

especially true in mental medicine ; it is, above all, a knowledge of men and of life which makes the skilful clinician of the mind.

It will be seen that Chaslin believes, with Ballet, that punishment may be of therapeutic utility in the case of some semi-insane subjects. Such subjects, he remarks, often drift to-and-fro between the prison and the asylum, and are fitted for neither. They require an institution of intermediate character.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

*Castration on Social Grounds* [*Die ersten Kastrationen aus Sozialen Gründen auf Europäischen Boden*]. (*Neur. Cbl.*, 1909, No. 5.)  
Näcke, P.

It is rare, in Dr. Näcke's experience, to find anything of scientific interest in an asylum report, and he joyfully calls attention to the Report for 1907 of the Swiss Cantonal Asylum at Wil. In this report are recorded four castrations performed on patients in the asylum on social grounds, the first cases of the kind, Näcke believes, that have ever occurred in Europe. The first case was a girl, æt. 25, epileptic and nymphomaniacal, who had had two epileptic and imbecile children. The nymphomaniacal tendency made necessary her retention in the asylum, though she was capable of work. She and her friends agreed to the operation, and she is now free, and working "satisfied with her condition." The second case was a woman, æt. 36, weak-minded and liable to attacks of excitement and over-mastering sexual desire. She was a skilful worker, but had had two children who were a charge on the community, which was, on this ground, opposed to her liberation. After the operation she was allowed to leave. In both these cases there was found to be cystic degeneration of ovaries. The third case was a man, æt. 31, physically vigorous, but psychically abnormal, and with morbid excess of sexual desire. He was placed in the asylum for observation on account of indecent assaults on minors. His general condition improved in the asylum, but the sexual excitement continued, and at his own urgent desire, and with the consent of his relations and the authorities, castration was performed. He has been guilty of no sexual offences since. The last case was a sexual invert, æt. 32, of a high grade of intelligence, but very strong sexual impulses ; on account of indecent conduct with boys he was sent to the asylum as irresponsible. For some eight years he was in and out of the asylum, always yielding, when out, to his abnormal sexual tendencies ; at last he urgently demanded castration. Since the operation he has so far felt no return of his abnormal impulses. There are no particulars concerning the exact nature of the operations.

Näcke, who has long regarded legal castration, with due precautions, as "one of the most beneficial institutions of the future," draws the moral of these cases, and points out the ease with which all concerned—patients, relatives, and the law—agreed to a step which was by no means demanded merely for the benefit of the patient, but primarily and chiefly for the benefit of society. Näcke is, however, in favour of confining castration on social grounds, for the present, to men, preferably by the method of vasectomy. He also wisely enters a warning against the belief that castration can permanently cure congenital

sexual inversion. [That point is illustrated by the instructive case recorded in this Journal, April, 1896.] HAVELOCK ELLIS.

*Is Sexual Inversion Curable? [Ist die Konträre Sexualempfindung Heilbar].* (Zeits. f. Sexualwissenschaft, Dec., 1908.) Sadger, S.

It is held by many who have a wide experience in the matter (including Hirschfeld) that cases of homosexuality on a congenital basis can never be really and genuinely cured. The sexual acts can of course be modified but not the innate direction of the impulse; even hypnotism, it is now held, produces no permanent cures. Dr. Sadger, of Vienna, one of the ablest of Professor Freud's pupils, claims that by the psycho-analytic method, both in his own hands and Freud's, a real cure is possible, provided the patient is fairly young, anxious to become normal, and not highly degenerate.

Sadger brings forward the case of a student, æt. 21, having a maternal aunt insane; his mother and sister are boyish in appearance. He himself has broad hips and very little hair on face; as a child he only cared for girlish amusements. His sexual ideals on coming under treatment centred around masculine individuals and he was attracted to boys, but much troubled by this attraction. Treatment, Sadger recognised, could only be effectual by changing the ideal. Psycho-analytic treatment, however (being the reverse of hypnotic treatment), cannot put anything into the patient; its object is to bring to the surface what is already present in sub-consciousness. Now Sadger believes (with Freud) that—just as in hysteria there are, according to this doctrine, concealed sub-conscious emotions and ideas—there are in every homosexual person latent elements of normal heterosexuality. The homosexual person has gradually organised his memories and feelings around his dominant tendency, and has allowed the normal feelings and memories to lapse. It is the business of the psycho-analytic method to fish up, so to speak, these lapsed feelings and memories from sub-consciousness, and to give them their proper value and force in the patient's conscious life. At first the patient could recall scarcely any memories implying normal sexuality. Many such memories were, however, slowly recovered; the patient gradually realised that behind his masculine ideals there really lay concealed feminine ideals, and after four months' treatment he reached the normal point of view and finally became attached to a woman.

Sadger concludes from this case that (1) even the most intelligent persons seldom know themselves fully or possess reliable recollections; (2) that normal sexuality may really be predominant even in cases where inversion seems to be complete; and (3) that inversion has its roots in early childhood even though it may not become conscious until puberty. HAVELOCK ELLIS.

*Statistical Inquiries regarding Recovered Epileptics [Statistische Untersuchungen über geheilte Epileptiker].* (Allg. Zeits. f. Psychiat., Bd. 65, H. 1.) Volland.

The elder physicians gave a bad prognosis for recoveries from epilepsy; a few, such as Odier and Trousseau, considered recovery