

blood-pressure in different forms of insanity suggests the line of treatment which may be adopted in the various kinds of mental diseases. 16. The feeling of weight and pressure upon the top of the head, so common a symptom in melancholia, is apparently vascular in origin, and is lessened or disappears when the blood-pressure is lowered. 17. Certain depressed patients improve with nitro-glycerine, but there is difficulty in keeping the blood-pressure down with this drug, as its action is so evanescent. 18. The action of erythrol tetranitrate is more prolonged and reliable, and is more powerful in lowering the blood-pressure in melancholia. 19. The prolonged bath raises the blood-pressure, and hence is of more value in the treatment of excited patients.

Conseil-Général de la Seine—Rapport, 1898.

This is the report issued by the Commission delegated by the General Council of the Department of the Seine to make a detailed and exhaustive study of the question of the treatment of the insane in England and Scotland, and to make a comparison between institutions for the insane in the United Kingdom and those of their own country. The Commission was composed of MM. Emile Dubois, President of the General Council; Navarre, President of the Third Commission; Paul Brousse, Reporter of the Alienist Service; Pelletier, Chief of the Alienist Service; and Edouard Toulouse, Medical Superintendent of the Asylum of Villejuif (Reporter).

The Commission visited all the principal asylums in the United Kingdom, including, among others, those of Claybury, Morningside, Derby, Barony, Gartloch, Larbert, and Murthly; and give in their report detailed descriptions of the construction, administration, organisation, and special methods of treatment of these several institutions, making at the same time a minute point-by-point comparison between them and the asylums of the first rank in France. This comparison is on the whole eminently favourable to our asylums, and the Commission avow that France has much to learn from Britain in the matter of the treatment of the insane. They place special emphasis on the system of the "open door," so much practised in our leading asylums, and are even now, since their return home, making strenuous efforts to introduce it into French asylums, notwithstanding the very determined resistance with which they are being met at the hands of many of their countrymen. On one point, however, they claim to have the advantage over us—namely, in the matter of food. After a minute comparison of the number of meals, the kind, quality, and quantity of food, beverages, &c., given to patients in the asylums of the county of London on the one hand, and those of the Department of the Seine on the other, the Commission come to the following conclusion:—"We conclude, then, from this short discussion that food is more abundant in the asylums of the Seine than in the asylums of London. This may explain the reason why the rate of alimentation is comparatively so low in the latter."

Tables and plans of every kind, detailed and drawn out in that thorough and masterly way which distinguishes all French work of this description, are scattered throughout the report, and appended to it are reproductions of a series of seven photographs—two of Gartloch and five of Larbert.

One of the most interesting parts of the document, not only to the speciality, but to the general reader, and one which it would be highly instructive to give *in extenso*, but which space unfortunately forbids, is the opening chapter on English and French customs. A few extracts, however, must suffice.

“Immediately we put our foot on English soil we perceive that civilisation has taken a very different direction from ours. The Englishman is certainly a more individualist citizen than the Frenchman—at least as regards everyday life. . . . Every Englishman is of the opinion of Spencer, who wishes that the State should as little as possible suppress individual liberty. . . . The Englishman has needs of domestic luxury which we have not. We are a people of economical habits, not to say a little miserly, renouncing superfluities, and even sometimes necessities, in order to amass a small capital. The sentiment of English respectability is different from our sentiment of vanity. The English character is especially developed in the schools, which are as different from ours as their asylums are unlike those of our land. . . . All education must have the tendency to develop in the very highest degree the aptitudes which will form practical men. The school must, therefore, approach as much as possible the conditions of life. . . . In any one society everything has a connection. . . . We shall find in the law and the organisation of asylums the same spirit of independence and individualism which renders the asylum more self-governing and more differential, and the patient more free. . . . Utilitarianism seems to be in England the directing idea of public acts.”

Delirium Tremens. Par le Dr. VILLERS. (*Extrait des Bulletin de la Société de Médecine mentale de Belgique, 1898.*)

In a most interesting paper Dr. Villers reviews the recent note by M. Jacobson, of Copenhagen, on Delirium Tremens (*Allgem. Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie*, t. 54, p. 221, 1898), and contrasts his results and those of Krafft-Ebing with the facts observed in the cases at the Hospital Saint-Jean in Brussels. The contrast is most instructive, and is fairly detailed. The chief points are that the German and Danish forms of delirium tremens are more severe, more complicated, more fatal, and occur at an earlier age than in Belgium. Dr. Villers attaches great importance, in explaining these facts, to the national habits. In Belgium, it seems, gin is still the usual beverage. In Germany delirium tremens comes on probably in those who have undermined their constitutions in early life by excesses in beer, and who, on taking to spirits, become easily delirious. All cases of delirium tremens—or