

Des Hallucinations, ou Histoire Raisonnée des Apparitions, des Visions, des Songes, de l'Extase, des Rêves, du Magnetism, et du Somnambulism. Par A. Brierre de Boismont, M.D., &c., &c., &c. Troisième édition. Paris, 1861.

THIS new edition of the work of our illustrious and learned colleague is so greatly enlarged and improved, that it may almost be considered a new publication. It is a work which ought to be carefully studied by every alienist physician, for those chapters which relate more particularly to the hallucinations of the insane and which form the most scientific parts of the work, are invaluable; and although they may lack some of the interest which attaches itself to other parts of the volume in which the historical hallucinations of priests and prophets, or the romantic hallucinations of lovers and poets are recited with the elegant simplicity of style which is so fascinating in the writings of this author, still, as he is at least as experienced as he is learned, and as the knowledge of hallucinations derived from his experience of mental disease comes to us fresh and first-hand, and is of positive and unquestioned value to those whose duty it is to observe and to treat mental disease, we feel that we are justified in placing a far higher estimate upon the scientific than we do upon what may be called the historical part of the work.

With regard, indeed, to the historical part of this work, it is difficult for us to see the facts recorded from quite the same point of view as that which M. Brierre de Boismont sometimes takes, because he appears to believe in supernatural phenomena and we do not. This belief in the supernatural, which is visible in the author's pages, is neither concealed nor assumed; it is an honest and avowed belief, similar to that which is entertained by many great men; it is, however, one in which we cannot for a moment concur. In an early page of his work the author says of supernaturalism that it is a great belief in which he emphatically avows his sympathy; but to us supernaturalism is an absurdity; if it exists, it exists not for us, as colour exists not for the blind, nor sound for the deaf. We believe in only one supernatural existence, namely, in the personal and individual Power which made nature. We believe in the book of nature, and in its one Author; in the world, and in God. But as for the supernatural, the spirit-world of sights and sounds, the whole tribe of apparitions, the whole chime of ghostly voices, we believe that they can, one and all of them, be explained upon the principles of physical or of metaphysical law. A large number of them are pure and simple fictions; others, intended only at first as an expression of imaginative thought, have been mistaken for realities; others again have been neither more nor less than the expressions of partial insanity.

In the mist of forgetfulness and error which disguises from our eyes any clear and distinct appreciation of the realities of the past, it has been but too easy to attribute the conduct of great men which we cannot explain, either to supernatural agencies or to mental disease, which if we were able to see it clear and close at hand we should be able to recognise as merely some imaginative peculiarity of action or expression. The demon of Socrates, the nymph of Numa, may have been nothing more than poetical expressions for modes of thought. We may illustrate what we mean by expressions which we once heard fall from the lips of the most popular religious orator of the day. We were listening to a sermon which Mr. Spurgeon, who was preaching from the text "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" After having with much force of language interrogated the different classes of his audience as to whether they were habitually engaged in their Father's business, he suddenly turned the interrogatory upon himself, and we heard him express himself in words to the following effect, which impressed themselves deeply upon our attention and memory:—"And I, when I have been sitting in my study arm-chair of an evening, in my thoughts elaborating a sermon, and may be elaborating the spirit out of it, often from the dark side of the room I have seen a hand in threatening attitude extended towards me, and often from the obscurity I have heard a voice saying unto me—"Art thou about thy Father's business?" Now we understood no more from this, and we do not believe Mr. Spurgeon meant us to understand more from it, than a rhetorical expression of the conscious feeling that he was not employing his time to the best advantage. But how easy it would be, in fact how inevitable it would be, that such a figure of speech should be interpreted into the emphatic and public confession that he, Mr. Spurgeon, was the subject of hallucinations; and how many hallucinations of men who are in the habit of expressing themselves with rhetorical vehemence, the stock hallucinations of history, may have been at the time nothing more than figures of speech, like this of Mr. Spurgeon's? When the devil appeared to Luther, for instance, and he threw his ink-bottle at him, may it not have been a figurative expression of the manner in which he rebuked the spirit of evil by the ink which so copiously flowed from his eloquent pen? But in addition to that class of historic hallucinations which are but the lies of false priests, the hallucinations of the Eleucinian mysteries for example, and in addition, to the historic hallucinations which are but mistaken conceptions of figures of speech, there have been no doubt a large number of partial madmen who have impressed their real hallucinations upon the history of the world. We cannot agree with M. Brierre de Boismont in the opinion that the hallucinations of the insane are easily to be distinguished from those which have been experienced by the founders of religious systems and creeds, when he says, p. 97, "As for

