

The author discusses the question whether the maldevelopment of the left cerebral hemisphere is due to the left premature synostosis, or to the pressure of the cyst, or to the deficient nutrition consequent on the smallness of the left cerebral arteries. W. H. B. STODDART.

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### 6. Treatment of Insanity.

*The Institute of Psychiatry at Reggio* [*L'Institut Psychiatrique de Reggio*]. (*Rev. de Psychiat.*, No. 5, 1900.) *Vaschide, N.*

Attention has been especially drawn to this institution recently by the celebration of the centenary of Lazzaro Spallanzani, the illustrious Italian biologist, with whose name it is henceforth to be associated. Vaschide gives a brief account of its interesting history and of its present magnificent scientific equipment. In the thirteenth century, as the Hospital of St. Lazarus, it was founded for lepers and lunatics; it became subsequently for a time a general infirmary, and in 1754 was reserved exclusively for lunatics. In the early part of this century, under Galloni, it was in this asylum that some of the earliest attempts were made to teach the insane on scientific principles—moral treatment. From 1871 onwards, its reputation becomes world-wide; in 1877 Prof. Tamburini became superintendent, and to him and his collaborators we owe numerous valuable contributions on experimental psychology and other subjects dealing with the insane. The laboratories are numerous and well appointed, and among the most interesting buildings are the museum of antiquities, with its collection of appliances which were formerly used for quieting lunatics (chains, collars, "cap of silence" [*cuffie del silenzio*], etc.), and the museum of psychiatric anthropology, which contains a fine collection of 1250 skulls of the insane. H. J. MACEVOY.

*The Payment of Asylum Patients* [*Krankenverdienst in der Irrenanstalt*]. (*Psychiat. Wochens.*, No. 48, Feb. 24th, 1900.) *Berze, J.*

Dr. Berze, of the Kierling-Gugging Asylum, discusses the question of the remuneration of patients for work done by them during their detention under treatment. Most of the asylums in Lower Austria follow the practice introduced some thirty years ago in the Landes-Irrenanstalt in Vienna. By the statutes of that institution, it is provided that a record be kept of the nature and duration of each patient's labour, and that the director of the asylum fix the pay due thereto in accordance with a tariff established by the committee; this money is the property of the patient, and part of it may be utilised for the purchase of luxuries, etc., in the asylum, the balance being handed over to the patient or his guardians on his discharge. Dr. Berze describes in detail the application of this principle in Kierling-Gugging Asylum; labour records are kept, and submitted every month to the director, who decides the wage due to each patient and the proportion of that wage which may be at once disposed of by the patient. In the light of

his personal experience, the author discusses the advantages and disadvantages of the system. He thinks the consciousness that they are earning money and that they may aid their families is of excellent effect with certain patients; on the other hand, many of the insane, notably the imbeciles and the alcoholics, misunderstand their position—think they do not receive a just wage, and are discontented. On the whole, the author thinks that the drawbacks outweigh the advantages, and the same opinion seems to be entertained by the majority of asylum superintendents in Austria-Hungary and Germany. Dr. Berze suggests that the present system in Austria be abrogated, that working patients be rewarded, not by payment in money, but by special privileges, and that the money value of their labour, estimated as a whole and in accordance with the old standard, be assigned to a common fund for the relief of the necessitous relatives of patients and for the aid of the patients themselves on discharge. The distribution of this fund should be at the discretion of the asylum physician. This more communistic method would secure, among other advantages, that help should be given to the cases that most need it, viz. acute curable patients, who on the old individualist system would receive little, as they are precisely the cases least capable of performing remunerative work.

In Kierling-Gugging the experiment of letting the patients hire out as labourers has also been tried, but has been abandoned owing to the complaints of unfair competition with free labour.

W. C. SULLIVAN.

*The Boarding-out of Lunatics in Dun-sur-Auron [Die Familienpflege in Dun-sur-Auron]. (Psychiat. Wochens., No. 1, 1900.) Paetz.*

This is an interesting article on the subject. Full details of the housing and supervision of the patients are given, with a general description of the whole system. This has been in actual work since 1892, and in March, 1899, some 700 patients were under treatment in Dun Levet, and the surrounding districts. Up to the present, women only have been thus cared for. The no-restraint system has throughout been maintained. Senile dementia is the commonest form of insanity among the patients, and with the organic dementias constitutes some 45 per cent. of all the cases. Patients with epileptiform seizures, with contractures, and even with hemiplegia are successfully cared for in this way. It is interesting to learn also that suicidal cases can also be treated on this plan, and, indeed, that the average of suicides is rather under that of ordinary asylum statistics. HARRINGTON SAINSBURY.

*Epilepsy modified by Treatment and Environment, with some Notes of Two Hundred Cases. (Alien. and Neur., Jan., 1900.) Barr, M. W.*

Dr. Barr is very sceptical as to ultimate positive cure of idiopathic epilepsy, though he gives the statistics of the Bielefeld and Craig colonies, which record some 6 to 7 per cent. of cures. He is not impressed by the results of surgical interference. Of the powers to