

graphic method. It is hoped that in time a series of systematic and accurate scientific records of the mental state of a number of individuals at successive periods of time will be collected, and valuable scientific results may also be hoped for by the association of these records with the morbid changes found in the brain of such cases as subsequently prove fatal. Some apparatus to equip this department was purchased when the laboratory was founded, and, out of a grant of £50 made by the Committee, further purchases have been made."

#### THE PATHOLOGY OF GENIUS.

In the July number of the *Popular Science Monthly* Mr. Havelock Ellis has an article upon the pathology of genius. Out of 322 cases where he has been able to ascertain accurately, or nearly accurately, the cause of death, lesions of the brain occurred thirty-five times, pulmonary tuberculosis thirty times, and asthma nine times. Gout is mentioned thirty-eight times, and the gouty geniuses were very remarkable, including Milton, Harvey, Sydenham, Newton, Johnson, Savage Landor, W. R. Hamilton, and Darwin. Mr. Havelock Ellis suggests that the gouty man views the world with, as it were, two different brains. When uric acid is circulating in his blood he is gloomy and introspective. When the acid is deposited in his joints his brain becomes abnormally clear. He thus exhibits well-marked mental periodicity. Gout, however, must not be considered the cause of genius, but given a highly endowed organism the gouty poison acts as a stimulus. As for insanity, of 902 eminent persons some 5 per cent. were insane. Epilepsy is mentioned as having occurred in only two cases—Lord Herbert of Chisbury and Sir W. R. Hamilton. Other nervous or neurotic conditions are, however, fairly common. Many men of genius stuttered, many were singularly awkward in performing actions requiring muscular co-ordination, and many were "neurasthenic." In fact, Mr. Havelock Ellis's researches go to show that genius exists in persons highly charged with nervous energy, but that the energy is ill-balanced and not equably distributed throughout the organism.

#### THE CERTIFYING OF THE INSANE.

Consequent upon recent scandals the following circular has been issued from the Home Office to clerks to county and borough justices, stipendiary magistrates, and the metropolitan police magistrates, under date May 31st, 1901:

"I am directed by the Secretary of State to acquaint you that he has had before him cases which have occurred in certain Poor Law unions in which the relieving officers have received payments from the district medical officers and proprietors of licensed houses in connection with the certifying of lunatics and their admission into these houses. Mr. Ritchie feels sure that he may count upon your active assistance to discover and put an end to these reprehensible practices, and with a view to preventing their repetition in the future he thinks it desirable to call the attention of magistrates to several points connected with the certifying of lunatics.

"(1) Section 16 of the Lunacy Act, 1890, which prescribes the steps to be taken when a pauper alleged to be a lunatic, or an alleged lunatic wandering at large, is brought before a justice, directs, amongst other things, that the justice shall call in a medical practitioner, and it is only when this practitioner has signed a medical certificate with regard to the lunatic that an order for his removal to an institution for lunatics can be made. In some cases the relieving officer has, it is found, often selected or influenced the selection of the medical practitioner who should examine the alleged lunatic; but it appears to the Secretary of State that the section requires that on each occasion the justice should himself call in such medical practitioner as he may think fit, and that the relieving officer should in no way be concerned in the selection.

"(2) A justice should not sign the reception order until the medical practitioner has signed the medical certificate. It appears that justices sometimes do not wait until the certificate has been signed by the medical practitioner and the statement of particulars filled in and signed by the relieving officer.

"(3) Sometimes the name of the asylum to which the lunatic is to be conveyed is left blank in the reception order. The Law Officers of the Crown have advised that, unless the name of the asylum to which the lunatic is to be removed is stated in the reception order when it is made, the order cannot legally be acted on; and Mr. Ritchie thinks it very important that the requirement of the Lunacy Act in this matter should be complied with.

"(4) I am to call your attention to Section 27 (2) of the Lunacy Act, and to say that it is important that justices should very carefully ascertain that there is a deficiency of room or that there are some special circumstances before they authorise a lunatic to be sent to some institution other than the county asylum. The cost in any such institution is, of course, much greater than in the county asylums, and in some instances the institution is situate at a considerable distance from the place from which the lunatic is sent, and he may thus be entirely cut off from his friends."

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#### LADY INSPECTORS OF ASYLUMS.

A letter to the Editor of the *Irish Times* states that it is in contemplation to appoint a lady inspector of Irish asylums, and suggests that four will be required at a remuneration of £200 to £300 a year each, with travelling expenses. We anxiously await the opinion of the gentleman inspectors as to this proposal.

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#### STATE INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES.

The Home Secretary, in pursuance of his powers under the Inebriates Act, 1898, has issued regulations for the management and discipline of State inebriate reformatories, the general superintendence of which shall, he directs, be vested in the Prison Commissioners, subject to the control of the Secretary of State, to be assisted in the performance of this duty by an inspector having special knowledge of the treatment of inebriety. The regulations provide for the appointment by the Secretary of State of visitors, who shall meet as a committee at the reformatory not less than eight times in the year to hear the complaints of inmates and to perform other functions connected with the control and inspection of the reformatories. After dealing with the admission, transfer, and discharge of inmates, the regulations provide that no spirituous liquors of any kind shall be admitted to the reformatory for the use of any inmate under any pretence whatever, except in pursuance of a written order of the medical officer. There are to be three classes of inmates—penal, ordinary, and special,—the penal class to be reserved as a punishment class to which inmates may be degraded for serious offences committed in the reformatory. Detailed regulations follow as to employment, health and recreation, instruction, and dietary.

It is also reported that pending the erection of permanent buildings, temporary accommodation for women at least will soon be available.

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#### REPORT OF THE DALRYMPLE HOME.

The report of the Dalrymple Home at Rickmansworth, by Dr. F. S. D. Hogg, the medical superintendent, relates to 606 cases that have been discharged since the home was opened. Of these 282 were under the Inebriates Act, and 324 were private. While of those under the Act 35 per cent. entered for twelve months (by no means too long a period), and 30 per cent. for three months, of the private patients only 15 per cent. entered for twelve months, and 50 per cent. entered for only three months. In 40 per cent. of the 600 odd cases there was no family history obtainable of either inebriety or insanity; in 7.5 per cent. there was an hereditary history of insanity, and in 52.5 one of inebriety, most often in the parents, but almost as often in uncles and aunts. In 22 of the 606 cases there was an associated opium habit, and in six of these there was a cocaine habit in addition. In six there was an associated addiction to chloral, in two to sulphonal, and in two to cocaine without opium. In 70 per cent. of the total cases the drinking habits were described as "regular," and in nearly 30 per cent. as "periodical." The