

2. *American Retrospect.*

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The "American Journal of Insanity" keeps up its reputation as the oldest Journal in America devoted especially to insanity.

The first paper is one by Dr. Dodding, on "The State in the care of its Insane." It appears that a Committee had been formed to consider the subject, but owing to various occurrences had been unable to meet; the opinions given are those of the writer only. In America complete provision is not made for the insane, and the author details what he considers the best methods of dealing with the subject. It seems that the insane in the United States are increasing out of proportion to the increase in population. Taking the ratio of increase in New York as an example, we find that the United States census of 1880 showed an average of one insane person to every 545 of the population; and it is presumed that the census of 1890 will show an average of one to every 450. The State that undertakes to make suitable provision for its dependent insane must supply accommodation for one in every 400 of population at the start, and be prepared to annually increase that accommodation by 125 beds for every million of population. The author looks forward to the near future, when more than one State hospital will be found "with its broad fields interspersed with groves and cottages and villas, its groups suited to every want and condition, and new structures springing up as their need is shown." Such institutions will no doubt, in time, be more common in England.

Dr. Stedman contributes a paper on "The Family, or Boarding-out System—its uses and limits as a provision for the Insane." This department of lunacy administration is still in its infancy in America, the only State where the experiment has been made being Massachusetts. The author had been requested to visit this institution, and the paper gives an account of what he saw there, with his observations thereon. What is wanted is to give to a number of chronic harmless patients, who no longer need confinement in an asylum, a domestic life, by boarding them out in families under State supervision, at the same time relieving the asylums from over-crowding, and giving more room for acute cases requiring cure or improvement. In Scotland 22 per cent. of the registered pauper insane are

comfortably and economically boarded out, but in Massachusetts the measure has not made much headway, owing to the fact that until last November medical supervision by an experienced alienist was wanting. Four classes of homes were found in this State; in the best, the surroundings were unexceptionable as to the housekeeping, comfort, and contentment of the patients; in the worst, the surroundings were extremely poor, and the patients were neglected by those in charge. As a rule, no evidence of undue neglect was found, and the housewives, the guardians of the insane, impressed him as being desirable persons for the work in the great majority of the families. The usual objections to boarding-out, viz., the liability to improper treatment, the imposition of drudgery and perhaps actual abuse, are discussed, and the economic aspects of the question are fully considered. The system does not seem to make much more headway in America than in England.

"*Wrinkles in Ancient Asylum Reports*," is the title of an amusing paper by Dr. Daniel Clark. When Rameses I. and II. were exhumed some time ago from their sarcophagi, their mummies were found wrapped in interesting asylum records, which have been translated by a friend of the author. It appears that the land of the Pharaohs was divided into three great provinces, named Europa, Americanus, and Canadensis. They were full of insane and mentally defective people; the manuscripts show that on an average one in every 450 persons was incapable. The Egyptian superintendents were thorough in their work, and were men of high executive ability. Not only did they give various nostrums, "but they had to see when a mess of pottage was boiled enough; how much water belonged to milk; why the bread made from flour of excellent wheat had more specific gravity and less porosity than was good for digestion." They had to nose out every smell, to be expert judges of horses, to be *au fait* in distinguishing the radical points of milch cows, and to study the various kinds of pigs. They were men of universal genius, for they were also botanists, vegetarians, mechanics, laundry and clothing connoisseurs. In the time of Rameses II., a medical system, based on scientific principles, sprung into existence. One philosopher asserted that all diseases were conquered by specific remedies, and a fierce controversy arose over this new doctrine. In one of the provinces a military man discovered a cure for insanity by putting the afflicted under blue glass. One has heard something of this kind of treatment of late years. "In one refuge for the insane in Canadensis, raisins were highly recommended for acute mania; they were prescribed in large quantities, and when the patient was well stuffed he became quiet." In the same principality a medical savant had investigated the ultimate elements of nature and warned his brethren of the bad effects of the ethyl series, a diffusible stimulant then much used, on brain tissue. In compiling the *per capita* cost of patients to the State, efforts were made to show a small outlay and thus prove economy and efficiency.

An animated discussion took place then as now on the personal restraint of patients, and between the same combatants the question of healthfulness in relation to work by the insane came to the surface. Some of the Egyptian asylum reports complain of the press of that day. They were classified as the good, the indifferent, the bad, the very bad, and the vile. The latter did all they could to bring public institutions into disrepute, but the first held up for approval all the faithful in the work of humanity.

Treatment of the Insane as related to Science, and general conditions of Humanity historically considered.

Dr. Everts refers to a statement made by Dr. A. D. White, late President of Cornell, who says: "Of all the triumphs won by science for humanity, none has been farther reaching in its good effects than the modern treatment of the insane." The paper is an endeavour to inquire into the truth of this question. Dr. Everts begins by tracing the treatment of the insane from the time of the Egyptians to the present day, and states the lines on which treatment is now pursued. He compares the general conditions of prehistoric humanity with those constituting modern civilization, and is of opinion that the most conspicuous characteristics of humanity at present are freedom and science. He concludes that "the treatment of the insane, as an affair of life, at any given time is a phase only of a general condition of humanity, and not a special result of an independent movement of whatever forces." He considers science as an inseparable feature of a general condition of humanity, and thinks that Pinel and Tuke, who inaugurated the modern treatment of the insane, were neither of them instigated to action as a champion of science, but simply from a feeling of humanity.

