatology of mania, and showed the similarity which exists between child's play and the antics of maniacs, and he said haphazard association of ideas was characteristic of mania.

Dr. Siemens reported on the resolutions of the committee for the economic interests of the alienists in German public asylums (for assistant physicians, life appointments after three years' service, with

retiring allowance of the alienist, his wife and children; grants in case of accidents; lowest salary 3,600 marks [£176] per annum, rising to 7,200 marks [£352] in twenty-one years, free lodging for family, with fire, lighting, and garden produce, medicine and medical treatment; for medical superintendents, 6,000 marks, rising to 9,000 marks [£294 to £491] in asylums with 700 or less patients; 9,000 marks to 12,000 marks [£491 to £688] in asylums with more than 700 patients, with the same emoluments). Dr. Birnbaum (Herzberge) read a paper on "Fleeting Delusions in Degenerate Persons."

The Provincial Board of Brandenburg opened a new asylum at Teupitz, near Berlin, for 1,050 patients of the third and fourth class, and for 150 patients of the first and second class. The cost was 6,769,000 marks (£338,450), including accommodation for seventy-six employees and married attendants. The houses for the attendants are arranged so that they can be used for the boarding-out of patients (family care). A description of this asylum, with plans and views, is published in the *Psychiatrisch-Neurologische Wochenschrift*, Nos. 40 and 41, vol. x, December, 1908.

ITALY

By Dr. LUIGI BARONCINI.

THE scientific activity of Italian alienists is directed more and more as time goes on to neurological subjects. One finds a mass of work in the proceedings of the first Congress of the Society of Neurology, which was held at Naples in the month of April, 1908. The following is a *resumé* of the more interesting papers presented at this Congress:

Mingazzini (Roma) discussed the new theories of Professor Marie on aphasia, and demonstrated that it was impossible to detach the motor speech functions from Broca's convolution, and that the verbo-motor and verbo-acoustic centres are represented in both hemispheres, but greatly predominate in the left. He discussed the association fibres between the different speech centres, and arrived at the conclusion that a lesion of Broca's convolution and one affecting the fibres anterior to the *putamen* (outer third of the lenticular nucleus) produce the same clinical features, both being the outcome of a mechanism almost identical.

Bianchi (Naples) stated the results of his recent experimental researches, in which he stimulated and excised the frontal lobes of monkeys. Electrical stimulation caused movements of the eyes, alteration in the size of the pupils, movements of the ears—phenomena which he accounted for by the presence there of sensory functions. By extensive excision of both frontal lobes, he produced both transitory and permanent defect of cerebral activity, affecting above all the memory, attention, association of ideas, and affectivity. These experiments pointed to the frontal lobes being the association centre for all the sensory images arising in the different centres of the cerebral cortex. He finally showed that certain pathological cases in man support the conclusions arrived at experimentally.