

*Dispensary Treatment of Mental Diseases. (Amer. Journ. Insanity, July, 1901.) Channing, W.*

Dr. Channing pleads with much force for the wider establishment of out-patient departments for the treatment of mental affections in connection with hospitals and dispensaries. Such departments, besides giving treatment and instruction (a very important part of their work), would serve as a "repository for the troublesome, a clearing house for doubtful cases, and a bureau of information in regard to the necessary machinery to be made use of in committing or otherwise disposing of patients." Those who have had charge of our overcrowded out-patient rooms will appreciate to the full the need which Dr. Channing points out, for it is absolutely impossible under present conditions to give the mental cases which now and again present themselves as out-patients the attention they require. As it is these sufferers have to content themselves with a dose of *mistura alba* or calomel, or perhaps a dose of bromide and some hasty words of reassurance, and then the "next patient." Perhaps the greatest service which these mental departments promise is in connection with *defective children*, some of whom "furnish a portion of the dullards in the schools, who are such an injury to the advance of the average pupils. Others become tramps or criminals. The girls often become the mothers of illegitimate children, and so spread the circle of degeneration and defect wider and wider." Dr. Channing accentuates the importance of the last-mentioned work, and in order to utilise more effectually the proposed department he systematises in tabular form the investigation of the defective child.

The long list of mental affections which Drs. Channing and Jelly have had under observation at the department which they have established in connection with the Boston Dispensary, U.S.A., furnishes sufficient evidence of the need for the department. The experience in this country which similar departments have gained will unquestionably enforce Dr. Channing's advocacy. HARRINGTON SAINSBURY.

*Modern Advances in the Treatment of the Insane. (Scot. Med. Surg. Journ., Aug., 1901.) Havelock, T. G.*

The advances referred to are, first, the erection of detached hospitals at asylums and the allocation of cases on admission to the various parts of the asylum where they can be best dealt with. Not least among the advantages of this system is the result that the less interesting cases "are not lost sight of, as they are apt to be in a block full of recent admissions."

Next, on the subject of bed treatment of the violent insane, we find that Dr. Havelock is not in accord with this method, at any rate as advocated by Continental physicians in particular, and as a routine practice. He deprecates these restrictions of practice to "bed-treatment" or exercise treatment, and counsels the judicious use of all methods available, and their individualisation.

The villa colony asylums are on their trial, he thinks, at any rate as to their economy of working, though he has no doubt that many cases may with great advantage be treated in detached buildings.