

come in contact with the suffering they wish to alleviate, but with which, from over-sensitiveness, they at present spurn all personal contact. If they could be brought face to face, as the physician is, with irremediable suffering, which they earnestly wished to relieve, their point of view would be changed. Helping the inmates of cancer wards or homes for incurables would be most desirable experience for them.

This ultra-anti-vivisectionist class, with its congeners, constitutes a serious danger to society. There can be no reasonable doubt, for example, that the anti-vaccinationists are morally responsible for the deaths of many thousands of helpless children ; while tens of thousands of deaths may be fairly ascribed to the anti-contagious diseases movement ; and if the anti-vivisector were successful, the victims would be still more numerous.

The emotional classes of modern society, however anti-social in the result of their actions, are not really criminal, since they act with a good intent and "mean well."

In spite, therefore, of the anti-vivisector's utter uncharitableness and irritating unverity, pity and sympathy with all human infirmity should actuate scientists to remove their want of knowledge, and to guide their good intentions into channels of real useful activity for suffering humanity.

Scientists are to blame for having stood aloof from these movements, leaving them to fall into the hands of the ultra-cranks, of the notoriety hunters, and of persons actuated even by less worthy motives. A little leaven of real knowledge would have kept them within the bounds in which they should be restricted, and within which they have been useful ; it is even yet not too late to effect this.

(¹) See in this respect a letter to the *Times* of December 11th, 1903, from Mr. Stephen Coleridge, in which he speaks of a leaflet, issued by the National Canine Defence League (a rival anti-vivisection society), as containing "a series of grossly false and misleading statements."

Drug Therapeutics in Asylums.

Clinical observation on the action of medicines, both new and old, is probably one of the most valuable fields for that extension of clinical work so much to be desired in hospitals for the insane.

The asylum clinician has such great advantages in regard to the observation of the action of medicaments, that it is a neglect of opportunity if he fails to lead and instruct the whole medical profession in this respect. In private or out-patient practice, and even in ordinary hospitals and sanatoria, the results of any mode of treatment are liable to be vitiated by variations of diet and habits of life, which are entirely beyond the ken of the physician.

In the hospitals for the insane, on the contrary, the diet and habits are under almost absolute control, and observation on the results of treatment should be much more reliable.

Analytic and synthetic chemistry are daily placing in the hands of physicians innumerable new compounds, the physiological action of which has been to a certain extent demonstrated, and their beneficial effect in diseased conditions testified to by more or less scientific medical authorities. The latter, however, are sometimes doubtfully reliable, from the fact that they have been to some extent associated with the manufacturing firms who have the drug to sell.

Independent authoritative examination of the action of drugs is therefore much needed. Formerly the repute of drugs was endorsed by adoption into the Pharmacopœia, on the authority of the College of Physicians. This body, however, seems to have allowed this function to lapse, very much to the advantage of the patent or advertising medicine vendor, and very much to the disadvantage of the public.

The British Pharmacopœia has remained for years unaltered, during a period wherein new remedies by the score are being produced every month, which the public almost compel their medical attendants to prescribe for them. These remedies may be good or may be bad, may be invaluable in the treatment of disease or most insidiously harmful while appearing to do good, or may even be dangerous in certain conditions, although advertised as harmless. The only certain thing about them is the fact that there is no authoritative information for the guidance of the practitioner. Hence the anomaly that scores of drugs are in daily use by the medical profession of which the British Pharmacopœia has no cognizance.

A therapeutic institute in connection with the College of Physicians, from which might be issued monthly bulletins in regard to the physiological and medicinal action of drugs new

or old, would appear to be an absolute necessity. In addition to this a pharmacopœial committee might be well occupied in bringing the drug preparations up to date in prescribing form, so that the medical prescriber should not be driven by the cumbrous and nauseous forms of the present preparations to prescribe the convenient and tasteless wares of the advertising chemist, who is still further advertised in this way.

The actual dietetic value of artificial foods could nowhere be better tested than in asylums, whose inmates so often stand in need of the most digestible nutritive preparations.

That much practical knowledge of this kind is acquired in asylums at the present time there can be no doubt, but it is of the utmost urgency that this knowledge should be put on record, so that it be available to the profession at large.

This JOURNAL will gladly welcome contributions tending to advance this most important branch of science, in which the physician to a hospital for the insane should stand *facile princeps*.

Hypnotism and Crime.

The Paris *Journal* publishes an account of the "hypnotising" by Professor Liegois, of Nancy, of a woman named Bompard, who was convicted of murder thirteen years ago; at her trial Maître Robert pleaded that she had committed the crime while under the hypnotic influence of a fellow-criminal named Eyraud, who was executed. Maître Robert instigated the investigation.

The report in the *Journal* describes the woman as re-enacting the crime, her actions being photographed and her words taken down by reporters.

According to this, after many refusals, she only consented to take part in the crime on being nearly strangled by Eyraud—a somewhat peculiar method of hypnotism.

In this scene she is reported to have said, "He is strangling me." That she should speak of him in the third person is certainly peculiar.

The report, if correct, shows from internal evidence that if the hypnotic reproduction is reliable, the woman acted from