

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.

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

various forms of periodic insanity, *folie circulaire* appears to take the lead in this respect.

The next eight chapters are devoted to the consideration of the various forms of periodic insanity. These include *folie circulaire*, periodic mania, melancholia, amentia, or acute hallucinatory confusion, paranoia, impulsive insanities, delirious confusional states, and insanities of secondary origin. A chapter is devoted to each of these. As is natural, *folie circulaire* comes first, and occupies the largest space. It is the typical form of periodic insanity, and is regarded by many as the form to which all the others may be relegated. In mental disease it is always dangerous to strain symptomatology too far as a basis of classification owing to our ignorance of its pathology, and to the amazing variability of the symptoms in individual cases. The author gives a full description of each of the varieties he has felt justified in naming, and also illustrates each group with detailed accounts of cases as examples. Attention is also given to diagnosis, aetiology, and treatment.

The eleventh chapter is devoted to a description of the bodily symptoms which are usually found. This is a most useful and suggestive chapter. General nutrition, the circulatory and respiratory systems, digestion, excretion, and the nervous system are passed in review. One of the most interesting sections in this chapter is devoted to the consideration of the pulse, which he has himself carefully investigated. In *folie circulaire* he has found that during the maniacal stage the pulse is quicker and has a lower tension, while in the melancholic stage it is slower and has a higher tension, than during the interval of sanity. It is interesting to compare this with the experience of Dr. L. C. Bruce⁽¹⁾ in cases of ordinary melancholia. The latter found both rate and tension increased in the acute stage, and both fell as convalescence was established. It would be of importance to know whether this is a distinctive character of the two forms of melancholia, and if it is what is the cause of the difference. Another interesting point which the author investigated is the examination of the urine. He tested it in a number of cases for albumen, albumose, acetone, diacetoacetic acid, and indican. In all those tested he found none of these abnormal constituents during the lucid interval, while one or other of them was present during the maniacal or melancholic stage. None was characteristic of any particular stage in all cases, but for each case the abnormal constituent was characteristic for the various stages. He concludes that this points to a disturbance of the chemical processes of digestion and nutrition. In some cases he was even able to predict the transition from one stage to another of the mental cycle by an analysis of the urine. This is the strictest test of a scientific truth, and hence is a fact of the utmost importance. It points, as he suggests, to a toxic element in periodic insanities, as has been done in some other forms of mental disease.

Two chapters follow in which are discussed bodily diseases associated with periodic insanity, and the combination of the latter with other psychoses and neuroses. The last chapter is devoted to pathology. Unfortunately the author has to confess that there are as yet no pathological features characteristic of this disease. In a considerable number

of cases there are no naked-eye changes at all, while in those which do exhibit them the changes are not uniform. The commonest diseased process was softening. It was further observed that it was only in those cases which had exhibited impairment of intelligence that some gross lesion was found. There is no record of any systematic microscopic examination of the cortex, which, of course, is a fatal omission. The book closes with a very extensive and apparently complete bibliography, which includes 724 separate references.

JAMES MIDDLEMASS.

(¹) *Journal of Mental Science*, Oct., 1900.

Traité de Thérapeutique des Maladies mentales et nerveuses. Paul Garnier et Paul Cololian, 1901.

The purpose of this treatise is to place treatment in the foreground without abandoning the clinical aspects of disease. Accordingly, the salient features of the several nervous affections are set forth, along with the special modes of treatment adapted to each case. The method is an excellent one, but we think that it might with advantage have been elaborated still more on the therapeutic side.

An historical chapter develops in outline the march of the therapeutics of mental affections from prehistoric times down to our own days. Needless to say this outline is very sketchy, and we miss some important figures. Thus, whilst Pinel deservedly takes a foremost position, we find no mention of the foundation of the York Retreat in 1792 by William Tuke on principles similar to those which guided the great alienist, yet independently of him. This criticism is not to detract from the glory of Pinel, to whom we owe so much, including even, according to our authors, the nasal feeding of the insane (see p. 24).

General therapeutics occupy a separate section, and deal with the management of the insane and with such questions as isolation, non-restraint, the open doors, confinement to bed, etc.; also with the treatment of the insane in colonies, as at Gheel, Lierneux, and Dun-sur-Auron, and the treatment in special asylums of the criminal lunatic, the epileptic, the idiot, the hysteric, and the alcoholic. Under the heading "Société de Patronage pour les Aliénés guéris" we find another omission, viz., no mention of the After-care Society, which has existed in England since 1879. France, of course, led the way by many years in this noble work, but when we are told that Germany, Belgium and Italy possess analogous institutions, we might expect to find mention of our own society.

The chapter on alimentation is very slight; upon it follows treatment by drugs.

Under bromides we should have expected some mention of the more recent attempts to convey bromine in organic combination with albumen or peptone (bromo-eigon), with oil (bromipin), with some of the fatty acid series (bromalin). Chloralamide we find described as an indifferent hypnotic, and as *dangerous*. Paraldehyde is stated to be but little prescribed nowadays, and a drug of small value. These dicta will scarcely represent prevailing opinion here. Under the classification "tonics" we find arsenic; with this arrangement we need not quarrel, for every