

*University of London M.D. Examination.*

Many inquiries have reached us in reference to the new Psychological Examination at the London University. It may be as well, therefore, to state that in lieu of the examination in Logic and Psychology, the Senate introduced for the first time at the M.D. Examination in November, 1886, the subject of "Mental Physiology, especially in relation to Mental Disorders." On the occasion referred to, a candidate had his option as to taking the new or old subjects of examination, but in future, Logic and Psychology will disappear from the Examination. This is certainly an important step in the right direction, and aims at a much more practical class of subjects—a class far more useful to the physician. We should have been better satisfied, however, if the terms of the subject now introduced had been differently expressed. It is no doubt the result of a sort of compromise—a little new wine in old bottles—but we hope that before long only two words will remain, namely, Mental Disorders. As it is, an examiner is hampered by the sense that he cannot ask questions which do not more or less directly spring from the cardinal point of Mental Physiology, whereas it is to be desired that he should be able to examine on the same lines as the pass examination of the Medico-Psychological Association. We have no wish to see the examination made a difficult one, but questions should be asked in regard to the diagnosis and treatment of Mental Disorders, similar to those asked in the examination about other diseases. This would not only be better for the candidate, but would extend the area of subjects for the examiner, who otherwise will find it almost impossible to ask fresh questions from time to time.

The following Questions were asked at the Examination in November:—

1. Mention phenomena occurring in health and disease which indicate that mental operations can be carried on and actions be performed, automatically, whether (*a*) consciously or (*b*) unconsciously.

2. What would lead you to conclude that one person is merely the subject of an optical illusion or sees ocular spectra, consistently with mental health, and that another has visual illusions or hallucinations in consequence of mental disease?

3. In a person presumably sane and managing his own

affairs, what circumstances, personal or otherwise, would induce you to suppose that he has an insane diathesis?

4. Distinguish between the erroneous beliefs of a sane, and the delusions of an insane man.

5. Contrast the mental characteristics of the idiot with those of the insane.

6. What perversions of healthy sensation (common and special) are frequently met with in the insane?

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*The Lunacy Bill.*

As we write, the Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill, which was ordered to be printed January 31st, 1887, has passed through Committee in the House of Lords, several amendments having been accepted by the Lord Chancellor. What alterations the House of Commons may introduce, it is impossible to foresee.

As is well known to our readers, the new Bill closely resembled that introduced by Lord Herschell, but a new clause, upon which Lord Halsbury specially prided himself, in reference to the notice served upon every patient before he could be placed under care, giving him power to appeal to and appear before a magistrate, has been withdrawn, and a less perilous provision substituted for it. A more objectionable enactment could scarcely have been devised by the wit of even a Lord Chancellor. Happily, both Lord Herschell and Lord Selborne perceived its mischievous character. Lord Grimthorpe, in moving the substitution of other words for Clause 3, pointed out that it would facilitate the escape of alleged lunatics from the country, or even from the world. The noble lord had received a letter from a medical practitioner stating that he had never known so many suicides of alleged lunatics as had occurred during the last two years; the result, he believed, of the fear of publicity. Lord Selborne maintained that the clause as it stood in the Bill would be absolutely destructive of its main object, namely, the prompt placing under restraint and supervision the alleged lunatic before he could injure himself or others. To proceed against such a person as a criminal and to put him upon his defence would be a perversion of the whole law of lunacy. He considered the proposal a most ingenious device to defeat the objects of the Lunacy Act. Lord Herschell, with every desire to support the Bill, was unable to do so in