the analogy which some allege to exist between hallucinated persons and the founders of religious creeds, the distinction is always to be made; in the hallucinated man that force of will, that logic of reason, that fixed purpose are not to be found which belong to men who have a providential mission. The hallucinated man is inflamed by certain religious ideas to which he subjects himself, he can neither lead, nor promote, nor develop them, but allows himself to be led in tow by them, or rather to be absorbed by them. The man of genius masters the idea, directs it; and makes it fructify, while the insane man has no power over it; it follows him as his shadow and he obeys all its caprices; the one is a king, the other a slave." He adds, "Among the large number of hallucinated persons whom we have observed for more than twenty years, we have always found that alongside of the consequential reasoning which appears the result of the idea, some incoherent word or some extraordinary act, that is to say, the grain of insanity occurs." We cannot think that this line is always to be drawn with such facility as our author appears to think. Suppose we grant, for the sake of argument, that Mahomet was a man of genius who made his ideas, which appeared like hallucination, bear the fruit of success, and that he was no more hallucinated than Napoleon was when he talked of the star of Austerlitz. What shall we say of Joe Smith, who has also been the successful founder of a religious system? Was he also a man of sound mind and of commanding genius? What shall we say of Edward Irving, the priest and prophet of an enthusiastic sect? What, above all, shall we say of Johanna Southcote, the lunatic old woman, the nature of whose writings the Master of the Rolls has within these few weeks been called upon to study and to judge? The great lawyer did not allow the blasphemous nature of Johanna's hallucinations to prevent him from deciding that her character was eminently pious, and her writings obviously intended to promote religious feeling, and on this ground he refused to disannul the validity of a will, by which property was bequeathed for the purpose of extending the circulation of her prophecies.

In our author's strictly scientific chapters; that is to say, in those in which he treats of hallucination as a symptom of, and a part of insanity, he adopts the excellent method of summing up at the end of the chapter the conclusions at which he has arrived; thus, in the fourth chapter on hallucinations of insanity in the state of simplicity, he sums up the conclusions arrived at as follows:

"In hallucinations insane of themselves, the actions are almost always consequent upon morbid sensations, so profound is the conviction of the lunatic in their reality; hallucinations of hearing are the most common, and may be estimated at two thirds of the others; enfeeblement or deprivation of the sense of hearing is no obstacle to their production, this characteristic distinguishing them

from illusions; most commonly hallucinations of hearing seem to come from without, but sometimes they have their seat in the interior of the body; they may be combined with hallucinations of sight, and less frequently with those of the other senses; to hallucinations of sight, less numerous than the above, and those which most attract the attention to them, must be referred the curious fact of visions; the beholders of visions have always played an important part in history, these hallucinations being nothing more than the coloured reflections of habitual thought may be infinitely varied, and may take as many forms as there are individuals; their production does not depend upon the integrity of the sense of sight, since blind men have been affected by them. Hallucinated men believe that they can see into the interior of their body, a tendency which is observed also in animal-magnetised persons and in somnambulists. Hallucinations of sight are often associated with those of hearing, and their concurrence may result in very remarkable facts. Hallucinations of touch are less easy to recognise than the above, because they are often confounded with nervous pains and visceral illusions, well observed facts proving this beyond doubt. Hallucinations of smell and of taste come after those above mentioned, in order of frequency; those of smell may be observed at the commencement of all kinds of insanity, these hallucinations are scarcely ever isolated, they are combined with the others, and above all with illusions. Hallucinations without complication are rare, almost always they are united to one of the forms of insanity."

On the subject of general hallucinations, in which most frequently, our author says, it is needful to comprise the union of hallucinations and illusions of all the senses, he arrives at the metaphysical conclusion that, general hallucinations will afford a powerful argument in favour of Berkleyism, if a pathological condition may serve to establish a psychological principle. On this point we would beg to observe that the proof of Berkleyism would be of no value unless the hallucinations were not only general as regards the senses, but as regards the objects of sense, that they had in fact supplanted all real perceptions of the real world; a pathological state the existence of which we have never heard of or read of. We do not understand how a single hallucination affecting all the senses, how, for instance, the hallucination of a fire which the patient hears and sees, and smells and feels, can have any validity in proving that there is no world but the world of ideas, while in addition to the unreal object of his hallucination the patient perceives through all his senses the reality of the material universe.