An interesting notice of the death of Dr. Charles H. Nichols, late Superintendent of the Bloomingdale Asylum, is given at the end of the Journal.

Mental relations of Heart Disease.

This is a paper published in the "Alienist and Neurologist," by Dr. Kiernan, of Chicago. It is well known that the types of insanity arising from cardiac disease are characterized by suspicion and emotional mobility, and Dr. Kiernan quotes several authorities in support of this. In such cases the treatment prescribed is naturally mental and physical quiet. This advice is usually observed for a time, but the suspicious state arising from the disease and the relief from the symptoms predispose the patient to believe that his physicians are mistaken in their diagnosis. Exuberant horse-play is indulged in, and the patient dies. These features are well illustrated in the case of Matthew Arnold, who called himself the "Apostle of Sweetness and Light." He had disease of the aortic valve, and by the advice

of Sir Andrew Clark he led a comparatively quiet life. The quietist philosophy, which he preached, no doubt had good results, and his training restrained all emotional peculiarities as "bad form." Of late years he had been less restrained, at times being cynical and anything but sweet, then becoming bland and buoyant. His buoyancy was always succeeded by horse-play, and in one of these conditions he attempted to jump over a gate and fell down dead. John Hunter illustrates the dyspnoic type. He suffered from paroxysms of irascibility and died in one of them. The author believes that the buoyancy is as much a part of the disease as the murmurs, and instead of being encouraged by the patient's good spirits, he thinks an effort should be made to curb them as much as possible. Moral measures to restrain emotional displays and remedial measures to control the heart's action make up the treatment which should be adopted.

Neuric and Electric Forces.

Dr. John Schilling considers that our present knowledge of the relations of mind and body is unsatisfactory, and the paper is an attempt on his part to clear up the subject. To nerve-force he gives the name "Nervicity," and he thinks the problem of the near future will be to prove that electricity and nervicity are identical, that the former need only influence animal matter to become nerve force. He supposes nervicity to be composed of two parts, positive and negative, and that, like electricity, positive nervicity is repulsed by positive and negative by negative nervicity. "Similar to the production of electricity, the force of mutual attraction between positive and negative nervicity is antagonized and temporarily suppressed by both physical and chemical forces, and the union of positive and negative nervicity, or a nervical current, calls into existence again physical and chemical processes." Union of positive with negative nervicity occurs in the cells of the nervous system and constitutes various psychical and mental states. Union of positive and negative chemical nervicity occurs mainly in the striated muscular fibre causing contraction, and union of positive and negative physical nervicity causes the contraction of the fibre cell. Nervicity acts, not only on nerves and muscles, but upon all animal tissues, and preserves their vitality in a physical and chemical respect. Motion, sensation (muscular, general, and special) are then described according to the above theory, and its relations to emotions and the different attributes of mind are reserved for a future number.

"The Quarterly Journal of Inebriety" contains many interesting papers, among which may be mentioned "Drunkenness; its influence on the Mind," by Dr. T. L. Wright. He refers to the difficulty of engaging the attention of a man when intoxicated on account of his nervous sensibilities being enfeebled; whatever thoughts he has in his mind remain there in stubborn possession; and consequently his

ideas become fixed and he is pertinacious and tiresome. He is a wonderful egotist, and claims to occupy a station of the highest possible eminence, his punctilio in this matter varying with the increase in the number and size of his "drinks." Illusions, hallucinations, and delusions beset the soundest mind when under the influence of alcohol, for since the whole range of sensibility is deficient as well as distorted in the drunken man, it is evident that his mind must labour under many misapprehensions. The idea that he is somehow physically invulnerable is common, and he becomes filled with an indomitable and reckless courage until the inevitable time of reaction comes, when he is full of explanations and abasements, known in common language as the process of "crawling out of the small end of the horn." In regions where strong drink is habitually taken by the people in general, the unduly sensitive inebriate's honour is ever on the alert to detect insults; deadly weapons are carried, and the mother tongue is much employed in asseverations of willingness to die in defence of his honour. Alcohol in small quantities dims consciousness, and in large portions wrecks and destroys it.

Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Study and Cure of Inebriety.

At this meeting a report was presented by Dr. Bradner, Chairman of the Committee "On Nostrums, Proprietary Medicines, and New Drugs," from which we learn that nineteen out of twenty of the nostrums most commonly sold as opium cures were composed in part of opium itself, and that fifty different proprietary preparations sold for special usefulness in the reformation of intemperate habits, all contained alcohol in proportions varying from 6 to 47 per cent.

