

The Beginnings of Criminal Anthropology [Des Origines des l'Anthropologie Criminelle]. (Bull. de la Soc. de Méd. Ment. de Belgique, Feb., 1909.) Meeus.

In his presidential address to the Belgian Société de Médecine mentale, M. Meeus, the well-known physician to the colony of Gheel, has set himself the task of tracing out in the medical literature of the last century the rudimentary form of those ideas which in their later developments have become familiar as the theories of criminal anthropology. M. Meeus deals chiefly with the writings of the French psychiatrists, and appears to be less well acquainted with the works of the English and German observers. He shows, however, a due appreciation of the immense influence which Maudsley's teachings have had on the scientific study of crime. An address of this kind cannot be expected to contain much that is novel; but English students of criminology will be grateful to M. Meeus for calling their attention to a comparatively unknown precursor of Lombroso, a Dr. Barbaste, who in 1856 published a work under the title of *De l'homicide et de l'anthropophagie*, in which he appears to have anticipated in a very curious way several of the ideas of the Italian master, including even the famous atavistic theory of crime. Judging from the extracts given by M. Meeus, Barbaste's views on the psychology of the criminal would seem to have shown remarkable originality and acuteness.

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8. Asylum Reports issued in 1909.

Some English County and Borough Asylums.

Cardiff.—We congratulate Dr. Goodall on his new asylum, which appears to have been designed conveniently. No doubt in its ultimate shaping it has improved under his experienced judgment. He is proud and thankful for the fact that over 600 patients were transferred from thirteen asylums by the new and untried staff without hitch or accident. The subjoined remarks made by him are, indeed, true and to the point.

The Institution is equipped much above the average in respect of scientific apparatus for clinical and pathological research. Such equipment is necessary in every hospital for mental diseases if the medical spirit, without which these institutions would rank merely as places of detention, is to be fostered, and young medical men of a desirable stamp are to be attracted. More than ever is it incumbent to have such in a mental hospital in touch with a town possessing medical laboratories and trained workers in all departments of medicine, which provides post-graduate instruction, and which aims at possessing a complete medical school. These facilities offer a golden opportunity for that collaboration of workers in different departments of medicine which is so essential to progress in knowledge and treatment, and which becomes increasingly necessary with the growth of specialisation. I must here express my indebtedness to Dr. Schölberg, of University College, Cardiff, for the very valuable guidance and assistance he has given us in bacteriological work. I would point out that all these considerations respecting medical and nursing work have a bearing on the question of maintenance rate. When we read of this or that asylum having a remarkably low rate of maintenance, we are not therefore to envy that institution forthwith, and to set

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