The frequency of hallucinations and illusions in the different forms of insanity has been studied by our author in 1146 cases, in 725 of which he found that they existed according to the relative frequency exhibited in the following table :

Form of Insanity.	Number of Cases observed.	Number in which Hallucinations and Illusions were present.
Acute delirium	32	25
Mania	229	178
Monomania of fear (Lypemania)	303	248
Hypochondriacal monomania	63	43
Simple melancholia	1	0
Stupor.....	6	2
Monomania of sadness with stupor	7	3
Monomania.....	34	29
Dementia	82	41
General paralysis	147	37
Weakness of mind, imbecility, idiocy	53	17
Alcoholic insanity	73	49
Hysterical insanity	14	9
Epileptic insanity	28	9
Puerperal insanity	23	18
Alternating insanity (folie à double form)	27	14
Moral insanity	5	1
Insanity	19	12
	1146	725

We regret that the limited space at our command forbids our analysing the able chapters of the work in which the psychological and the physiological aspects of the subject are exhausted. These, and the chapter on the etiology, and that on the medico-legal relations of hallucination, are written with the fulness of information and breadth of view which characterise the experienced and philosophical author. The work is in every way an admirable production.

The Statistics of Insanity.

THE Commissioners in Lunacy frequently give to their very able reports some distinguishing feature, and in their last report this feature was statistical. The appendix contains a continuation of the statistical tables given in the eighth report, and comprises the statistics of England and Wales for five years, ending with 1858. The tables show a vast increase of pauper patients in asylums, namely, 7222 in the ten years ending January 1st, 1861, and this is accompanied by the remarkable fact that there has not been any increase in the number of registered private patients during the same period. There has, indeed, been an increase of private patients in the hospitals for the insane to the extent of about 207 in the ten years, but this increase has been counterbalanced by a corresponding decrease in the private patients of licensed houses, so that the result is the stationary position of the number of private patients throughout the country.

The first important deduction from their tables upon which the Commissioners remark, is one which adds a new and valuable illustration of the well-known importance of early treatment in insanity. In direct

proportion as patients are submitted to early treatment, they are susceptible of cure; and in direct proportion as they are withheld from early treatment, they are liable to become incurable and irreclaimable burdens upon the resources of the community. Of 1000 patients admitted into asylums the duration of whose disease did not exceed one month, at the end of three years 509 in 1000 had been discharged recovered, 155 had been discharged relieved or not improved, 178 had died, and 153 were remaining in the asylums. Contrast with these figures the results of treatment of 1000 patients admitted into asylums after they had been insane six years and upwards, of these only 50 recovered, 173 died, and 633 were remaining in the asylums, the other 124 we presume were discharged, not recovered. The commissioners found this result of experience upon what may be called a statistical law. "The recoveries decrease with the increase of the duration of the attack at the time of coming under treatment," and the operation of this law, coupled with the fact stated by the Commissioners that comparatively few recent cases are admitted into asylums, has resulted in the ever-increasing accumulation of chronic and incurable cases.

Looking at this question of the curability or incurability of patients solely as an affair of the pocket, the statement cannot be too often repeated to the guardians of the poor, who are practically the persons in authority over the insane poor, that if they send cases to the asylum on the first outbreak of the malady, at the end of three years only 153 per 1000 will remain as a charge upon the poor's rate, whereas if they defer to send patients to the asylum until six years have intervened after the outbreak of the malady before the resort to asylum care and treatment is made, 633 per 1000 will remain a weighty and burdensome argument against the impolicy of delay.

The Commissioners, we think very properly, lay but little stress upon the fact that there has been no augmentation of private patients in asylums. The number of private patients in asylums bears so indefinite and unknown a proportion to the number of insane persons in the rank of life from which private patients are drawn, that it would be rash to found any argument relating to the increase or decrease of insanity upon such imperfect and fallacious data. Our own personal observations and enquiries have led us to the conviction that not a moiety of the insane of the upper or middle classes of society are registered in the books of the commissioners, either as private patients in asylums, or as single patients kept for profit; and it is a subject of grave importance in these enquiries to ascertain the extent to which, in a still lower rank of the community, the custom of detaining the insane at their own homes, tends to vitiate our statistics of the insane in questions relating to the increase or decrease of the malady. How is it that so few recent cases are admitted into our public asylums, that, as the Commissioners point out, the increased duration of life of in-

