

ameliorate the condition of epileptics he has no doubt, and whilst laying stress on the great value of the colony system, of which Bielefeld is the most striking instance, he does not despise drugs, among which he selects bromides combined with arsenic as most effective. *Solanum carolinense*, *Eupatorium perfoliatum*, and *hydrastin* have failed in his hands to give any good results. Nitrate of silver proved beneficial in one case for a time. In anæmic cases, he finds arsenic combined with iron and bromide efficacious.

HARRINGTON SAINSBURY.

*The Bromide Sleep: a New Departure in the Treatment of Acute Mania.* (*Brit. Med. Journ.*, Jan. 20th, 1900.) *Macleod, N.*

In 1897, and again in 1899, Dr. Macleod drew attention to a new method of employing the bromides as sedatives. His method might be described as that of the massive dose, two drachms of the drug being given in half a tumbler of water every two hours (during the day) till an ounce is given. On the second day a similar amount is given in the same way, and this may suffice to induce a sleep lasting from five to nine days. During this sleep the patient is not so deeply unconscious that he cannot be roused to micturate, or for the bowels to act, or for the administration of food; but left to himself he would starve, and the organic functions work unnoticed. Feeding must be rigorously maintained, and a tumblerful of milk every two hours up to seven tumblerfuls will suffice to maintain nutrition. Following the sleep is a gradual return of consciousness; this takes some fourteen days, the whole treatment lasting some twenty-one to twenty-four days.

HARRINGTON SAINSBURY.

*Psychical Treatment of a Case of Delusional Insanity—Zwangsirresein* [*Traitement psychique d'un cas de folie délirante*]. (*Rev. d'Hyp.*, May, 1900.) *Städemann, H.*

The case related is that of a man, æt. 30 years, without nervous heredity. As a boy, he was given to speculations, and much troubled concerning the nature of the deep problems of life; but as time passed he became tormented with trivial thoughts—the fate of a fly in his room, of a bit of match on the floor, of a spot of grease dropped from a candle, etc., etc.—amounting to painful obsessions. A cure rapidly followed treatment by hypnotic suggestion—two daily *séances* for fourteen days. Fifteen months later he remained well.

H. J. MACEVOY.

*Hysterical Polyuria and Suggestion* [*La polyurie hystérique et la suggestion*]. (*Rev. d'Hyp.*, May, 1900.) *Souques.*

Although rare, hysterical polyuria is occasionally met with. The amount of urine passed may be four, five, eight—up to twenty-five litres a day. Its pathogeny is still obscure. The diagnosis is easy, for although in a given case hysterical stigmata may be absent, the polyuria is of hysterical origin, when, as Babinski has shown, it may be made to vary by suggestion; hence the line of treatment is clearly indicated

—either hypnotic suggestion or indirect suggestion—by the administration of some drug. That ergot, for instance, acts in this way is illustrated by the case of a man whose polyuria improved rapidly when this drug was administered. On a subsequent occasion, when the polyuria relapsed, ergot was prescribed again, but a little bicarbonate of soda given instead. The same improvement took place as before.

H. J. MACEVOY.

*Treatment of the Insane [Les divers modes d'assistance des aliénés devant la commission d'études au Conseil-Général de la Seine]. (Rev. de Psychiat., No. 3, 1900.) Marie, A.*

This paper contains the pith of the suggestions made by a commission appointed by the General Council of the Seine to study and report upon the questions of treatment of the insane. This commission had to consider and report upon such points as observation hospitals for acute cases; over-crowding of chronic cases, and means of relieving it; treatment of vicious and criminal insane; treatment of epileptics; isolation of alcoholics, etc., etc. They recommend, among other things, the creation of a hospital for the observation and treatment of acute cases; for chronic cases chronic blocks, farms, home treatment, etc.; there are suggestions for the treatment of the various classes of alcoholics, etc., etc. Embodying the results of their visits to asylums at home and abroad, this report is a very important document, and will, no doubt, lead to decided steps in the direction of improving the conditions and treatment of cases of mental disease in the Department of the Seine. It is a most comprehensive report.

H. J. MACEVOY.

*An Address on the Insane and their Treatment. (Brit. Med. Journ., Jan. 20th, 1900.) Spence, J. B.*

The address, delivered before the Staffordshire branch of the British Medical Association, gives an interesting historical sketch of the treatment of the insane from remote periods up to the present. But small advance was made up to the eighteenth century, at the end of which the labours of Pinel and Tuke, followed later in this country by the efforts of Lord Ashley (subsequently Lord Shaftesbury), initiated a new departure. The advances of late years are then dwelt upon—and they are undoubted, but leave something to be desired; and Dr. Spence does not fail to comment on the fact that in 1845, when the office of Commissioner in Lunacy was first instituted, the visiting staff of the Commission was of exactly the same numerical strength as at the present moment, though the number of the officially insane in 1845—viz. 20,893—has in January, 1900, advanced to 81,258 in asylums alone. On the importance of the attachment of pathological departments to the larger asylums, now being recognised, Dr. Spence lays stress, as also upon the establishment of clinics at asylums adjacent to large towns and at all the larger general hospitals. Finally, Dr. Spence urges that the influence of members of the profession should be enlisted in order to facilitate the passing of the Act to amend the Lunacy Laws, introduced by the Lord Chancellor in the last session of Parliament. One clause