

to bring them to an almost normal condition. For this class, then, operation is recommended. Partial thyroidectomy can only be suggested, we are told, as an antidote to impulsiveness and constitutional restlessness, and not, of course, for other types of moral insanity. Lugaro seems to have in view that state which von Krafft Ebing described as the maniacal form of constitutional affective insanity rather than what is commonly termed moral insanity. Though he thinks that partial thyroidectomy is not unjustifiable in the same way that castration is, he holds that it should not be performed without the knowledge of the relations and the patient's own consent. He appears to consider the risk of myxoedema very slight, and, at all events, easily combated by thyroid treatment. It seems strange that this learned author should have ignored treatment of what he calls moral insanity with anti-thyroid serum. He cannot be unfamiliar with the brilliant results which are accredited to this method in Graves' disease. It would appear rational to give anti-thyroid serum a full trial before proceeding to the more radical step of surgical operation.

CONOLLY NORMAN.

*The Family Care of the Insane in Gardelegen [Die Familienpflege Geistes-kranker in Gardelegen, Besuch im November, 1903]. (Psych. Neur. Wochensch., June 25th, July 2nd, 1904.) Wickel, C.*

Alt's chief reason for establishing family care in Gardelegen was to demonstrate that even at home in Germany this method of treatment could be quickly put in force without the need for educating the population for years beforehand, and that patients suitable for this form of treatment would be happier in families than in an institution like Uchtspringe, where free treatment is carried out to the widest conceivable limit. After 5½ years' experience, it can be said that these objects have been fully attained. The patients in Gardelegen are regarded as belonging to Alt's asylum of Uchtspringe, whence they have been sent, and on the books of which their names are still retained. Gardelegen is a pretty little town containing about 8000 inhabitants, situated almost nine miles from Uchtspringe, or about twenty minutes' train journey. The first patients, four women, were sent there in the autumn of 1898. In January, 1904, 119 patients were in residence, mostly women. In 1903, when the numbers were rapidly increasing, a chief nurse was stationed in the town, and the immediate medical care of the patients, hitherto carried out direct from the asylum, was committed to an experienced medical officer residing in Gardelegen and acting under Dr. Alt, the physician and director of the parent asylum.

There is as yet no central hospital, but such a building is in contemplation.

No family can receive more than two patients. The number of families applying for patients is ever on the increase. Very few to whom the care of patients has been committed have proved unsuitable. Patients are from time to time sent back to the asylum owing to severe physical illness or to mental relapse. The greatest care is exercised in the selection of homes for the patients; it is felt by the citizens to be an honour for a family which is chosen, and it is looked on as a disgrace

when a case is removed. Dr. Wickel vouches that the dwellings are thoroughly clean, fresh, and well kept, the bedrooms cheerful, light, and airy, and the bedding clean. If any room was not in perfect order, the hosts apologised and assigned a reason. Frequently the patient's room contained more furniture than the regulations required, and many rooms had been rearranged or renovated for the special use of patients. The patients themselves were clean, well dressed, well nourished, and wonderfully contented. The hosts showed a good knowledge of the cases under their care, with whom they seemed on excellent terms. On the whole, the impression conveyed was most favourable. An individual case is described of an idiot, æt. 19, who when received by her hostess a few years ago could neither speak nor employ herself, and could not be kept clean without difficulty, who now speaks intelligibly, though little, has learned to sew and patch, is useful about the house, and perfectly tidy. Private as well as public patients are sent to Gardelegen. Relatives are well satisfied with the arrangements. The inhabitants do not overwork, nor make game of, nor annoy the insane, nor have any serious difficulties ever arisen between the asylum authorities and the hosts. The patients mostly belong to the mental classes of congenital and acquired weak-mindedness, and old-standing tranquil paranoia. Considerable profit seems to accrue from treating private patients in this way; and with regard to public patients the maintenance charge alone is about 1½*d.* cheaper *per diem* in family care; or reckoning on the gross account, these patients cost nearly 7*d.* less daily than patients treated in the asylum.

How enthusiastically family care is being taken up in Germany is shown by a note of Dr. Wickel's. Between the date of his visit to Gardelegen in November, 1903, and the publication of his paper the number of patients residing there had risen to 142. He tells us that at Uchtspringe and the neighbouring villages 62 patients are located. Round the newer asylum at Jerichow and its neighbourhood 146 cases are treated, so that the number of patients thus dealt with in the province of Saxony already amounts to 350. CONOLLY NORMAN.

*Troublesome Lunatics (Les aliénés difficiles). (Rev. de Psychiat., March, 1904.) Colin.*

In this paper, Dr. Colin gives a short account of the system which he is at present organising under the *Conseil-Général* in the Department of the Seine for the treatment of the special class of insane patients whom he qualifies as "troublesome" or "vicious."

As distinguished from the criminal lunatics who commit grave offences, these individuals are merely troublesome, not dangerous; they are, in fact, the class, as well known in this country as in France, who oscillate between the prison and the asylum, and seem equally out of place in both. A good many of them are congenitally weak-minded, and others are chronic alcoholics who trade on their mental symptoms. The inconvenience caused in the Seine asylums by the frequent sojourns of the *quasi*-lunatics of this type has led to the adoption of the plan proposed by Dr. Colin.

This plan consists essentially in the establishment of a number