

PART II.—REVIEWS.

Pope's Law and Practice of Lunacy. Second Edition. By J. H. BOOME, of the Middle Temple, and V. DE S. FOWKE, of Lincoln's Inn, Barristers-at-Law. Sweet and Maxwell, Limited, London. 1890. pp. 573.

We may say at once—and we say it with pleasure—that in the hands of the present editors the reputation of Mr. Pope's "Treatise on the Law and Practice of Lunacy" is quite safe. All the material features that differentiated the first edition of this well-known work—its clearness of arrangement, its lucidity, its scientific *excursus*, its accuracy, and its detail—have been preserved, while the recent legislative changes in the law of lunacy have been incorporated into the text.

"The Act of 1890," the editors observe in their preface, "at last seems to give some promise of finality in lunacy legislation." Having regard to the incompleteness of the new measure, to its sins of commission, and its far more serious sins of omission, we hope and believe that this is not the case; and in the firm conviction that a third edition of *Pope* will soon be called for, we venture to direct the attention of the editors to the following points:—

1. A tabular explanation of the legal abbreviations used throughout the work is much needed. What are medical men to make of such signs as "B and C," "M and M," "De G, M, and G."?

2. The amount of space (twelve pages) devoted to criminal responsibility in mental disease is utterly inadequate to the importance of the subject.

3. The Act of 1890 should be annotated, even although the process involves a certain degree of repetition. The editors should take "Sebastian on Trade Marks" as a model.

4. Some account should be given of the gradual judicial departure from the rules in Macnaghten's case in recent years. These rules will soon be as defunct as "the wild beast theory" which has secured for Mr. Justice Tracy a bad immortality.

5. The statement (p. 20) that "there are no less than five distinct criterions of legal sanity and insanity" is inaccurate, or, at least, misleading. The law now recognizes only one test of lunacy, viz., "Was the person whose act is in question able to understand its nature, and to pass a fairly rational judgment on its consequences to himself and others, and was he a free agent so far as that act was concerned?"