A complimentary dinner was afterwards given to Dr. Parrish, the President of the Association, and the speeches give an account of the progress of legislation for inebriety in America from the time when the cause was insignificant, the subject of indifference, ignorance, and ridicule, up to the present. Now inebriety is recognized as a disease, curable in the same sense as other diseases are curable, and hospitals have been established for its treatment.

The April number of this Journal is occupied by an address of Dr. Parrish, in reply to the speeches made in his honour at the meeting before mentioned; a sketch of his life by Dr. Shipman; and the "Study of Inebriety and its Relation to the Temperance Movement," by Dr. Norman Kerr, of this country.

Dr. Parrish's life is a very interesting one. It seems that he first established himself in practice in Burlington, the native city of his wife, and in 1847 set on foot "The New Jersey Medical Reporter," which before long became the official organ of the Medical Society of the State. In 1854, at the urgent request of the Philadelphia College of Medicine, he accepted the Chair of Obstetrics and Diseases

of Women and Children in that institution, but after one term he was obliged to resign it, on account of feeble health. In May of the following year he was suffering from a pulmonary complaint and sailed with his wife for Europe, returning twelve months afterwards with renewed health and intensified aspirations, and from that time he was occupied with organizing, administering, moulding, and inspiring various institutions. He first became Superintendent of the Training School for Idiots at Philadelphia, but in 1863 resigned that appointment and entered the United States Sanitary Commission, acting first as an inspector of the camps and hospitals in the neighbourhood of Washington. He was always to be found wherever suffering humanity had to be attended, and rendered invaluable services to both sides during the Civil War. At its close he originated the movement developing into "The Citizens' Association of Philadelphia," which in June, 1866, was incorporated by the Legislature of that State, for the purpose of establishing a society for the reformation of inebriates and for the moral and social elevation of the ignorant and neglected classes. Of this Association Dr. Parrish became the President, and he has ever since been actively engaged in propounding the principles for the treatment of inebriety at home and abroad.

Functional Nervous Diseases and their Relations to Gastro-Intestinal Derangements.

This is a paper by Dr. Thomson in the "Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease." He inquires whether there are any features which distinguish supposed functional nervous diseases from organic nervous diseases, and concludes that the one distinction of fundamental import is the absence of intermission in structural disease. On the other hand a truly intermittent disease cannot have an organic basis in the nervous system. In many severe acute functional diseases all that is found is some change suggestive of a poison in the blood, and the same applies with more force to chronic functional diseases which have long intervals of complete cessation of symptoms. There is no doubt that decompositions are constantly occurring in our digestive laboratory, and are accompanied by the formation of definite and virulent poisons; Bouchard calculates that the amount of alkaloid formed in the intestine of a healthy man in twenty-four hours would be sufficient to kill him if all were absorbed and excretion stopped. The same author shows "that if the day be divided into three periods of eight hours each, the proportional quantities of poison excreted are—Asleep, 3; early awakening period, 7; late waking period, 5." These facts may afford some clue to the nocturnal character of some cases of epilepsy and to the attacks of gout and asthma, which often occur during the later hours of the night. The nervous system, in fact, would be liable to serious functional derangements if the active functional poisons formed during the processes of life were not freely

eliminated or actively destroyed. Against this liability to self-poisoning we are protected in great part by the liver and the natural digestive secretions of the alimentary canal. When the functions of these organs are imperfectly carried out, we get various morbid states of the blood, such as anæmia and chlorosis. Sir Andrew Clark, as is well known, ascribes the blood-change in the latter disease to retained fæcal accumulations.

Dr. Thomson believes that hysteria is due to perverted and disordered intestinal digestion, and finds good results from repeated purgation and the administration of intestinal antiseptics. Migraine, he thinks, is due to imperfect digestion, and he is of opinion that most of our reputed remedies for this form of headache, act by virtue of their antiseptic qualities.

Now that chemistry is asserting her claims to be heard, the stomach and bowels have regained much of the importance which they held in the minds of the old physicians as centres of the processes of life and disease. The old teaching that the origin of feelings, emotions, and moral characteristics is in the bowels, is confirmed in a way by Dr. Bland Sutton, who says that "he is convinced that the spinal cord and brain of vertebrata have been evolved from what was originally a section of the alimentary canal; in other words, the central nervous system is a modified piece of bowel!"

3. *French Retrospect.*

By DR. T. W. McDOWALL.

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(Continued from Vol. xxxv, page 105.)

Professional Intoxication of Wine and Liqueur Tasters. By DR. DONNET.

The author is inclined to believe, from observation and information otherwise obtained, that men employed as wine and liqueur tasters are specially subject to alcoholic poisoning, although the fluids are not swallowed—at least, need not be swallowed, unless the taster chooses. They are, however, he acknowledges, constantly subject to temptation to excess, as they are not supposed to eject the wine, etc., when drinking with customers.

The cases given by Dr. Donnet do not at all satisfy us that alcoholic symptoms can be produced by simply tasting without swallowing. When he says that the tastes, habits, and education of some of these