

—either hypnotic suggestion or indirect suggestion—by the administration of some drug. That ergot, for instance, acts in this way is illustrated by the case of a man whose polyuria improved rapidly when this drug was administered. On a subsequent occasion, when the polyuria relapsed, ergot was prescribed again, but a little bicarbonate of soda given instead. The same improvement took place as before.

H. J. MACEVOY.

*Treatment of the Insane [Les divers modes d'assistance des aliénés devant la commission d'études au Conseil-Général de la Seine]. (Rev. de Psychiat., No. 3, 1900.) Marie, A.*

This paper contains the pith of the suggestions made by a commission appointed by the General Council of the Seine to study and report upon the questions of treatment of the insane. This commission had to consider and report upon such points as observation hospitals for acute cases; over-crowding of chronic cases, and means of relieving it; treatment of vicious and criminal insane; treatment of epileptics; isolation of alcoholics, etc., etc. They recommend, among other things, the creation of a hospital for the observation and treatment of acute cases; for chronic cases chronic blocks, farms, home treatment, etc.; there are suggestions for the treatment of the various classes of alcoholics, etc., etc. Embodying the results of their visits to asylums at home and abroad, this report is a very important document, and will, no doubt, lead to decided steps in the direction of improving the conditions and treatment of cases of mental disease in the Department of the Seine. It is a most comprehensive report.

H. J. MACEVOY.

*An Address on the Insane and their Treatment. (Brit. Med. Journ., Jan. 20th, 1900.) Spence, J. B.*

The address, delivered before the Staffordshire branch of the British Medical Association, gives an interesting historical sketch of the treatment of the insane from remote periods up to the present. But small advance was made up to the eighteenth century, at the end of which the labours of Pinel and Tuke, followed later in this country by the efforts of Lord Ashley (subsequently Lord Shaftesbury), initiated a new departure. The advances of late years are then dwelt upon—and they are undoubted, but leave something to be desired; and Dr. Spence does not fail to comment on the fact that in 1845, when the office of Commissioner in Lunacy was first instituted, the visiting staff of the Commission was of exactly the same numerical strength as at the present moment, though the number of the officially insane in 1845—viz. 20,893—has in January, 1900, advanced to 81,258 in asylums alone. On the importance of the attachment of pathological departments to the larger asylums, now being recognised, Dr. Spence lays stress, as also upon the establishment of clinics at asylums adjacent to large towns and at all the larger general hospitals. Finally, Dr. Spence urges that the influence of members of the profession should be enlisted in order to facilitate the passing of the Act to amend the Lunacy Laws, introduced by the Lord Chancellor in the last session of Parliament. One clause