

pressed him: the first case gave much trouble, the erotic propensities of the patient leading him to attempt at rape, and rendering him absolutely dangerous. Under the use of the Bromide of Potassium this passed away; the memory returned, self-control was restored, and the patient left the asylum perfectly restored to health. The next case was that of a young officer, in whom fits of epilepsy were frequent and severe; the administration of the drug in large doses completely restored him to health. In no case had Dr. Sabben seen any danger to life, from its use, and he believed it to be a most valuable and efficacious remedy.

Dr. TUKE very frequently prescribed Bromide of Potassium, and found it specially efficacious in puerperal and hysterical mania, or epileptic mania. Its great value seemed to depend upon its power to relieve congestion by its action upon the capillary circulation. Dr. Tuke, however, had found large doses—twenty or thirty grains—absolutely required; and in cases of sleeplessness would give twice as much. In a case with strong erotic symptoms he had attended with Dr. Gull, twenty grains repeated three times a day had been very successful. In the treatment, however, of hysterical mania and of epilepsy, he thought the Bromides, in proper doses, were the most useful. He had seen no danger attend their exhibitions, but the continuance of their use was apt to produce an eruption upon the skin, and particularly upon the face of the patient, a symptom which he did not remember to have seen noticed. Mr. Kesteven's paper had dealt with the subject in a very practical manner, and Dr. Tuke quite concurred with his views as to the value of the Bromides.

Dr. LINDSAY could not agree with Dr. Maudsley as to the dose of the Bromides. Ten grains in his hands were inefficacious, and from twenty to forty grains were required. He had found great benefit from the mixture of hyoscyamus with the drug.

Dr. MAUDSLEY explained that it was not improbable that in hospital practice, smaller doses were sufficient than were found to be necessary in asylums; he still thought that the dose of the Bromides had been uselessly increased,

Dr. SANKEY asked whether Dr. Lindsay had found the Bromides useful in chronic cases of epileptic mania.

Dr. LINDSAY had not tried their effect in chronic cases.

Mr. KESTEVEN said he felt obliged by the attention with which his paper had been received, and the general concurrence in his views expressed by the members. In answer to Dr. Maudsley, he had himself never seen any bad result follow the use of the Bromides, and in the one case instanced by Dr. Maudsley, there seemed to be no ground for ascribing the patient's death to its use. He had had but small opportunity of arriving at any opinion as to the effects of the Bromides upon the sexual feeling; he saw the good result, but it was a question in the case of ladies difficult to ask. With regard to Dr. Ogle's remarks, he would say that he had found the Bromides useful in congestion of the kidneys, and he believed uræmia to be a very frequent cause of epilepsy.

MR. LEY, OF LITTLEMORE.

MR. WILLIAM LEY,* who had only lately retired from the office of Medical Superintendent of the Asylum for Oxfordshire and Berkshire, was born in 1806, and at the time of his death had not completed his sixty-third year.

He was the son of a clergyman in Devonshire, and received his early education at the Grammar School at Ottery St. Mary. He was apprenticed to Messrs. Lawrence and Warner, of Cirencester, practitioners of good reputation and experience; and completed his professional education at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where he was a dresser under Mr. Earle. He was admitted a Member of the College of Surgeons in 1831, and a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1835.

The first public appointment he held was that of Resident Medical Officer of

* See also Obituary Notice. *Journal of Mental Science*, April, 1869.

the Fever Hospital. After holding it about four years, he began practise in Crawford Street, and about the same time he was elected Surgeon to the Western General Dispensary,—an office which gave him much work among the poor. His colleagues remember that he did the work with ability, with good feeling, and with the most conscientious uprightness of purpose. In his own opinion, however, he was more fitted by his tastes for the duties of a Physician than for the more strictly surgical part of the profession.

After some few years,—at the instance of Sir William Lawrence and other private friends—he determined to quit the general practise of medicine, and to enter on the special department of lunacy, which was then receiving attention from active members of the profession. With this view he took lodgings at Hanwell, for the purpose of studying the diseases and general management of the insane. Ample opportunity was afforded at the asylum under the personal superintendence and instruction of Dr. Conolly and Dr. Begley. Mr. Ley's minute knowledge of morbid anatomy, and ability to detect shades of difference in diseased structure, at once gained him the respect of all who met him at the examinations in the dead-house.

When the asylum for the united counties of Oxford and Berks was instituted in 1845, he was appointed to the office of Medical Superintendent then created. To form such an establishment, and to bring the different officers—all alike new to their duties—to work together in harmony, to maintain the requisite discipline, and to enforce it by example, was a task which he executed with remarkable skill; he gained the affection of those under him, while he commanded their respect. He was seldom absent from the Asylum; indeed he denied himself the moderate relaxation which others in similar office find necessary as a relief from the monotony of the work.

