

apparent connection between the mental disease and the criminal act : of the twelve epileptics, for instance, who had actual convulsive attacks only six committed their offences in the dream state. And, though in cases of paranoia the victim of the lunatic's violence is generally the villain of his delusions, the interpretation of this fact is not, the author holds, that the insanity caused the crime, but rather that the aptitude for both lay in the individual's nature. The anomaly of character, in fact, which is the potentiality of paranoia has considerable affinity with the essential anomaly of the moral lunatic and the criminal. And a further proof of this is found in the fact that the typical insanity of the criminal in prison is of paranoiac form : in the 47 cases, for instance, of insane prisoners in the author's series, all but four were cases of paranoia. The author maintains, therefore, that in general there is little real difference between criminal lunatics and lunatic criminals : both are criminals with a psychopathic aptitude, and it is a question of environment and of the strength of the insane as compared with the criminal tendency whether crime or lunacy appears first.

Details of a number of the cases are given, as well as tables showing for the whole series the relation of the form of delinquency to the form of insanity, the distribution of the cases in the several provinces, the cranial characters of the individuals, etc.

As regards the character of the delinquency, the series showed the usual predominance of homicidal offences, 78 out of the 115 being of this nature, while there were only eight crimes of acquisitiveness and four of lust. Special note is made of the fact that criminal tendencies seem to be more prevalent with paranoia than with epilepsy, there being 46 paranoiacs as against 19 epileptics among the homicides. And this is confirmed on comparing the criminal with the non-criminal inmates of the asylum, the proportion of criminal paranoiacs to paranoiacs in general being considerably higher than that of criminal epileptics to all epileptics.

W. C. SULLIVAN.

5. Treatment of Insanity.

Of the Placing of the Insane under Restraint and of the Powers of the Police to Intervene [Du placement des aliénés et de l'intervention des commissaires de police]. (Prog. Med., April 16th, 1904, p. 253.) Bourneville.

M. Bourneville, together with a growing number of alienists, pleads for the recognition of the asylum as a hospital for mental disease and the more ready admission of patients into asylums, the legal formalities having been duly effected.

In France, the insane patient can be placed under care either by the voluntary act of the relations (*placement volontaire*) or through the agency of the police (*placement d'office*). M. Bourneville urges that all admissions under care should be by *placement volontaire*, with the exception of those cases in which the police have had to arrest or take into custody the lunatic. He further draws attention to a serious flaw

in the *modus operandi* of the *placement d'office*. It would seem, *viz.*, that the police officer cannot take action upon the report that an insane person is likely to commit an act which will endanger himself or others, but must wait for the authority of the *fait accompli*. A case in point is recorded in which by a happy chance alone the disaster of the *fait accompli* was averted, and the *placement d'office* system saved from scandal.

HARRINGTON SAINSBURY.

On Veronal [Ueber veronal]. (Psych. Neur. Wochensch., May 7th, 1904.) Herm van Husen.

This recent hypnotic has now received considerable attention, and the general verdict is decidedly favourable. It was introduced by Fischer and v. Mering; it has a urea nucleus with two ethyl groupings, and it is named chemically diethyl malonyl urea. Its rational formula shows a resemblance to the sulphonal and trional groupings. It is rather insoluble in cold water but dissolves fairly in hot water, and may be given in hot tea or milk, or it may be administered as a powder or in cachet, or in the form of Merck's cocoa tablets. Dr. van Husen sums up the results which he obtained on sixty-nine patients in the Grafenberg asylum as follows: In simple sleeplessness it is an excellent hypnotic, and for the most part induces sleep within twenty minutes to one hour; this is general in the dose of $7\frac{1}{2}$ grains. In mild cases of excitement it is also very serviceable, but the requisite dose is on an average $15-22\frac{1}{2}$ grains ($1-1\frac{1}{2}$ gr.). The sleep induced is somewhat delayed. In severer cases of excitement and unrest, as in senile restlessness and in dementia præcox, it fails not infrequently. It comes nearest to trional in the quality and quantity of its effect; only rarely does it seem to surpass trional in activity. A certain amount of cumulative action may be noticed (as also in the use of trional) in that the effects will occasionally fail until a third or fourth dose has been given, also in that the effects will often persist awhile after discontinuance of the drug. Prolonged use of veronal is liable to produce habituation, the dose requiring to be raised. Severe after-effects or by-effects are not witnessed, but giddiness, confusion, inclination to stagger, may be noted, especially after doses of $15-22\frac{1}{2}$ grains, occasionally after $7\frac{1}{2}$ grains.

The use of veronal on a large scale is contraindicated at present by its costliness; its advantages over the much cheaper trional, whose efficacy seems to be about on a par with it, are therefore not very obvious.

HARRINGTON SAINSBURY.

A Case of Veronal Poisoning [Ein Fall von Veronal Vergiftung]. (Cbl. f. Nervenheilkunde u. Psychiat., June, 1904.) P. T. Hald.

Not a few cases of toxic symptoms have been recorded after the use of veronal, especially after the employment of the higher doses of $1\frac{1}{2}-2$ or even 3 grammes, but instances of the effects of a single massive dose are scarcely to be found. Dr. Hald's report of the results of 9 grammes (140 grains *circa*) taken in a single dose is the more valuable. The patient was a woman of about thirty, who was admitted in a comatose state, the breathing somewhat laboured (*leise keuchend*)