

## INSURRECTION AT THE BICÊTRE.

This remarkable outbreak, an account of which has appeared in the Paris and London papers, deserves some notice in this Journal.

There are in the establishment, separated from the ordinary patients, a number of criminals who are more or less lunatics. These are placed in a quarter called the *Sûreté*, which is a building quite distinct from the rest and surrounded by walls. It contains twenty-four cells and four courts. Above are rooms where the warders or attendants reside. On Sunday, the 25th May, one of the inmates, called Joly, who had demanded another supply of food and was kept waiting, gave the signal of insubordination, and began to break the plates. His companions, five in number, at once followed his example. They invaded the rooms where the attendants were placed and attacked them. One of the latter escaped in order to inform the Director, whilst the others held their own against the invaders. A patient, very strong and dangerous, was conciliatory, and twice endeavoured to induce his comrades to return to the airing courts. It is needless to say that they would not listen to him. The Director was not more fortunate. When Joly saw him he cried out, "Beg pardon, I spare you on account of your wife and children, but you must go down on your knees and ask pardon." When he refused, he threw at him a pot full of earth. A warder wishing to protect him, was himself attacked and seriously bruised. Seeing that it was impossible to maintain the struggle, it was thought better to retreat and abandon the *Sûreté* to the aggressors. They then ascended into the rooms of the warders, smashed the windows, and destroyed all they could lay hands on. The head of the police arrived on the scene and found Joly and his companions astride the first boundary wall, brandishing their knives, razors, and iron bars. When appealed to by the officer of the law Joly promptly replied, "You and your law, I defy. We are outside the law; we are madmen; no one can do anything to us!" Upon this, the head of the police decided to call in the troops. Sixteen men, commanded by an adjutant, were quickly on the spot, bayoneted, and forcing open the door, entered the *Sûreté*. "If you do not give yourselves up, I shall instantly fire on you," exclaimed the adjutant. At the same moment they brought two fire engines and directed a formidable stream of water on to the insurgents, who, after having thrown away their dangerous weapons, came down and allowed themselves to be conducted to their cells, where they were immediately camisoled. The head attendant had his left arm broken, and four other attendants were more or less grievously wounded in the affray.

One of the Paris journals, commenting on the revolt and upon the remark of the patient who said, "No one can say anything to me," observes: "The madmen revolted only against the warders. From the moment the soldiers arrived they quietly submitted to them, and did not attempt any defence. If they had been labouring under an acute attack of insanity, they would not have recognized a distinction, they would have attempted to massacre all and made use of their liberty and power. The truth is that these madmen revolted, having a knowledge of the cause. For what motive? It is this we wish to ascertain. But without special inquiry into the insurrection at the Bicêtre, one may and ought to protest vigorously against the punishment inflicted in this asylum; it is forgotten that the madmen are sick people, and that if society rightfully cares for them, and renders it impossible for them to injure anyone, it is in the wrong when it employs against them such barbarous means as to confine them in cages. It is useless to play upon words, and to call this cage by the name of the *Sûreté*. It is just as much a cage as those which confine the ferocious animals in the *Jardin des Plantes*. The only difference is, that to the wild animals another cage is opened during the day, in which the sun shines, and in which they are able to breathe the open air. At the Bicêtre the patients, shut up in cages, have not this chance, and the rays of spring-time never penetrate

their bars." The writer adds, "I have visited the *Sûreté*, and I have always experienced the same feeling of disgust and shame. It is so completely a place of punishment, and not of safety, in which men are shut up and are punished, whatever may be the character of their cerebral disorder. Pinel or Laségue do not descend from heaven to break these abominable bars, to give proper rooms to the insane—cells, if you wish, but not cages—to cause respect for the grand tradition, which is the honour and glory of French Mental Science."

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INTERNATIONAL MEDICO-SCIENTIFIC EXHIBITION, BERLIN,  
AUGUST, 1890.

In connection with the Tenth International Medical Congress, to be held in Berlin, August 4th-9th, 1890, there will be an International Medico-Scientific Exhibition.

The undersigned Committee of Organization has been authorized, by the representatives of the medical faculties and leading medical societies of the German Empire, to make the preliminary arrangements. We therefore cordially invite all who may wish to exhibit or participate in the above Exhibition; all exhibits, however, to be of a scientific nature.

The exhibits expected will be as follows:—

1. New or improved scientific instruments for biological and special medical purposes, including apparatus for photography and spectral analysis pertaining to medicine.
2. New pharmacological chemical substances and preparations.
3. New pharmaceutical substances and preparations.
4. New food preparations.
5. New or improved instruments for internal and external medicine, and allied specialities including electrotherapy.
6. Plans and models (new) of hospitals, houses for convalescents, disinfection, and general bath-houses.
7. New appliances, such as pertain to nursing the sick, including the methods of transportation and baths for the sick.
8. Apparatus (new) for hygienic purposes.

The Special Committee on "Exhibition" consists of the following gentlemen: Commerzienrath Paul Dörrfel, H. Haensch, Director Dr. J. F. Holtz, Director Dr. L. Loewenherz, Regierungsrath Dr. J. Petri, H. Windler, and the Secretary-General of the Committee of Organization. The names of the associate members of the Exhibition Committee, as well as the names of the heads of departments, will be made known shortly; also the conditions for exhibitors.

For applications for exhibits and information please address, Dr. O. Lassar, Secretary-General, Bureau of the Tenth International Medical Congress, Berlin N.W. Carlstrasse No. 19.

Please designate all mail matter relating to the Exhibition, "Exhibition Affairs," and also enclose a visiting card or card of the firm, on which the name and residence is plainly written or printed.

The Bureau is open for the present from 5-7 o'clock p.m.

The Committee of Organization of the Tenth International Medical Congress: Dr. Rudolf Virchow, President; Dr. E. von Bergmann, Dr. E. Leyden, Dr. W. Waldeyer, Vice-Presidents; Dr. O. Lassar, Secretary-General.

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