

*The Scientific Border-line between Sanity and Insanity.* (*Amer. Journ. Ins.*, 1898, vol. lv, p. 219.) Runge, E. C.

The subject is treated in a very scientific fashion. He accepts as an indisputable fact the existence of some cortical areas as centres of psychic function. Insanity is the symptom of any pathological process implicating these centres. From both clinical and pathological stand-points we have no facts to justify us in separating the acute delirium of fevers or acute alcoholism from insanity. In both there is irresponsibility, and both require treatment along rational lines. The question is only one of degree. The real objection is contained in the word "insanity" itself, which word is objectionable and unscientific, and its disappearance would be hailed with genuine satisfaction.

J. R. LORD.

*Art and Literature in the Mentally Abnormal.* (*Amer. Journ. Ins.*, 1899, vol. lv, p. 385.) Hrdlecka, A.

He finds that among the insane there is seldom any manifestation of any high talent, and usually the faculties are acquired when sane. His paper resolves itself into the study of the effects of abnormal mental states on previously acquired artistic tastes. As regards education in the insane, he has collected statistics showing its degree in the various mental disorders, which point out that, on the whole, education is hostile to the development of terminal dementia, and is favourable to paranoia and chronic mania in men, and acute melancholia and paranoia in women. He found artistic and literary tastes most prevalent in paranoics and chronic manias, and least in paretic and terminal dementes. The melancholic may indulge in poetry, but any artistic production of the acute maniac is confused and shapeless. As a rule the insane indulge in drawing and music, and occasionally in decorative art or construction. The drawings are commonly symbolic or allegorical in nature. Supernatural figures, mysterious objects, secret signs and symbols, often occur. Religious objects are also frequent, and occasionally indecent drawings are produced, the latter mostly by epileptics. Execution is often most elaborate, but commonly lacks in detail and fine points. Painting is seldom done, more usually crayon, coloured pencil, and pen-and-ink sketches. Female patients sometimes produce symbolic embroider. A curious feature is that some insane never finish their work. He continues the subject in much more detail, taking up music, dancing, literature, the theatrical art, etc., *seriatim*, forming in all an interesting and instructive paper.

J. R. LORD.

*Brain Anatomy and Psychology.* (*Amer. Journ. Ins.*, 1899, vol. lv, p. 449.) Paton, S.

He reviews some of the influences which have aided psychology in passing from its metaphysical to its scientific periods. He greets with delight the advent of the "new psychology." He points out that the attempt to study mental disease from the clinical side has failed, equally with the effort of the introspective psychologist to establish his system for the study of the mind. He shows that the most rational ideas depend upon a knowledge of cerebral structure, and the correlation of the latter with function.

J. R. LORD.

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