

and syncope. A few days afterwards she had a genuine epileptic fit. These symptoms occurred for twelve days, until one morning she seemed to awake, as if from a dream, and asked what had happened, as she could remember nothing. Her mother said that her daughter had suffered from fits since the age of eleven; the first following an attempt at rape by her step-father. For the last two years the fits had been more or less followed by the series of events noted since admission.

During her stay at the asylum she had about three seizures a month. At the beginning of March, 1898, there occurred an excited attempt at suicide, with hallucinations of sight and hearing. After some days she was better again. In the May following another period of excitement was noted, the patient remaining confused, with speech disturbance and amnesia. The symptoms rapidly increased, and Dr. Toulouse came to the conclusion that he was dealing with a case of general paralysis, which was afterwards confirmed by a post-mortem examination.

GERMANY.

By Dr. J. BRESLER.

The evolution of psychiatry in Germany, as in other countries, is by no means rapid; yet the year 1899 can be looked back upon with satisfaction. The year opened well with what was practically an act of benevolence on the part of the Lunacy Board of the Province of Brandenburg. It decided that for the future, both medical and administrative officers should include in their period of service qualifying for a pension the years they had formerly spent in private asylums, the work in the latter being practically identical with that they afterwards engaged in under public bodies.

The "After-care Association" of the Grand Duchy of Hesse, founded by Dr. Ludwig in Heppenheim twenty-five years ago, has since then been a very active factor in the progress of lunacy administration in Germany. A considerable raising of the pay of attendants is one of its latest accomplishments, besides a Grand Ducal order that attendants, male and female, after six years' good service shall receive a donation of 1000 marks, and that male attendants, after such service, can be employed by the State or railway administration in inferior offices.

The question of the care of criminal lunatics has been to the fore several times this year. The Prussian Government has acknowledged the necessity for a proper care of the criminal with mental disturbances while undergoing imprisonment, but declines to take any further steps in the matter. The asylums must therefore continue to receive criminal lunatics; and it is to be hoped that the lunacy boards will soon resolve upon erecting special institutions for this class of patients. A commencement has already been made at Düren, in Rheinland.

The "Association for combating the Abuse of Alcoholic Drinks" at Hildesheim, repeated its motion before Imperial Parliament for

special legislation, but was not successful. The deputies paid but little attention to it, and referred the question to the Government for consideration. As regards another matter, a true advance was made. It was decided that, for the future, no individual should be licensed to hold a private asylum but a legally qualified medical man with sufficient experience in lunacy. A phenomenon, illustrating the improvement of public opinion as regards lunacy, occurred recently in the Wurtemberg Parliament. In former years, there has been a tendency for members to dilate upon the unjustifiable detention of sane people in asylums, and to make charges of bad treatment, etc. In these days it is much more common, on the part of the majority of those who speak on the subject, to accuse us of discharging patients who are not sufficiently recovered.

The year under review saw the birth of a new association for alienists, known as the "Association of Alienists of Northern Germany," which held its first meeting at Schleswig, on August 3rd. The meetings are to be held annually.

All the German Universities have now psychiatric clinics with the exception of the University of Kiel. It is satisfactory to note that the new "Clinical Asylum," in connection with the latter, is fast reaching completion.

The Inaugural Ceremony of the Uchtspringe Asylum occurred in December. This hospital for the treatment of the insane, epileptic, and feeble-minded was built under the direction of its medical superintendent, Dr. Alt, and is provided with all possible appliances for practical psychiatry, together with excellent appointments ensuring the personal comforts of its patients.

On April 15th, at Görlitz, death removed from our midst one of our greatest alienists in the person of Dr. Karl Ludwig Kahlbaum, at the age of 70. It is needless to ask why he occupied such a high place in our estimation. To him we are indebted for the clinical images of several well-recognised mental diseases. His two elder sons are following in his footsteps, and have taken over the asylum formerly held by him, and now famous in the annals of psychiatry.

The Annual Meeting of the Association of German Alienists was held at Halle on April 21st and 22nd. Great attention was given to a report by Prof. Wottenberg (Hamburg) upon the degree of responsibility in those afflicted with mental disease, and to a paper by Dr. Hoche (Strasbourg) on the present position of the neuron theory. The former was followed by an interesting discussion upon the so-called "diminished" responsibility in mental disease. It was generally accepted that there are many cases in which responsibility is not entirely abrogated, but only diminished, as, for example, in epilepsy, hysteria, neurasthenia, sexual perversion, eccentricity, etc. The practical side of the question, both as regards those wholly responsible and those only partially responsible, was acknowledged to be a difficult problem. It was generally conceded, however, that any punishment must be qualitative, not quantitative, with all except those wholly responsible. Prof. Wottenberg feared, with reason, that the occurrence of diminished responsibility having been conceded, it would often happen that those

wholly responsible would be considered and treated as if only partially so. A proposition by Dr. Siemerling (Tübingen) was adopted, recommending that full information regarding the practical application of the doctrine of diminished responsibility be collected and presented to the Association. It cannot be said, however, that any real progress was made in the matter. Much attention was also given to a paper by Dr. Werner (Owinsk) on *The Public Asylum with regard to its Size and Administration*. He advocated that no new asylum should be built for more than 600 patients; that the director should give the fruits of his long experience to the actual treatment of each patient individually; and that there should be a medical officer for each 100 of the latter. The Committee of the Association awarded a prize of 500 marks to Dr. Scholz (Waldbriuel), one of seven competitors, for the best Handbook for Attendants. The founder of modern lunacy, Dr. Johann Christian Reil, who died in 1813, having lived and worked in Halle, where the meeting was held, Dr. Alt proposed to do honour to his memory, by granting a sum of 1000 marks from the Treasury of the Association for the renovation of his grave, which still exists, but in bad condition, on the so-called Reilsberg of Halle.

BELGIUM.

By Dr. JULES MOREL.

The past year has been marked by the very considerable amount of attention given to the study of alcoholism. Certain of these papers are of importance, and I send the following notes:

The responsibility of the alcoholic.—Dr. de Boeck devotes his presidential address to the consideration of those cases of acute alcoholism with delirium held to be irresponsible in Belgium, France, Germany, and England. His conclusions are formulated on the basis of scientific, moral, and social studies. Having referred to the opinions of Aristotle, the Romans, and St. Thomas Aquinas, who agreed that accidental drunkenness with loss of consciousness is not a condition involving responsibility, while voluntary drunkenness, consequent on neglect or carelessness, is a condition involving responsibility, Dr. de Boeck gave an account of the German code, which makes a distinction between drunkards who retain or lose consciousness. When consciousness is affected the accused person is held partially responsible; when it is completely lost he is held wholly irresponsible. Dr. de Boeck believes that it is more reasonable to try to establish a scientific distinction between a state of health (implying responsibility) and a state of disease (implying irresponsibility); but he recognises the difficulty of defining these conditions and of classifying intermediate cases, and therefore admits the doctrine of partial responsibility. As the medical expert appointed by the judge remains a physician, the accused must be a