

brought up to date on this side of the English Channel. We therefore are glad to welcome Dr. Sutherland's monograph and to commend it to the attention of all those who are interested in criminality. The public administration is still defective and erroneous in its methods, and it is well that there should be a clear and authoritative account of the present conditions. We hope that Dr. Sutherland's monograph will stimulate reformers to obtain newer and more rational information as to crime and criminals, and to proceed to more effective methods of dealing with them. He has done his part in a systematic presentation of the questions which now arise, and we commend his book to his fellow-citizens.

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*Grundriss der psychiatrischen Diagnostik.* By Prof. Dr. RAECKE. Illustrated. 8vo. Berlin: Hirschwald, 1908. Price *m.* 3.

This little book of 146 pages has been written by Prof. Raecke, of the Kiel Clinic, at an opportune time. It is brief, direct, and definite in its description of clinical types of mental diseases, arranged on the classification of Binswanger and Siemerling. This is just what is wanted when the influence of German opinion is making itself felt, especially in America and England. Prof. Raecke gives extended definitions of terms which the dictionaries have not yet included and which we have not yet thoroughly assimilated, and for that reason alone his book, with an admirable index, is welcome. We hope that it may find a translator, and thus become a useful handbook in explanation of the great mass of German literature which demands our serious attention at present and occupies so much time in studying. It appears to be an authoritative synopsis prepared by a teacher who has set himself to clarify and epitomise just that kind of information which we desire to gain.

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### Part III.—Epitome.

#### Progress of Psychiatry in 1908.

##### BELGIUM.

By Dr. JULES MOREL.

The year 1908 will be memorable in the annals of Belgian alienism for the advances which have been made in the art of nursing. In former days certain asylum authorities went so far as to refuse to allow their medical officers to give professional instruction to the nurses, on the ground that the latter had not sufficient time to attend the courses. It is to be observed, moreover, that Belgian nurses attached to the Flemish asylums were not in the habit of presenting themselves at the examinations held in those institutions.

Recently a royal decree changed the course of events, and the superiors and proprietors of hospitals and asylums now find themselves obliged to assent to their nurses receiving professional instruction.

Previous to this legislation on the subject, however, certain medical officers had offered to instruct those desirous of studying the art of nursing. At Brussels and Antwerp, in pursuance of the example of Great Britain, Holland, France, Germany, and Austria, examinations were organised and diplomas distributed. At the Asylum of Uccle (Fort Jacco), the Sisters of Charity were replaced by certificated nurses from Holland, and regular instruction was initiated by the Medical Superintendent, Dr. Ley—a procedure already carried out at Antwerp in 1902 by Dr. Sano. The syllabus adopted by the above superintendents was based on a proposition formulated by the “Congrès international sur l’assistance des aliénés,” which met at Antwerp in 1902.

Early in 1908, a motion was brought forward in the Belgian Senate by three of its members, proposing that the “Commissions médicales provinciales” should be empowered to give certificates to those nurses and attendants who had complied with certain conditions, the precise nature of which was to be subsequently determined. As the principle at issue had been carried into effect in almost all other civilised countries, the Government felt bound to accede to the proposed legislation, and on April 4th, 1908, a Royal Decree authorised the “Commissions médicales provinciales” to submit to examination those persons desirous of acquiring a nursing certificate. Candidates must have followed during one year a course, theoretical and practical, given according to the official syllabus by a medical practitioner, or have passed a probation of at least two years in a public hospital or private clinic.

From this moment the movement became general, and asylums all over the country began to institute nursing schools, many awarding diplomas of their own. Some of these diplomas require a preparation considerably more extended than that laid down in the Government syllabus, and one only given after two or three examinations. It would be well if these institutions insisted on their pupils passing the Government examination, as the public is apt to repose more confidence in a State diploma. The successful candidates could then be required to continue their studies until the special certificate of the asylum was gained.

It is somewhat surprising to note that while in Belgium the Government only require one year of study from their nurses, a school which was established in May, 1908, at Bamba in the Congo, has a curriculum of three years’ duration, three lessons being given in each week.

The Government programme is not sufficiently extensive in its teaching of the duties of a nurse. This deficiency is particularly noteworthy with regard to such questions as professional secrecy, and the necessary legal measures in case of birth, accident, and death. Again the disastrous effects of alcohol on the human organism are not sufficiently insisted upon, and sexual diseases are completely omitted. One observes, in fact, that the syllabus has been drawn up by men insufficiently acquainted with the procedure which has been adopted in other countries.

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