

the conviction that it is eminently desirable that the contents of Prof. Bianchi's book should, as speedily as possible, be made available to every British alienist by means of a careful translation.

W. FORD ROBERTSON.

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*Einführung in die Psychiatrische Klinik* [*Introduction to Clinical Psychiatry*]. VON EMIL KRAEPELIN. Leipzig: Barth, 1901. Pp. 328, 8vo.

Prof. Kraepelin has the rare distinction of possessing equal eminence in the scientific investigation of morbid psychology and in the study of its practical and clinical aspects; he is known for his persistent attempts to introduce greater clearness and precision in nomenclature and classification, as in the extension he gives to the conception of "dementia præcox" and katatonia, to "paranoid" states and maniacal depressive conditions; he is, moreover, the author of a text-book of psychiatry, now in its sixth edition, which in Germany is regarded as a kind of classic.

The present volume is not an attempt to boil down the larger work, nor is it in any sense a text-book. It is strictly a series of demonstrations of clinical cases set forth in the form of thirty lectures, each devoted to some particular form of disease—epileptic insanity, katatonic stupor, puerperal insanity, mixed maniacal depressive conditions, katatonic excitement, alcoholic mental disturbances, chronic alcoholism, morphinism and cocainism, senile dementia, etc. The lectures are very clearly and simply written, so easily and fluently that a careless reader might possibly suppose them to be casual and hasty productions. Yet they withstand the most careful critical examination. It is, indeed, only after careful reading that it is possible to realise how much unobtrusive literary art, as well as wide knowledge and sound judgment, has gone to the composition of these clear and simple lectures. Usually the lecture begins with a brief but vivid and precise description of the case which is supposed to be before us; then follows the history; and then the considerations suggested by the case, without any direct reference to the opinions of other authorities. Usually one or two other cases are then brought before the reader in the same way, to illustrate further aspects or later stages of the same disorder. A foot-note states the final issue and present state of the case, and these notes show that the cases are selected over a period of ten years.

A brief introduction is furnished to the lectures, as well as a conclusion. The former is noteworthy as containing the author's expression of belief that there is a real increase of insanity among the population in Germany, and not a mere absolute increase; in the latter he suggests that as our knowledge of the causation and mechanism of insanity increases one may possibly find that various forms are to be explained, in the same way as cretinism is to be explained, by the formation of a poison in the organism; such a poison, it is suggested, may be the link between syphilis and general paralysis, the direct action of syphilis not being sufficient to account for the facts, since general paralysis is not amenable to antisyphilitic treatment. He

is inclined to sympathise with those who would similarly explain epilepsy as due to a poison generated in the organism, while admitting the difficulty that we do not know whether, or how far, epilepsy can be regarded as a simple disease.

We can scarcely hope to see an English translation of these lectures, for the history of German cases would not among us greatly appeal to the student, for whom such books are alone supposed to be written. In reality, however, it is scarcely a book for students, who may more profitably follow the actual demonstration of living cases. But the alienist who is sufficiently at home in German to follow this admirably written volume will certainly find keen satisfaction and stimulation in thus being brought into close contact with one of the masters of psychiatry.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

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*Die periodischen Geistesstörungen* [*Periodic Mental Diseases*]. By Dr. A. PILCZ. Published by Gustave Fischer, Jena, 1901. 8vo, pp. 210, with 57 curves in text. Pr. 5 m.

The writing of monographs on all varieties of medical subjects seems at the present time to be much in vogue in Germany. In many respects this practice has much to recommend it from the specialist's point of view, but it has its dangers. Where the subject is well worn, and when little fresh knowledge has recently been acquired in respect of it, the writing of a special treatise lays the author open to the temptation of straining after novelty by magnifying unimportant details, or of over-refinement in classification, which after all adds little to a real knowledge of the nature of a disease or to our means of treating it. Dr. Pilcz's treatise, while containing much that is of value, is not wholly free from this blemish.

As it is well recognised that most forms of mental disease have a distinct periodic tendency, it is absolutely necessary to define those to which the title of the book is restricted. This the author does in his preface, where he gives the following definition:—"By periodic psychoses I mean only those forms of disease whose individual attacks recur without known external causes, with the same train of special symptoms, and with regular periodicity. In this class two forms are included: firstly, those exhibiting a more or less regular repetition; and secondly, those in which, when once the mental disturbance has manifested itself in a special series of symptoms, the individual attacks resemble each other (to a certain degree.)" In other words, the parallelism may be one of time or of manner. It will be seen subsequently what forms of insanity this definition includes.

The first chapter consists of an historical review of the subject, and it is shown that periodic forms of insanity have been recognised for a very long time. The second is concerned with ætiology, which is considered under various headings. These include frequency, age, sex, heredity, cerebral injury or gross disease, bodily disease, and mental shock. As to heredity, all authorities are agreed in regarding it as of predominating importance. The author's own investigations place the percentage of cases exhibiting it at about 57. Of the