

Influenza.

Influenza has been more rife than usual this wintry spring, and although fortunately the mortality therefrom has not been very high, its baneful influence has been more widely spread than ever.

Whole schools have been prostrated, committees of important bodies scarcely able to raise a quorum, Government offices so weak handed as to seriously diminish the supply of red tape, and some departments of the law, never arraigned as yet for furious speed, have come nearly to a standstill. On the other hand, ammoniated quinine has been at a premium, nurses have been too busy, with rare exceptions, even to prosecute their doctors for treating them gratuitously, and seaside resorts, especially those with golf courses, have been largely frequented.

Lastly, but by no means least, our editors, reviewers, and contributors have suffered unanimously, and if the JOURNAL is late and somewhat emaciated in its appearance, this also must be ascribed to the demonic influence of the influenza.

Part II.—Reviews.

Syphilis und Nervensystem [*Syphilis and the Nervous System*]. By Dr. M. NONNE. Published by S. Karger, Berlin, 1902. Octavo, pp. 458, with 42 illustrations. Price 14 m.

THIS monograph takes the form of seventeen lectures, delivered by the author in the autumn of the years 1899, 1900, and 1901, to practising physicians in Hamburg. He has published them in the same form as they were delivered, as he thinks they will thus possess greater practical interest without being wanting in scientific accuracy. They are illustrated by many valuable clinical facts from the author's own observation, and wherever possible the clinical symptoms are referred to the basis of pathological anatomy. In his division of the subject he is guided largely by his own experience, and by the necessities of practical utility. This is wise, not only in view of the circumstances under which the lectures were delivered, but also in view of the mistaken impression of the subject which is obtained when a series of very rare

though interesting conditions are detailed, of which the majority of people will probably never see an example. A more correct picture is thus given of what is likely to be the average experience of an ordinary practitioner.

The lectures, as stated, are seventeen in number, and they review the subject in all its different aspects. The ætiology, diagnosis, and pathological anatomy are first considered. Under the last head he recognises three types of syphilitic disease as it affects the nervous system: (1) syphilitic new growth; (2) chronic hyperplastic inflammation; (3) vascular disease. The last leads to consequences which are not of a syphilitic character,—for example, necrosis of nervous tissue. He recognises, also, a group of post- or metasymphilitic affections which manifest themselves in various simple degenerative processes, which, on clinical grounds, are attributed to syphilis, though pathologically they cannot be distinguished as specific of that disease. The three groups above mentioned are fully described and illustrated. As regards vascular disease in syphilis, the author considers that there is “no essential difference between atheromatosis resulting from syphilis and that which is found without the concurrence of syphilis.”

The author then turns his attention to the symptomatology of syphilitic arterial disease, cerebral meningitis, disease of the base of the cerebrum, and to the differential diagnosis and prognosis of these. He then takes up the psychoses and neuroses of syphilis. He concludes that there is no mental disease specifically syphilitic, and diagnosable as such; further, that there is no form of psychical disturbance which may not be observed as a result of syphilis.

In the ninth lecture the author states it as his opinion that general paralysis is not a specifically syphilitic disease, though he admits that the relations between them are numerous and intimate. He allows that syphilis plays a part, in that it diminishes the resistance of a brain more or less disposed to it, and that thus, at a later period, damaging factors are able to exercise their influence. Of these factors he looks on alcohol as the chief.

The next three lectures are devoted to syphilis of the spinal cord. In the thirteenth the author considers the question of tabes. As in general paralysis, he regards this disease as not a specifically syphilitic affection, and for much the same reasons. The question is undoubtedly a difficult one. As regards general paralysis, the greatest light appears to be shed by the cases of its juvenile or developmental form. In them there are seldom any of the “damaging factors” to which the author alludes to be discovered. The sole common factor in the great majority of such cases is the existence of hereditary syphilis. It is quite true that the pathological anatomy of general paralysis and of tabes does not present features similar to other recognised syphilitic processes, but after all this is nothing but a mere argument. The author himself recognises at least three distinct forms in which syphilis may manifest itself pathologically in the nervous system, and not one of these primarily attacks the nervous tissue. Why, then, must one deny that there may be a fourth or even a fifth form? When one considers the highly specialised structure of the nervous system, one might, indeed, be surprised if syphilis did not affect it in a pathologically different way

from what it does in other tissues. This also is, of course, a mere argument, but it is more likely to be true than the other.

The last four lectures deal with the cerebro-spinal forms of syphilis, disease of the peripheral nerves, hereditary syphilis as it affects the nervous system, and finally therapeutics.

The book, as a whole, is clear, interesting, and well written. It contains numerous descriptions of cases the author has himself seen, which illustrate the point under discussion, and stir fresh interest in the subject when this might flag during the course of theoretical disquisitions. The bibliography is most complete, extending to twenty-one pages. It is drawn from all countries, and omits no work of importance dealing in any way with the subject. The indexes are also good.

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Object-Lessons in Penal Science. Third Series. By A. R. WHITEWAY, M.A., Barrister-at-Law. Sonnenschein, 1902. Crown 8vo, pp. 212. 3s. 6d. net.

Mr. Whiteway has a lively sense of the defects of our police, of our criminal laws and procedure, and of our prison system, in fact, of every stage of our dealing with offenders, whether in catching them, trying them, or punishing them. His heart is in his subject, he writes with liveliness, and his book is calculated to stir somewhat stagnant waters; but in his recommendations for reform there is a lack of definiteness. As existing, our system, he says, is altogether wrong, root and branch, lock, stock, and barrel; but beyond vague declarations that things ought to be better done, we do not get much enlightenment as to what precise measures should be taken to reform them. Prison governors and warders ought to be better trained, but what they are to be trained in we are not told. The author argues against the view of Sir E. Fry and other jurists, that at the bottom of the whole system of punishment is the notion of fitting suffering to sin. The introduction of the last word was unfortunate, and has given occasion to others before Mr. Whiteway to exclaim against the assumption of a religious function by the law; but it is perfectly obvious to any one who has read Sir E. Fry's article that he used the word "sin" in no religious sense, but as a wide term to include all forms of wrong-doing. "We have no right," says Mr. Whiteway, "to *punish* for punishment's sake." I should very much like to know why not. "All we can do properly in our treatment of criminals is to efficiently protect ourselves. If in doing so we benefit them, that is not only a matter of duty, but one, too, to our own exceeding great advantage." And if in doing so we harm them, we may regret the necessity, but we manifestly have, on these premisses, the right to do so. "Practical utility" has something to say in the matter, no doubt, but undoubtedly the earliest, and still the most operative motive in the infliction of punishment is that very *lex talionis* which Mr. Whiteway so strongly deprecates; and, *pace* all the efforts of all the utilitarians, so it will remain as long as the sentiment of indignation at the sight of wrong remains a constituent in human nature, and I for one should be sorry to hasten its departure by a single day.