

diagnosis, nervous diseases offer a particularly fascinating study. Each special function points to a special structure; and each variety of disordered function points to a different kind of morbid process. As, through experimental research and the study of development, our acquaintance with the functions of the nervous system extends, the symptoms of nervous diseases cease to be the mere meaningless symbols of an unknown language; they become, like Egyptian hieroglyphics to Oriental scholars, merely another alphabet of an already acquired tongue. Not in any other department of medicine have the symptoms so precise and so definite a meaning as in diseases of the nervous system. Notwithstanding the obscurity that still hangs over many of them, they present as a class features that enable us to fix more accurately the seat, and to infer more correctly the nature, of the lesion than is the case in most other diseases. Dr. Ross's work leaves little to be desired in point of facilitating the recognition of the affections it deals with.

The sections on treatment, too, are carefully written, and represent the well-weighed experience of a scientific physician. The author always makes apparent the rational principles on which his course of procedure is based.

The illustrations are copious, and are well executed. The style is simple and intelligible, and bears the impress of a thoughtful mind.

In reviewing this work we really have nothing but praise to bestow on it. It is one of which the profession in England may justly feel proud.

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*Die Progressive Paralyse der Irren: Eine Monographie.*—Von Dr. E. MENDEL. Berlin, 1880.

This is an octavo volume of 350 pages. The author has, with praiseworthy diligence, studied the different phases of General Paralysis by every means available to modern science, and enriched his knowledge with extensive reading. Nothing shows in a more striking way the restless activity of modern research than the rows of references at the foot of almost every page to periodicals in German, French, Italian, and English recording an endless number of observations on a single disease.

A monograph like this from its very size gives a certain indistinctness of outline. After we get over the preliminary

sketch of the typical disease we are perplexed and fatigued by long descriptions of variations which after all can neither recall nor include all the variations. Observations are quoted only to be opposed by the conflicting observations of others, or to be overruled by the experience of the author himself, so that we have not only a book on General Paralysis, but a book about everything which has been written on General Paralysis and about other matters incidentally bearing thereupon. To judge from the preface, Dr. Mendel's book has been finished about ten months after that of Dr. Mickle on the same subject, and this has enabled the former physician to give an opinion on some new points brought out by later researches.

The book is illustrated by some good lithographs showing the morbid appearances of the tissues, sphygmographic tracings, and illustrations of the handwriting of those affected. We cannot claim it as an advantage that the German work is a hundred pages longer than the English one. Dr. Mendel does not attach so much importance to a series of thermometrical observations in the diagnosis and discernment of the pathological condition of the brain as Voisin and Reinhard have done. He agrees with the assertion of Kroemer that the average temperature in the disease is generally lower than that of healthy people, though he observes that the outward conditions of general paralysis favour a low temperature. Where a high temperature does occur, Dr. Mendel is inclined to suspect the complication of other diseases. He suspects some mistake in Reinhard's statements that there is a great difference in the temperature of the head and that of the extremities. He himself found that in the majority of cases the difference was slight, and no greater than what occurs among other insane people or in ordinary individuals. He has seen cases where maniacal excitement took place without any increased temperature. Dr. Mendel notices the sudden variations of temperature in the disease and the rise in the evening.

The description of the mental aberrations in general paralysis is well done. As an illustration of the increasing mental weakness, he gives the instance of a patient who, being asked, What was the square of twelve? answered 144, no doubt from memory; but being asked, What was the square of thirteen? he said 109, and then 121.

Dr. Mendel observes that general paralysis does not necessarily involve the membranes, nor the spinal cord, nor the

sympathetic system, nor is there any peculiar specific lesion, as might have been expected in a disease exhibiting such a distinctive chain of symptoms.

After debating all points, he comes to the conclusion that general paralysis is a diffused, interstitial inflammation of the cortex, ending in atrophy of the brain.

Dr. Mendel finds that syphilis has a decided influence in favouring the accession of general paralysis. Out of 201 cases, of which he had notes, no sure information could be had in 55; but out of the remaining 146 as many as 109 had syphilis. Taking 122 cases of melancholia, mania, hypochondria, and other forms of insanity, about the same age as general paralytics, there was no sure information in 21, and in 28 cases there was syphilis. Thus, in general paralysis, 75 per cent. had syphilis, and in the other mental disorders only 18 per cent. Our author is thus led to think that general paralysis may be a syphilitic inflammation of the brain, one of the many forms of the degenerative processes which this malady engenders. At one time we have cirrhosis of the liver; at another gummatous tumours in the brain; and so a rarer form might be an interstitial encephalitis. He remarks that the diagnosis between general paralysis and syphilitic tumours in the brain is sometimes impossible. The sequel, however, is different; and it may be asked if general paralysis be but a peculiar form of constitutional syphilis, why is it not amenable to the ordinary treatment by which the effects of syphilis are removed or ameliorated?

There is nothing peculiar in the treatment which Dr. Mendel recommends. There are always a great many remedies for diseases which we do not know how to cure. He goes over a list, some of which he denounces as useless; from the rest he leaves the reader to pick out those for which he may take a fancy. It is noticeable that he does not even mention *veratrum viride* and perchloride of iron, which Mickle recommends as giving more benefit than any other drugs tried by him in the treatment of the disease.

On the whole Dr. Mendel's book is a laborious and praiseworthy treatise, putting into an accessible form a vast variety of information about General Paralysis, so that workers in the same field may be in no doubt of what has been already done.

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