

management of criminal and dangerous lunatics is closely connected with the subject of mechanical restraint and coercion. We know how conscientiously French alienists adhere to these latter. The transfer of dangerous lunatics to a criminal lunatic asylum, or rather to a *Quartier de Sécurité*, may sometimes, indeed, place the patient where mechanical restraint and rigorous means can be better resorted to, as at Gaillon and the *Quartier de Sécurité* at Bicêtre, but may not be altogether the best for the patient.

(To be Continued.)

The Diagnosis of Diseases of the Spinal Cord. By W. R. GOWERS, M.D., F.R.C.P. 1880.

This book is an enlarged and revised reprint of an address delivered to the Medical Society of Wolverhampton, October 9th, 1879, and embodies the results of modern investigations on the diseases of the spinal cord. To the researches, originated by Charcot, Vulpian, and others, we owe the accurate knowledge of the topographical anatomy and of the "system-lesions" that has dispelled the confusion and darkness in regard to the pathogeny of spinal affections. Dr. Gowers treats this important subject with unsurpassed ability, and his precise and clear descriptions bring forward facts of great clinical value. The pages devoted to the consideration of the superficial and deep reflexes are full of practical details, in addition to the author's investigations on the subject. Contraction of certain muscles, with a proportioned relaxation of their opponents, exists for every movement, dependent on the deep reflex processes, which in locomotor ataxy are almost always impaired. This fact alone may account for the inco-ordination in posterior sclerosis, without the assumption of disease of special co-ordinating fibres, which have been supposed to run vertically in the posterior columns. In ataxia, with the deep reflexes in excess, instead of being lost, it may be that they are impaired elsewhere than the region in which the knee reflex and the ankle clonus are developed.

The several lesions of the cord are distinguished by their onset into six classes: *sudden, acute, subacute, subchronic, chronic, and very chronic*. "A lesion of sudden occurrence, developing symptoms in the course of a few minutes, is always vascular; commonly hæmorrhage, perhaps sometimes

vascular obstruction. But a vascular lesion may occupy a somewhat longer time in development—a few hours or days. In acute and subacute inflammation the symptoms come on in the course of a few hours, a few days, or a week or two. Chronic inflammation occupies from a few weeks to a few months. Degeneration, in which there is no adequate evidence of any inflammatory process, occupies many months, or it may be years. The symptoms produced by growths or simple pressure (traumatic causes excluded) are never sudden or very acute, and rarely, if ever, very chronic, the time occupied by the development of the symptoms varying, according to the nature of the cause, from a fortnight to six months."

Our experience fully corroborates Dr. Gowers'—that "in the majority of cases of locomotor ataxy—*i.e.*, of primary posterior sclerosis—there is a history of syphilis." We no less think with him, that the current description of symptoms of anæmia of the cord, hyperæmia of the cord, and reflex paralysis are contributed by a vigorous scientific imagination.

Finally, we could not pass unnoticed Dr. Gowers' remarks in regard to the subject of the nomenclature of diseases of the spinal cord. "We must endeavour," he very properly says, "to substitute the idea of morbid processes for that of definite diseases. . . . We have only to combine the terms indicating the place and the lesion to have a system of terminology already partly in use, and which will altogether suffice for our present needs. Thus we may have a columnal or a cornual myelitis, hæmorrhage, sclerosis, degeneration, or growth."

A series of typical cases, as examples of diagnosis, closes the book, which is illustrated with very fine, well-executed plates. In one word, the contribution is certainly a most valuable and complete outline of the intricate subject of Diseases of the Spinal Cord.

A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Medicine. By JOHN SYER BRISTOWE. Third Edit., 1880. Smith, Elder & Co.

We congratulate Dr. Bristowe on the success which attends his treatise, as indicated by the appearance of a third edition. It is a work on which much conscientious labour has been bestowed. The chapter treating of Insanity is clear and