

Dr. Garnier was supported by Dr. Winkler, Dr. Motet, and others. Prof. van Hamel then presented his report on "The Measures Applicable to Incurable Criminals." He argued that the detention of recidivists must be indefinite, the criminal to be periodically brought before a court which would possess the power of deciding concerning his future. Prof. Thiry, who was persuaded that indefinite detention could not be avoided, was in agreement with Prof. van Hamel, but did not see the necessity of judicial intervention to prolong or interrupt detention. M. Maus, in a paper on the same subject, advocated an indefinite sentence (somewhat as at Elmira), considerable latitude being left to the prison administration to individualize the treatment. Dr. de Boeck, of Uccle, and M. Otlet, an advocate of Brussels, presented a report on "Prison-Asylums and the Penal Reforms they Involve," formulating their conclusions in the shape of an Act corresponding to those already accepted by the Parliaments of Italy and Belgium. On the last day of the Congress, after a communication from M. Terawo-Tora, the delegate of the Japanese Government, on the progress of criminal legislation in Japan, M. de Ryckere brought forward his paper on Bertillon's anthropometric system, which is shortly to be introduced into Belgium. Among other papers brought before the Congress were two by Prof. von Liszt and Prof. Benedikt on "The Applications of Criminal Anthropology," two by Dr. de Rode and Prof. Hubert on "Sexual Inversion and Legislation," arguing that before trial there should always be a medical examination in such cases, and papers by M. de Vaucheroy on "The Influence of Alcoholic Heredity on Insanity and Criminality," and Dr. Coutagne on "The Influence of Occupation on Criminality." The excellent plan was followed at the Congress of issuing *Rapports* beforehand, so that it was not necessary actually to read them at the Congress, thus allowing ample time for discussion and for the reading of shorter communications. Pending the publication of the "Actes," a fairly full account of the papers and discussions will be found in the "Archives de l'Anthropologie Criminelle" for September, the whole number being devoted to the Congress.

The next International Congress will be held at Geneva in 1896, but it is expected that there will be a special session at Chicago during the present year.

WEST LONDON MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY.

Dr. H. Sutherland read a paper on Nov. 4th on the "Prevention of Suicide in the Insane."

Statistics showed that only one case out of 222 patients who were suicidal on admission succeeded in committing the act, the remaining 221 having been prevented from doing so by the vigilance of the attendants.

The duties of the superintendent and attendants of the suicidal insane were to keep a careful and constant watch upon all medicines, plasters, and disinfectants. To keep keys, razors, knives, forks, fireirons in places of safety. To impress upon visitors the necessity of not leaving poisonous substances about, or introducing scissors or edged tools into the asylum. Attempts at hanging might be prevented by keeping out of the wards all nails, wires, ropes, sash-lines, bell-pulls, tapes and string. Patients with homicidal and suicidal delusions should not be allowed to work in the shops of the asylum, where they have knives and hammers at their command.

The site of the asylum should be chosen as far as possible from rivers, ponds, and railways.

In the asylum itself all doors should open outwards, windows should be protected, w.c.'s should close with a ball let into the door, fireplaces must be

protected by guards, taps for gas secured under lock and key, and all windows and gas jets be placed out of reach.

Patients should be watched at meals to see that they eat enough, and do not take food in a dangerous manner.

Some curious weapons were exhibited, made by suicidal patients from pieces of crinoline steel, firewood and string forming a knife, and from stones tied up in a stocking forming a hammer, and other curious inventions.

The paper concluded by a tribute of praise to the attendants, by whose devotion suicide in asylums is reduced to a minimum.

ILLENAU'S GOLDEN JUBILEE.

Since we received the "Festschrift," issued at the time of the Jubilee, which we have noticed in this Journal (p. 109), we have received from the Director, Dr. Schüle, an account of the proceedings which took place at Illenau on the 27th September, 1892.

Our space allows us only to note that the occasion was a very brilliant one. The Grand Duke and Grand Duchess of Baden honoured it by their presence. The ceremony was partly religious, partly secular. A sermon was delivered by the Chaplain. The Duke replied to a loyal speech in which he was addressed. Dr. Schüle, of course, spoke. Among other things a hymn, specially written for the Ceremony, was sung at the Service, and a special poem eulogizing the work performed at Illenau was recited during the proceedings. Altogether the enthusiasm and the tributes paid to those who had been the making of the asylum were of the warmest character, and the success was, we are glad to say, as great as it deserved to be. Congratulations in regard to the past were combined with the expression of the hope that in the future still greater heights would be reached in the treatment of the insane. We add our "Amen!"

Obituary.

THOMAS AITKEN, M.D. EDIN.

We regret to have to record the death of Dr. Aitken, of the Inverness District Asylum, one of the senior members of the Medico-Psychological Association.

Dr. Aitken was born in Dumfries, and was rocked in his cradle by the widow of the poet Burns. After attending school in Birmingham he served as assistant medical officer under the late Dr. W. A. F. Browne in the Crichton Royal Institution, and thereafter completed his medical education in Edinburgh. He graduated in 1856 and then became assistant medical officer in Durham County Asylum with Dr. R. Smith, before being appointed Superintendent of the Inverness Asylum in 1859. That institution was completed in 1863, and was designed to accommodate 300 patients. Since then it has been repeatedly enlarged, and now contains over 500. Further accommodation being urgently required, Dr. Aitken was, until the time of his sudden illness, occupied in designing a separate hospital block for the reception of acute cases. Although it was well known that for some years his health was far from being robust, and