curable cases due to good treatment in detaining patients from the grave, so completely outweighs the influence of improved methods of treatment in effecting the discharge of patients by cure, as continually to silt up our largest institutions? Something of this must no doubt be attributed to the short-sighted parsimony of the guardians of the poor, who have been but too willing to defer as long as possible the evil day when an insane pauper will cost the parish eight or nine shillings a week in hard money; something also must be set down in many counties to the difficulties of procuring asylum care and treatment where the asylum accommodation is inadequate to the demand made upon it; but a still larger share of this lamentable result must, we are sure, be attributed to a great fact hitherto overlooked in the statistics of the pauper insane, namely, that the admission of a pauper into an asylum is in a very large class of instances not the direct result of his insanity, but the result of his poverty. He has been maintained out of the asylum, and beyond the reach of the Commissioners' registration, either upon his own means or upon those of his friends, until under the impoverishing influence of his malady these means have become exhausted, when he is admitted into the county asylum, and for the first time comes under official cognizance an old-established and incurable case of lunacy. This is, without doubt, the most potent cause of the lamentable fact that comparatively few recent cases are admitted into our county asylums; and it is the consideration of circumstances constantly bringing this cause under our notice, which makes us hesitate to give full credence to the public statistics of the insane in this country, as sufficient data whereon to found any reliable conclusions respecting the proportion of the insane to the population.

In view of the general bearing of their statistics the Commissioners arrive at two wide conclusions of a satisfactory and comforting nature. The first is, that they believe them to afford "abundant reason for discrediting the statements which foreign authors have founded on our returns, to the effect that the inhabitants of this country are more liable to insanity than those of any other civilized state." The second is, "that we have not found any reasons supporting the opinion generally entertained, that the community are more subject than formerly to attacks of insanity." With regard to the first of these conclusions, the Commissioners evidently go on strong grounds, inasmuch as they demonstrate that a very large proportion of registered lunatics is due to the operation of the law intrusted to their administration, whereby the existence of lunacy, at least in the pauper class of the community, is accurately registered.

In countries where there is no constituted authority, or a very limited one, over the insane members of the community, they cannot even be counted, much less protected; and it is clear that no comparison can be drawn between the proportion of lunatics to the population in countries placed in altogether different circum-

stances for facility of registration. But it must be remembered that there are some civilized countries in which the registration of lunatics is as perfect as it is in our own. This is certainly the case in Holland and we are inclined to think that it is also so in France. The statistics of the insane of the latter country published once in nine years, are a perfect model of careful and scientific arrangement. In these statistics it is to be remarked that the number of the large class of unregistered lunatics who escape the computation of our Commissioners is by some means or other obtained, and forms a most important element in the result. In the enumeration of the insane in France in 1851, there were altogether 44,970, or one in 796 of the population of the country; of these 20,537, or 45.68 per cent. of the whole number were in asylums for the insane or general hospitals, waiting for their transference to an asylum, and 24,433 lunatics, or 54.23 per cent. were living at home (*a domicile*) a number which the reporters think would be still further increased but for the lamentable prejudice so injurious to the insane, which leads families to conceal the existence of their insane members.

The reporters remark on this fact that there are a greater number of insane living at home than in asylums, "although it is probable that the larger proportion of the insane living at home belong to the class of harmless lunatics, yet in relation to public health and safety a considerable amount of danger exists in such a state of things."

The reporters give tables showing the number of the insane who are living at home in twenty of the departments, and the proportion which this number bears to the population. At the head of this table is the department of Vosges, containing 516 lunatics living at home, or 121 in 100,000 of the population. At the foot of the table is the department of the Seine, containing 169 lunatics living at home, or 12 in 100,000 of the population. As might have been expected, the six departments which contain the largest number of the insane living at home are devoid of asylum accommodation; while out of the ten departments containing the smallest amount of insane living at home, eight have the advantage of possessing an asylum. This result, that the departments without asylum accommodation (*où il n'existe aucun établissement consacré au traitement de l'aliénation mentale*) are those in which there are the greatest number of insane living at home, is more completely proved by the following table, which shows at a glance the position of the insane in this respect in all the departments of France:

	Population in 1851.	Lunatics living at home.	Proportion to 100,000 of the Population.
In the 25 departments without asylums	8,908,923	7,225	73.24
In the 61 departments which have asylums	26,874,226	17,208	64.03
Total	35,783,170	24,433	68.28

The reporters inquire whether the figures of this table "do not prove that the real cause of the continued increase of persons admitted into asylums is to be found less in the progress of the disease, than in the creation of the asylums themselves, which, in receiving each year an increasing number of patients, have the effect of gradually diminishing the relative number of the insane who were before time taken care of in their families."

The Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland, in their third report, also take cognizance of the insane living at home, or as they put it, living in private houses. Thus it appears that there are in Scotland 8084 lunatics, of whom 2632 are in public asylums 852 are in private asylums, 866 are in poor-houses, and 3734 are in private houses. Of this number of patients who are in private houses 1877 are private patients, and 1847 are pauper patients. In Scotland as in England the number of private patients has diminished while the number of pauper patients has increased and the Scotch commissioners point to a very obvious cause for this. "This result is probably in great measure due to the transfer of a number of the indigent insane from the class of private patients to that of paupers." We do not observe any reference in the English report to this explanation of the fact that the establishment of a system of public asylums is accompanied by this transference of patients to the pauper class; yet every county asylum in England contains no inconsiderable number of patients who in the olden times would have been found as private patients in the large low-class asylums which were formerly the substitutes for public institutions; and many of these patients, even at the present time, although nominally paupers, are in reality private patients, inasmuch as the cost of their maintenance, sometimes the whole of it, though more often in part only is defrayed by their friends through the intervention of private arrangements made with parochial officers.

The Commissioners' report gives the number of pauper patients in private houses as 5980, of whom 785 were in lodgings or boarded out, and 5195 were living with relations. The corresponding number of private patients, however, who are on the books of the Commissioners as living in private houses, being those only who are returned as single patients kept for profit, is 118. The discrepancy of this number for the whole of England and Wales when compared with the number of private patients known to live in private houses in Scotland, namely, 1887, shews how essential it will be to institute an enquiry on a larger base, as a test of the prevalence of insanity in the population. We should expect to find a much smaller proportion of the insane of the middle classes living at their own homes in Scotland than in England, because the former country has in its excellent middle-class asylums long been in the possession of asylum accommodation for the insane of small means, of which this

country is loudly proclaimed to be greatly in need. But notwithstanding the existence of the middle-class asylums of Scotland we still find 1887 private patients who are known to reside out of asylums. Now if we take the population of England and Wales as about seven times greater than that of Scotland, there ought to be 13,209 insane persons not paupers living out of asylums in this country, instead of the 118 recorded as doing so in the books of the Commissioners in Lunacy; an enormous mass of unrecorded insanity which must vitiate any general statistical conclusions founded on the numbers of the insane who are registered and counted as the inmates of asylums. These unrecorded cases will explain the much greater proportion of insanity in Scotland to that which is known to exist in this country, since the 8084 lunatics in Scotland would, on the above estimate of the relative populations of the two countries, correspond to 56,588 in England and Wales. It is indeed a subject of regret that effort was not made through the instrumentality of the census to gain some knowledge of the amount of insanity in the country. In referring, however to the elaborately accurate report of the Massachusetts commission, we find that even a house to house visitation of census officers, may be ineffectual to obtain this knowledge. The Massachusetts commission obtained, by means of the medical profession, the accurate information that in 1852 there were in the State 3719 idiots and lunatics. Six years before this enumeration was taken, a State commission had been issued for the same purpose, which commission made its enquiries through the municipal authorities. This inquiry resulted in the enumeration of only 1512 insane persons, of whom 1156 were paupers, and only 291 able to furnish the means for their own support. This enumeration was tolerably correct respecting the number and condition of the pauper insane of whom the municipal authorities could have direct information, but it was evidently most incomplete in the enumeration of the insane who were living at home and supported on their own property or by their friends. Again, only two years before Dr. Jervis's commission the officers of the national census were by law directed to ascertain the number of the insane by house to house visitation, and they discovered only 2471 insane and idiots. "It is probable" says Dr. Jervis "that many of the families refused or neglected to report to these officers the insane that were within their households." The large proportion of independent lunatics enumerated by Dr. Jervis's own commission shows to what an extent such a refusal would vitiate the correctness of these statistical returns, for of 1110 lunatics having property no fewer than 716 were found to be residing at home.

