

several influences appear to have contributed, and endeavouring to weigh their relative importance, so as to be as little incorrect as possible in stating *the* cause, there is nothing to do but to record carefully and conscientiously *all* the influences which appear to have played a part. Take a case (no uncommon occurrence) in which there is shown to have been hereditary tendency to insanity, mental anxiety, and alcoholic excess as facts in the history. Who shall decide on which to throw the responsibility and which to exclude? Is it not more probable that all have played a part, and that to attempt to dissociate them is impossible, and must fail? The system proposed provides for any such contingency, and gives to all the adverse influences a place.

But it may be urged that the value of positive data as to the number of cases of insanity traceable to a given cause, and that cause only, is too great to be given up. It would certainly be so if it could be shown that in a majority of cases it were possible to ascertain the fact; but if, as I have contended, this is impossible, then, as it appears to me, it is better to remain satisfied with data, which if not so definite and precise as could be wished, nevertheless express important facts and furnish reliable information.

It may be objected, in the second place, that by the proposed method all causes would appear to be of equal potency: that is to say, no special indication is given of those which *singly* have or appear to have occasioned the insanity. I must admit the force of the objection, which, however, applies equally well in reality, if not on paper, to the system commonly in use. Practically, the most important cause will be that the occurrence of which is most frequently noted, and this is at once indicated in the method of tabulation proposed.

Finally, it may be urged that it is safer in stating causes to give too little than too much, that it is better to omit the record of some condition which may have been causative, rather than to introduce such as those which may have had no influence. Possibly this is so. Practically, however, with care, serious error in over-statement will, I think, be usually avoided.—*Journal of Psychological Medicine*, vol. iii.

Fraternal Congratulations.

The Association of Medical Superintendents of American Asylums concluded the scientific proceedings of their Annual Meeting with the following resolution, which was adopted:—

Resolved—That we congratulate our much-esteemed colleague, Dr. Andrew MacFarland, an early, useful and beloved member of this Association, upon his new social relations assumed with Miss Abbie

King, in our presence. We sincerely hope his days may be long, his life happy, and that he may walk, and not faint, may run and not grow weary.

We reciprocate the wishes of his American brethren, that Dr. MacFarland may not faint when he walks, and may not grow weary when he runs, if he is imprudent enough to run; but we are perplexed to guess what social relations Miss Abbie King and he have instituted.

Chloroform Delusions.

A surgeon's assistant, named George Howard, was tried at the Midland Circuit on Nov. 9th, for rape on a Mrs. Child, to whom he had administered chloroform for the purpose of taking out a tooth. Mrs. Child seems only to have been put partially under the influence of the anæsthetic, and was stupid and speechless afterwards for a time. She affirmed that it was while in this state, being quite conscious, but having no power of motion, that the crime was committed. This was proved to have been merely a delusion on her part, no doubt due to perverted sensations and sexual excitation during partial anæsthesia, the delusion persisting afterwards. Dr. Richardson said that he had known persons in the second stage of chloroform inhalations subject to delusions as to what had taken place under the influence of chloroform. He mentioned one case, in which a lady had had an exactly similar delusion to that of Mrs. Child, although her father and several other persons were present when Dr. Richardson had administered the chloroform, and persisted in her belief long after the influence of the anæsthetic had passed off. Mr. Mills said that patients of the fair sex frequently had delusions of an erotic nature under such circumstances.
