

depend on a defect of attention and a change in the psychological "tension" rather than any coenæsthetic disorder. The diagnosis lies between an early phase of dementia præcox and manic-depressive insanity.

H. DEVINE.

*On Great Mental Depression arising from Political Events [Über psychische Störung depressiver Natur, entstanden auf dem Boden der gegenwärtigen politischen Ereignisse]. (Allg. Zeits., Bd. 64, H. i.) Hermann, N.*

Dr. Hermann observes that while passions, such as anguish, distress and terror in some cases prepare the way for mental derangement by weakening the nervous system, in others these emotions become the immediate causes of insanity, especially with individuals predisposed by hereditary degeneration. The unhappy condition of Russia, owing to the Japanese war, famine, and the political disorders and massacres, has thrown the whole population into a state of uncertainty and fear. Amongst the soldiers who took part in the war a peculiar form of insanity has been described, in which depression, stupor, and mental confusion were prominent symptoms. These were occasionally attended by incoherent delusions, ideas of persecution, and self-accusations. In addition to these affections amongst the soldiers, Rybakow has described twelve cases of insanity in the civil population which seemed to be caused by painful political events. Almost all of these exhibited the same form—great distress, restlessness, delusions of persecution, and, in most cases, illusions of the senses of a distressing character. Dr. Hermann, Superintendent of the Government Asylum at Orel, now contributes seven cases, occurring in the civil population, with similar symptoms. He has especially excluded patients in which there was an abuse of alcohol. In the cases described by him, the period of incubation was not marked, and only lasted one or two days. In some, the mental derangement followed immediately after the shock. Besides the extreme mental depression, most of the patients had hallucinations of sight and hearing, often of a distressing nature. They heard threats that someone would kill them; they heard the sobbing of people who had been thrown into the fire; loud noises, and voices of enchanters. They saw people thrown into a fiery furnace; they saw witches, and one saw Satan floating in the air above him. They saw mobs of people coming out of the earth. One patient had an hallucination of smell, which gave him much annoyance. While the mental condition in all these patients was one of overpowering distress, there was no self-accusation. The delusions were not of a systematised character, nor directed against special persons, but indicated a condition of general alarm and misery. The prognosis in this form of insanity was found to be good, and the duration of the attack was short. Out of Hermann's patients, four recovered soon, two were in the way of recovery, and the seventh was uncertain.

WILLIAM W. IRELAND.

*The Mental State in Chorea and Choreiform Affections. (Journ. Nerv. and Ment. Dis., June, 1908.) Burr, C. W.*

Professor Burr, in his Presidential Address to the American Neurological Association on this subject, regrets that the word "chorea" cannot