

These three from among his seven conclusions we may quote. They are not at all satisfying ; but, indeed, the whole paper appears to us most inconclusive.

HARRINGTON SAINSBURY.

5. Sociology.

Juvenile Murderers and Homicides [*Ueber jugendliche Mörder und Todtschläger*]. (*Arch. f. Kriminalanthropologie, Bd. xi.*) Baer.

This paper is one of the most notable contributions of recent years to the anthropological and psychological study of the juvenile criminal. It is based on careful observation of a series of twenty-two youthful assassins who were under the author's care for considerable periods of time in the Plötzensee Prison at Berlin. Full notes are given of each case, comprising a history of the crime, the personal and family antecedents of the criminal, his physical and mental condition, with anthropometric details, and, in most of the observations, with good photographs of the individual at different ages. The main facts brought out by the inquiry are then summarised, and their bearing on various problems of criminology is discussed with that union of thoroughness of method and breadth of view which invariably distinguishes Dr. Baer's work. A paper of this scope and character cannot, of course, be adequately treated within the limits of a short notice, and the present *résumé* does not aim at more than indicating a few of its salient points.

Of the twenty-two murderers, three were aged 14 to 15 years, three 15 to 16, eight 16 to 17, and eight 17 to 18. Only six of the cases were crimes of passion—revenge, jealousy of comrade's success, etc. In three others the motive was to gain a change from reformatory to prison ; and in the remaining thirteen the object was robbery. In nearly all the instances the crime was of a very revolting brutality, so that the series may be fairly taken to represent juvenile delinquency at its worst. It becomes, therefore, a question of interest whether these criminals presented the anatomical characters supposed by the Italian school to be distinctive of the "*reo nato*," and more particularly of the assassin type. The author's answer is unhesitatingly in the negative : —"Neither in the general formation of the skull, nor in that of the face and the rest of the skeleton, could any peculiar characters be detected showing a specific deviation from the normal condition of development of individuals of the same age, belonging to the same race and social class." In many of the cases, no doubt, physical stigmata of degeneracy were present, but they were not different in kind, degree, or combination from those met with in the non-criminal degenerate.

In these youths, as in all classes of criminals, intellectual and affective anomalies were frequent and well marked. In ten instances the mental condition was one of pronounced defect ; and at least five of the other cases had episodic attacks of depression with suicidal impulses. Two of the prisoners became insane after some years' imprisonment ; and in

this connection Dr. Baer points out that the psychoses which develop about puberty, though they may not present definite intellectual symptoms before the seventeenth or eighteenth year of age, often induce disorders of conduct several years earlier.

Absence of moral feeling was noted in nearly all the cases, but, as the author remarks, it is not always easy to say how much of this defect is due to congenital feebleness of brain and how much to the influence of bad training. And a somewhat similar reservation, he adds, has to be made in regard to many of the physical anomalies met with in such cases. Very often they are to be viewed not as the expression of a congenitally defective organisation, but as the result of bad hygienic conditions during the period of growth.

In common with English and French observers, Dr. Baer notes that the worst cases of ethical defect, as shown by the brutal character of the crime and the total absence of remorse, are found in the town-bred youths. A vicious sexual precocity appears especially to characterise these young criminals of the big cities.

As regards the effects of treatment and the ultimate prospects in these cases, Dr. Baer is not optimistic. In only two or three instances was there any real raising of the intellectual and ethical level. The only rational treatment, the author holds, is that of the reformatory for an indeterminate period, preferably in institutions of the farm colony type. But he considers that in many cases no permanent results can be looked for from that or any other method; it is, in fact, necessary to recognise the existence of a class of incorrigible criminal defectives who are unfit for free life, and must, in the interests of society, be kept under restraint indefinitely. W. C. SULLIVAN.

The Mental Examination of Accused Persons [L'examen mental des prévenus]. (Bull. de la Soc. de Méd. Ment. de Belgique, Feb., 1903.) De Moor.

Dr. de Moor, in his presidential address to the Belgian Society, in view of the well-known fact that insanity is often overlooked in the law courts, urges the importance of judges being able to acquire, as at Heidelberg University, some knowledge of the mental condition of criminals, and of diseases of the mind generally. Moreover, he would reserve the mental examination of accused persons or prisoners to medical men with special diplomas. The selection of a lunacy expert should always be granted to the defence in a trial. In important cases he is in favour of two experts giving evidence, one of whom should be chosen by the defence; in case of their disagreement, the magistrate, with the consent of the defence, could select a third expert, whose decision would be practically final. In some cases, it is highly desirable that the accused should be placed under observation in an asylum for a limited period (the German law fixes this limit to six weeks). Such a sojourn by a special enactment could be made without prejudice to the accused. In addition to giving correct information concerning the mental condition of the accused (detection of simulation, etc.), such a period of observation in an asylum would turn out to be of real benefit as regards the treatment of the really insane. In exceptional cases the six weeks of