The success of the commission worked by Dr. Jervis, in obtaining a full and accurate account of all the insane persons in the State, was gained, as we have said, mainly through the instrumentality of

the medical practitioners. Country clergymen, overseers of the poor, superintendents of asylums, &c., gave their quota of information, but the mass of it was obtained by the medical men who worked willingly and systematically, comparing notes with each other so as neither to omit nor to repeat the enumeration of any case; and so unanimous were they in the work, that of 1319 physicians in the State all except four made reports to the commissioners.

The second conclusion which the Commissioners have drawn from their statistics is that reasons are wanting for the support of the opinion that insanity is on the increase; and this conclusion appears mainly to be founded on the satisfactory reasons they have been enabled to afford for the great increase of pauper lunatics, namely:

“1st. The large number of cases previously unreported and only recently brought under observation.

“2nd. The increased number of lunatics sent to asylums.

“3rd. The prolongation of their life when thus brought under care.”

The manner in which the operation of the county asylum system brings to light the existence of the insane among the poor, is singularly illustrated by a comparison of the proportion of the insane paupers to the amount of the pauper population in those districts, which do, and those which do not, possess asylums. “Thus in two contiguous districts in South Wales, nearly equal in population, the one (without an asylum) which has a large excess of paupers receiving relief, has at the same time a considerably smaller number of paupers under care.” The boroughs of Maidstone and Canterbury afford a similar instance; Maidstone, which has asylum accommodation, has nearly double the number of insane paupers to Canterbury, which has no asylum accommodation. This result is partly no doubt owing to the rapidity with which neglected pauper lunatics disembarass the poor's rate by dying off, but by far the greater part of the difference is owing to the lunatic poor of the unprovided districts not being counted as lunatics. There are no doubt just as many persons who become insane in these districts as in the others, but about half of them are not recognised as insane, or they do not receive relief as such. The special relief wanted, that of the asylum, cannot be obtained, and therefore no relief is demanded.

It would be a strong argument in favour of the opinion that insanity is not increasing with what is called civilization, if it could be established that the number of the insane in the upper classes of the community has not increased. As we have said, the returns of the Commissioners show that their number in asylums has not increased, but this certainly does not conclusively tend to prove that the increase in the number of the pauper patients cannot be attributed to social or other causes which would operate with even greater force upon the upper classes; since the number of the upper classes who are in asylums is no test of the number

of these classes who are insane. But must we then believe that the great increase of the pauper insane is fully explained by their more complete registration, and by their increased duration of life? Pauperism has decreased during the last ten years, by 20 per cent., and moreover, as the Commissioners remark, "We are unable to discover any material changes in the social condition of the labouring population rendering them more prone to mental disease." On the contrary, we may say that the changes in the condition of the labouring population tends quite the other way; the people are better fed, better clothed, and better housed; there is less drunkenness, there is less moral excitement; no epidemic incendiaryism, no widespread discontent, no reform-bill agitation, no corn-law agitation; political fanaticism defunct; religious fanaticism in a rapid decline; and yet, in ten years, here is an increase of pauper lunatics from fourteen to twenty-two thousand. We must acknowledge that we have much difficulty in repressing the belief that insanity in the community at large is on the increase. The sthenic diseases which struck down our hardy fathers have disappeared; the lancet rusts in its case, and the free-handed use of opium and brandy has replaced the tartar-emetical and the calomel of our youth. Such an atonic constitution of disease, accompanied by an increased liability to nervous excitement and depression, would be an amply sufficient cause of the increased prevalence of insanity. What is the cause of the cause, or what is the mode of influence of the habits of civilisation in the production of this atonic and nervous constitution of disease, is a subject worthy of most diligent inquiry. We cannot believe that this is an age in which "wealth accumulates and men decay," but we do firmly believe that men are not constitutionally what they were before the time of the cholera and influenza epidemics, when Christendom was not only muscular, but vascular.