The view he took of madness, as it came under treatment, was that diseases of the mind, as shown in the insane, were generally dependent on constitutional causes. He pointed to the pathological evidence that they were most frequently found in connection with diseases of the chest or the respiratory system. It was a special feature of his system of management that the patients were invariably treated with gentleness. On one occasion an officer from another asylum applied to the head nurse to lend a "strait waistcoat." The nurse not being able to understand the name or the nature of what was wanted, came to Mr. Ley and reported the request. There was no such thing at Littlemore.

Mr. Ley sought consistently to carry the humane system far beyond what was common—beyond what other people could understand. In the task he set himself to accomplish, he felt that he had to take all the duty upon his own back—or too much of it. It need not excite wonder that his health broke down. "*It took more out of a man,*" he said, shortly before his death, "*than any man is justified in giving.*"

Beyond his Annual Reports, which were regularly printed by the Committee of Visitors, he was not the author of any printed work, except a single pamphlet—"An Address to the Governors of the Warneford Asylum, upon the Distribution of the Warneford Gifts," and a paper in one of the Medical Journals upon *Cannabis Indica*, which he was the first to bring to the notice of practitioners in England. He was one of the early members of the Association of Medical Officers of Asylums, and served the offices of President and Treasurer. For some years he took an active part in the affairs of the Society, without, however contributing to the Journal.

At different times of late years Mr. Ley had shown symptoms of hypertrophy of the heart; and, without admitting to himself the extent or the full consequence of the lesion, he felt the need of being released from the charge upon him. Conscious of failing health, and doubtful of his power to continue the duty to his satisfaction, he more than once requested to be allowed to resign his office. At the urgent desire of the Committee of Visitors he consented to remain. Frequent and lengthening periods of illness, without perfect recovery in the intervals, made retirement necessary.

The Committee acknowledge in most complimentary terms his just and honourable discharge of duty through more than twenty years. "*Twenty years,*" said one of the Committee, "*and there has never been a scandal.*" As a further acknowledgment of the services he had rendered, the Committee awarded him a pension, which was confirmed unanimously by the Quarter Sessions of both counties, and the boroughs in union.

When he was finally released from the labors under which his once strong health had given way, he spent some months in Devonshire, looking forward to a home among the scenes of his early life. He had lately returned to the neighbourhood of Oxford, and was upon a visit to former friends at Littlemore—purposing after a short stay to pass on again to Devonshire, to try whether the warmer climate would be more suitable to his increased difficulty of breathing. His strength failed too rapidly to allow of his removal from Littlemore, and there,—under the watchful care of those who had been trained under his own eye,—he quietly breathed his last.—*Medical Times and Gazette.*

ALLEGED INCREASE OF LUNACY.

WE often hear people assuming that lunacy is more common than it used to be, and speculating upon the causes of the supposed increase. Sometimes it is ascribed to education, sometimes to religion, and more frequently to the railways or the telegraph. The conception of proper treatment for lunatics is modern, and provision for giving practical effect to it belongs to the present century; and perhaps Providence has ordained that the number of subjects for treatment should increase in order to prevent so much good philanthropy from being wasted. It is probably correct to say that the middle and upper classes of Englishmen are more temperate than they were a century ago, and it would be disappointing to conclude that those who used only to get drunk now go mad. We are told that politics and statesmanship do not produce many lunatics, neither does law, literature, nor the fine arts. We know that clergymen sometimes make their hearers mad, but we do not know that they go mad themselves. The army and navy send few patients to asylums; and, on the whole, it is concluded that intense devotion to business is the chief cause of madness. The speed at which we live is said to be too high, and if a man comes up to business by express train in the morning, receives and answers telegrams all day, and returns home by express train in the evening, it is supposed that his brain must be in a process of deterioration. Another conjecture is that people have too much pleasure or too much variety in life, and that the best preservative of a sound mind was the dullness of a country town of the last century.

That statement that lunacy is increasing would be highly important if true, but we have some reason to think it is not true. It is matter of common knowledge that lunatics have been very much looked up during the last twenty or thirty years, and it may be that the supposed increase in their numbers is merely the result of greater accuracy in registration. A considerable degree of accuracy has now been attained, and inaccuracy, even if it exists, does not affect the present question, because the belief in the supposed increase of lunacy, unless it is mere vague conjecture, must be founded upon such statistics as can be procured; and these statistics, as we shall proceed to show, do not support this belief, but disprove it. In short, it is a popular delusion to suppose that the spread of intelligence and progress in the arts of life renders this generation more liable than its predecessors to brain disease. This subject was discussed at a recent meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association, and a paper read before that meeting by Dr. C. Lockhart Robertson exhibited the results of examination of the returns, upon which alone a trustworthy opinion can be formed. This paper admitted that a general belief in the increase of lunacy existed, and had some apparent justification. The grand total of the insane of all classes, detained in asylums, in workhouses, and in private dwellings was, in 1844, 20,611, and, in 1868, 50,118. Thus in twenty-five years the number of registered lunatics has