

increased the space given to the section so as to make it disproportionate.

The exclusion of general paralysis of the insane from this section, and its relegation to that dealing with nervous diseases, is difficult to understand. Only last year, for the first time, this affection received the official recognition of the Commissioners as a distinct type of insanity, and its absence from this section and this volume is productive of a distinct sense of incompleteness.

We have not dealt with the contributions which make up the section individually. All are characterised by a high level of excellence. We would point out, however, that the table of ages on p. 185 is of but little value, giving as it does merely the absolute numbers of patients in asylums at various age-periods without any reference to the population at corresponding ages. Nor is it the case that (in proportion to population) "the largest number of cases of insanity occurs between the ages of twenty-five and fifty." It is during the twenty years, thirty-five to fifty-four, that the proportion attains the maximum; and if general paralysis, which alone, and not puerperal insanity, is responsible for this occurrence, is left out of consideration, the liability to insanity, judging from the age on admission, is one which increases by steady progression with advancing age. The relationship to insanity of age, sex, and condition as to marriage is by no means a simple one, and no one of these can be considered by itself, but must be taken in conjunction with the other two. To say, for instance, as Dr. Savage does, that "over half the insane are married," tells us really very little, and taken by itself is positively misleading; for if the two conditions, celibate and married, are compared for ages over twenty, *i. e.* the marriageable age, the proportion of single to married among the admissions in relation to the corresponding population is between two and three to one. Table xviii, which gives the condition as to marriage, refers to population, though that is not stated, and its place should have been occupied by either Table xix or xx of the Commissioners' Report, though both of these are also misleading if only the totals for all ages are given.

Apart from the few exceptions which have been mentioned, the section on "Mental Diseases" is in every way excellent. To the general practitioner, whose difficulties in dealing with these cases are often trying in the extreme, it will prove a very present help. To the specialist also is it likely to prove helpful, and some of the contributions, such as those on dull, delicate, and nervous children (Dr. F. Warner), vice, crime, and insanity (Dr. Mercier), and criminal lunacy (Dr. Nicolson), are such as should appeal to that section of the enlightened public which interests itself in the moral and mental welfare of the community.

Diseases of the Nervous System. By CAMPBELL THOMSON. Baillière, Tindall, and Cox, London, 1899, pp. 123. Price 4s.

The author in his preface tells us that the object of his book is to serve as an introduction to the study of diseases of the nervous system,

and that the arrangement he has adopted is that which he has found in his experience as a teacher to be useful to students. Of the thirteen chapters into which the book is divided eight are devoted to the description of the motor system and the actions and nerve-supply of the muscles, and the remaining five deal with the general structure of the nervous system, the sensory system, reflexes, localisation of spinal diseases, and disorders of gait. In the description of the architecture of the nervous system the results of the more recent microscopic investigations appear to be taken into account, though we have not found any reference to Waldeyer's conception of nerve structure, which involves the existence of neurons of association as a link connecting the sensory with the motor neurons, the whole forming the reflex arc. The chapters on the ocular muscles and the reflexes are particularly good, and the descriptions throughout are freely illustrated by photographic reproductions and diagrammatic sketches. There is nothing strikingly original in the work, but the manner of dealing with the principles of the subject is so lucid that the result is a very readable book, and one which fulfils very well the author's intention.

Clinical Studies in Vice and in Insanity. By G. R. WILSON, M.D.
Edinburgh: W. F. Clay, 1899, 8vo. Price 7s. 6d. net.

In this work Dr. Wilson has brought together a number of clinical records illustrating certain aspects of mental disease which are in some degree related, whether in origin or in symptomatic expression, to what we rather vaguely term vice.

The standpoint throughout is clinical, but the observations are preceded by and interspersed with very interesting considerations on pathology and treatment.

The vice disease specially dealt with is inebriety; and the first portion of the book is devoted to "an account of alcoholism intended to convey an idea of a progressive alcoholic lesion in drunkenness, with a provisional suggestion of the nature of the vehicles and modes of nerve-motion in health and in disease."

The author comments at the outset on the present confusion in the nomenclature of alcoholism, and suggests some emendations. We could wish that he had been even a little more drastic in his proposals: such secondary conditions, for instance, as paraplegia and hemiplegia in a drunkard are hardly entitled to rank as special alcoholic disease forms either separately or as constituents of "alcoholic paralysis;" and "alcoholic epilepsy" or "epileptoid alcoholism" is a term which, perhaps, asserts too much.

The chief interest of this section of the work centres in the very ingenious, if somewhat speculative, theories which Dr. Wilson advances in explanation of the pathology of alcoholism. His view is that the morbid condition consists essentially in a lesion of the dendritic system, whereby there results a reduction of mental function: new paths are not developed, new connections are not made, hence the loss