

produce hysteria and sometimes other psycho-neuroses is a question of individual predisposition which is at present not elucidated.

H. DEVINE.

## 5. Asylum Reports.

### *Indian Asylum Reports for 1907.*

*Agra and Oudh.*—The nineteen deaths from influenza, out of the sixty-two admitted to hospital, occurred in the last six weeks of the year, and extremely rapid signs of pneumonia set in after a few hours' malaise associated with slight cough and fever. It was treated throughout as acutely infectious, and was confined to one section of the asylum in which the first cases appeared. In many cases when the patient survived the third-day symptoms of enteritis supervened. The influenza death-rate was 30 *per cent.*, but it must be remembered that the patients were suffering from insanity, which reduces the power of resistance to other diseases to the lowest.

The flushing system of conservancy in the Benares Asylum was stopped in June, 1907, and the dry earth system re-introduced. During the flushing system period the health of the asylum remained as bad as it has been since the system was introduced, and twenty-one deaths occurred during the first six months of the year. With the introduction of the dry-earth system the health of the asylum has gone back to its former excellent standard, and though fourteen deaths occurred during the second half of the year some of these contracted their ailments during the first six months, while no fewer than six were from causes which were non-preventable.

*Bengal (1906).*—Another important and desirable change which took place in the administration of asylums of this province was the appointment of a separate medical officer as superintendent of the Berhampore combined asylum, *viz.*, Major C. J. Robertson-Milne, I.M.S., who has had experience of asylum management elsewhere. He took charge of the institution on October 29th, 1906, relieving the civil surgeon of the asylum work. On his arrival in Bengal he was at first employed in special duty in inspecting the existing asylums, the site and the designs already drawn up of the proposed Native Central Asylum at Ranchi, with a view to the final preparation and adoption of suitable plans for the new buildings at that place. He submitted a valuable note containing his remarks and suggestions, which were considered at a conference of officials of the Imperial and Local Governments held by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor at Belvedere, with the result that fresh plans have been prepared and will soon be submitted for the sanction of the Secretary of State.

*Eastern Bengal and Assam.*—The Lunatic Asylum at Dacca was in charge of Lieutenant-Colonel R. N. Campbell, I.M.S., from January 1st to June 15th; Major E. R. Parry, I.M.S., from June 16th to June 18th; Major A. R. S. Anderson, I.M.S., from June 19th to October 5th; Lieutenant-Colonel R. N. Campbell, I.M.S., from October 6th to November 7th; Major A. R. S. Anderson, I.M.S., from November 8th to the end of the year.

*Bombay.*—Though the accommodation in the Dhárwár Asylum is in many respects admirable, the most serious defects which have been noticed are (1) that there is no separate accommodation for the criminal insane, and (2) that the female asylum (which is really only part of the male one cut off by a dividing wall) is unsuitable for its present purpose. As it is very desirable that the criminal insane should not associate with the non-criminal ones, a proposal is being made that they should be segregated in the present female asylum, which is in every way suitable for them, and that separate accommodation be provided for the female lunatics to the north of the asylum kitchen, an arrangement which, in addition to removing them from close proximity to the males, would also allow of the former being taken out for exercise in the asylum compound more frequently than is at present possible.

*Burma.*—Two attempts at suicide occurred in Rangoon, both of which were thoroughly investigated. Immediately after the first attempt at suicide Captain Shaw, I.M.S., the Superintendent, introduced the "card system" of surveillance, which has been found to work satisfactorily and has been introduced into the Minbu Asylum.

The tell-tale clock system in Rangoon is to be further extended, as the experience gained shows its efficacy. Its introduction in the female section in Rangoon caused a strike among the female attendants. Those refusing to carry it out were promptly dismissed. The Superintendent notes that there has been no further trouble.

*Central Provinces.*—The Superintendent of the Nagpur Asylum doubts the reliability of the causes of insanity assigned in new admissions, which, he says, are usually filled in by the police or the magistrate, and have to be supplemented, when possible, by inquiries from relatives or friends later. In approximately 81 *per cent.* of his admissions causes were assigned: 28 *per cent.* of these were debited to the use of ganja, and 10 *per cent.* to the use of alcohol. In 16 *per cent.* the disease was said to have been inherited. At Jubbulpore eleven of the sixteen admissions were ascribed to physical causes, six to ganja and charas, two to malaria, two to heredity, and one to privation, and five were due to moral causes (overstudy, overstudy with insomnia, loss of occupation and consequent mental anxiety, family trouble and religious impressions).

*Punjab.*—The question of improving the pay of the subordinate staff has been under consideration for some time. Hitherto the rate of pay has been undoubtedly low in view of the distasteful nature of the duties performed, and the necessity for securing as attendants men of good character, capable of taking an intelligent interest in their work. The Local Government has now sanctioned a considerable increase in the permanent establishment, with increased rates of pay; and it is hoped that the difficulty hitherto felt by the Superintendent in securing suitable men as attendants will disappear.

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Owing to want of space a large quantity of Epitome has been held over until the July number.—EDITORS.