

The Section of Psychological Medicine.

The Section of Psychological Medicine, under the presidency of Dr. Urquhart, appears to have been unusually successful and interesting.

Owing to lack of space, we are unable to deal with the proceedings of the Section in this number of the JOURNAL.

Members of our Association appear to have taken conspicuous parts in other sections. The address given by Dr. Maudsley demands special attention, and a discussion, opened by Dr. Weatherly, in the Section of State Medicine, on the provision of sanatoriums for poor consumptives, was well supported.

The desirability of the close association of the Annual Meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association with the British Medical Section has often been discussed and there is so much diversity of opinion on the point that the result of a general vote would be very useful for the guidance of the Council.

Part II.—Reviews.

Psychological Medicine: A Manual of Mental Diseases for Practitioners and Students. By MAURICE CRAIG, M.A., M.D.Cantab., M.R.C.P.Lond. London: J. and A. Churchill, 1905. Pp. viii, 447.

With the appearance of each new work on mental diseases one is conscious of a hope that here at last is the pre-eminent treatise which can be unhesitatingly recommended as *the* best book in English on the subject. The manual before us is not such a treatise, but, nevertheless, Dr. Craig has produced what is, upon the whole, a commendable work. The keynote of the book is struck in the Preface, when the author states that "the student will be constantly reminded to look upon mental disorders in the same way that he views disease in general," and the stress laid upon the physical signs of the different forms of mental disease bears out this statement, and is an entirely satisfactory feature of the work. It is somewhat inconsistent, however, to impress upon the reader that general paralysis "is a disease of the nervous system, and is not in the ordinary sense of the word an insanity," as if the former statement were not true of every form of mental illness.

Despite certain faults which will be alluded to later, the clinical descriptions are good, and furnish reliable pictures of the diseases treated of; and the therapeutical sections are also on the whole satisfactory, the reader in both departments having the advantage of the considerable experience of the author, who is evidently a painstaking observer. But it is disappointing, at this time of day, to find a work by one of the younger school of alienists destitute of any introductory sketch of anatomy, physiology, or (worst of all) pathology as bearing on the study of mental diseases, and this is the more surprising when one considers what we have called above the keynote of the book. It is true that some sketch of the pathology is appended to the descriptions of the different diseases, and a very full and copiously illustrated account to that of general paralysis; but these sections cannot be called satisfactory, and where there is a difference of opinion the author, with a somewhat misplaced modesty, refrains as a rule from giving the reader any assistance whatever in arriving at a judgment. In a book intended primarily for students this is, we submit, a mistake.

The work commences with a useful chapter on Normal Psychology, followed by one dealing with the question, What is Insanity? Next comes a chapter on the General Causation of Insanity (which calls for no particular remark), and then one on Classification, in which, after giving the systems of Maudsley, Savage, Krafft-Ebing, Kraepelin, and others, the author promulgates a kind of eclectic scheme, which he wisely avoids calling a classification, wherein items from other classifications are jumbled together without much attempt at system. Probably this is all that can be done at present, but such a plan must be most confusing to a beginner, and we cannot see how it possesses any advantage over the older system of classification by mental symptoms. No system can be other than temporary in the present state of our knowledge, and the old one had at least the merit of passable uniformity, and was a logical consequence of our establishing the group of "mental diseases" at all. If this be objected to, however, probably we cannot do much better than Dr. Craig has done.

The next chapter, on General Symptomatology, is good, but would be better if the various symptoms were arranged more systematically, and this applies to the clinical descriptions throughout the book, which are in other respects good. The section on the Heart and Vascular System, in which Dr. Craig gives a summary of the results of his work on blood-pressure, is particularly interesting. (Chapters on insomnia and on general treatment, which should come in here, are for some reason relegated to the end of the book.)

The systematic description of mental diseases begins with states of excitement, passing on to states of depression, with regard to which we may note that Dr. Craig has not convinced us of the desirability of classing agitated melancholia under the head of Mania. Next comes stupor, including catatonia (which, by the way, was both described and named by Kahlbaum long before 1874). We may note that absence of spontaneous movement does not constitute "negativism," as here stated. In the description of paranoia which follows Dr. Craig appears to have missed the essential mental feature, *viz.*, impairment of judgment, and we could find no mention of the by no means uncommon sequence of

symptoms which constitutes the *délire chronique* of Magnan. In dealing with dementia præcox, we note that he is of opinion that "there is no recovery in an unqualified sense" from this form of disorder, a statement which we take leave to doubt. We are inclined to agree with him however, as to the expediency of restricting the name—a bad one at best—to the hebephrenic form. Under the heading of Pathology we miss any allusion to L. Bruce's observations. A chapter on Secondary and Organic Dementia is followed by a not wholly satisfactory section on the Puerperal Insanities, the treatment of which, considering their practical importance, should have been dealt with more at length. Climacteric and Senile Insanities are next described, and a chapter on Alcoholism, Morphinism, Cocainism, and Plumbism is followed by an excellent description of General Paralysis, in which, however, the author seems to us to be too much "on the fence" with regard to the etiological importance of syphilis. The pathological section is enriched with copious illustrations, mostly reproduced from the *Archives of Neurology*. The short accounts of Neurasthenia and Acute Hallucinatory Insanity are good, but personally we lean to the theory of a toxic origin for the latter. Epilepsy, Hysteria, and Traumatism in relation to insanity next receive attention, and then the subject of Obsessional Insanity. Of the necessity of making the last a distinct form we are doubtful. The Section on Syphilis in the chapter on Insanity and Physical Diseases leaves something to be desired. Other chapters follow on Idiocy, Imbecility, and Moral Insanity, on Feigned Insanity, and on Law in Relation to Insanity. Oddly enough, the subject of certification of patients is dealt with, not in this chapter, but under the head of Case-taking, while this latter subject receives scant notice. The book ends, as before mentioned, with a chapter on Treatment.

Dr. Craig's English is not beyond criticism at times, and he does not invariably escape the tendency to diffuseness which is the bane of writers on psychiatry; but his views, which are almost always very sensible, are often forcibly expressed, and his book is both readable and interesting, while his facts are up to date.

Part III.—Notes and News.

ADJOURNED (1904) ANNUAL MEETING.

Held at 11, Chandos Street, London, W., 19th July, 1905.

Dr. PERCY SMITH, President, in the Chair.

The following members were present:—Drs. Fletcher Beach, C. Hubert Bond, Arthur N. Boycott, James Chambers, Maurice Craig, Thomas Drapes, Charles C. Easterbrook, Charles K. Hitchcock, Theo. B. Hyslop, J. Carlyle Johnstone, Robert Jones, Harold A. Kidd, Alfred Miller, H. Hayes Newington, Bedford