

was only recognised in 11·3 *per cent.* of the photographs. The subjectivity of the method inspires some doubt as to the value of the results.

W. C. SULLIVAN.

*International Inquiry Concerning Insanity in Prisons* [*Enquête Internationale sur l'Aliénation Mentale dans les Prisons*]. (*Rev. de Psychiat.*, Feb., 1908.) Pactet.

Dr. Pactet, whose name has been associated with a campaign in France in favour of the Belgian system of alienist inspection of prisons, gives in this paper the results of an inquiry which he has made by means of a *questionnaire* sent to prominent psychiatrists in various countries regarding the frequency of cases of insanity amongst the inmates of gaols. The queries, which were rather numerous, dealt chiefly with the alleged failure of the medical service in prisons to recognise insanity in its early stages, and with the value of the Belgian system as a remedy for this evil. The replies of seventeen alienists are given, apparently *in extenso*, but it is not quite clear how many of the correspondents have any special experience with reference to the points at issue. They are in substantial agreement, however, as to the excessive frequency of unrecognised insanity in the prison population, and it is recognised by all of them that training in psychiatry ought to be an essential qualification for prison doctors; but there seems to have been some divergence of opinion as to the utility of the Belgian system of peripatetic psychiatrists, which most of Dr. Pactet's correspondents appear to know only by repute. It is perhaps significant that, according to Dr. Jules Morel's letter, this system has suffered some contraction in the country of its origin, the number of alienist inspectors having been recently reduced from three to two, and their quarterly survey of recidivist prisoners having been discontinued.

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*The Question of "Responsibility"* [*Responsabilité ou Réactivité*]. (*Rev. Phil.*, June, 1908.) Lauphs.

In this paper the author, well known as a psychologist and criminologist, brings forward a number of interesting considerations regarding the debated question of "responsibility" and alternative conceptions. He is very decidedly opposed to the medical use of the term, and expresses himself on this point with much frankness. "One could write a volume on the foolish things which have been put forward by certain medical men on the question of 'responsibility'; such men degrade medicine by bending it to an end to which it ought not to be directed." "Responsibility" is not a clinical symptom, and the word should never be heard from the lips of an expert, even apart from the fact that, judging from the opposite results reached on the matter in individual cases, the question of "responsibility" or "irresponsibility" would often seem to be, as the late Dr. Garnier put it, a matter of heads or tails.

The author is not, however, content with merely destructive criticism. If the conception of "responsibility" is not scientifically tenable, and should therefore never be employed in medicine, what test should be applied in its place? In modern societies, Lauphs believes, there is