The Fourth Annual Report of the Commissioners for Scotland contains a statement, supported by a statistical table, which opens up a new view of the occurrence and existence of insanity:—"But it would appear, from the following table, that the occurrence of lunacy is considerably more frequent in urban than in rural districts. We here use the term occurrence in contradistinction to that of existence. For it by no means follows that the number of lunatics should be greatest where most cases of lunacy occur. It may happen, for instance, that in a district in which comparatively few cases occur, a greater number of lunatics will remain at the end of a fixed period than in another district in which lunacy is of much more frequent occurrence; and the explanation of this fact will probably be found in the greater proportion of recoveries and deaths which takes place among the patients of the latter district. With the view of elucidating this point, we have contrasted the number of pauper lunatics intimated from town and rural districts, and we find that in the

former the occurrence of pauper lunacy, as compared with its occurrence in the latter, is as 100 to 54, whereas the proportion of existing pauper lunatics at 1st January, 1861, in the corresponding districts, was as 100 to 106. We have regarded as urban those parishes containing towns, or parts of towns, having more than 20,000 inhabitants, and as rural all other parishes." (p. xxxiii.)

The Commissioners think that some portion of the remarkable fact, that the occurrence of insanity in the town population of Scotland is nearly as two to one to its occurrence in the rural districts, is to be explained by the officers of town parishes admitting the insane into the lunatic wards of workhouses, discharging them therefrom, and admitting the same cases again, with a facility which does not occur in asylums supplied by rural districts. After deducting somewhat, however, for this influence on the accuracy of the town returns, a large part of the difference must still remain. That with so great a difference as to the occurrence of insanity, the existing amount of insanity between the two kinds of population should be so nearly equalised, is a remarkable and suggestive fact, suggesting, as the Commissioners indicate, that mental disease in the town is more fatal or more curable than in the country. The impressions left upon us by our own experience of these two classes of the insane would entirely concur with this view; the inquiry, however, deserves to be carefully and thoroughly pursued as to the prevalence of different causes and different forms of insanity, and its different results in town and country; and it is quite possible that such an inquiry may throw light upon the apparent increase of insanity in the community in connection with one of the most remarkable tendencies of society in this country and in this our age, as indicated by census returns; namely, that the increase of the population of the country at large has taken place in the towns, and that the rural population is stationary. The true value of statistics as a branch of science is to give us the means of foreseeing events, so that we may resist the tendencies to evil, and promote the good; and it is just possible that in the course of time the skeleton forms of the statistics of insanity which we now possess may be so filled up that we may be truly able to estimate the force of the influences which tend to the production of this dread scourge of our race. As an instance of the deeper foundations of statistics, take the influence of the Earl of Shaftesbury, who has signed the report which has served as a test for these remarks. In the discharge of his duties as the Chairman of the Commission in Lunacy, he has undoubtedly done more than any one else to leave his mark upon the statistics of the insane, both by promoting the influences tending to their cure and diminishing those tending to their injury, and by establishing an accurate record of all official facts bearing upon the movement of their numbers; but a more profound statistic than we at present possess

might, and very probably would, demonstrate that something else which his lordship has done has had far more influence than all the above upon the statistics of the insane. The Act of Parliament in which the voice of humanity made itself heard as law, forbidding that the youthful promise of our town populations should be ruined in health in that greed of gain which would use up the springs of life of factory children with as little remorse as fuel is supplied to the untiring machine which animates the mill; this must have had a profound effect in preventing the causation of insanity, to estimate which we must be in the possession of quite another kind of statistics to any which we now have. Our readers will not mistake us to mean that any large number of factory children would be likely to become insane from the simple effect of fatigue. But the secondary effect of the exhaustion of the vital powers at a time when children are growing into men and women, the secondary effect upon the causation of insanity resulting from an enfeebled stock of men and women, whose nervous system had been strained to the utmost in early youth and subjected to unnatural stimulus that it might bear the strain, must have been fearful. When we think of the physiological effects of men and women so used up in youth becoming the parents of a race, we get an idea of the manner in which an insane population might be produced. All our knowledge tends to convince us that the seeds of insanity are sterile unless they fall in fruitful ground, and that the immediate causes are unimportant compared with those wider influences which we call primary. Take a healthy boy and girl, of healthy parents, and supposing such a devilish experiment possible, you would find that you could scarcely succeed in inflicting insanity upon them by any amount of vice, misery, or wretchedness. But after the experiment, let these children breed, and you will produce a crop of madmen and idiots. We must look for the most potent causes of insanity a generation at least beforehand.

The Social Science Review.

Numbers 1 and 2.—We welcome this new paper, for which there is undoubtedly a place in the thick crowd of periodical literature, if only it is so conducted as to fill the want which is felt for some organ to bind together the *disjecta membra* of what is called social science. The contents of the two numbers which have been issued are valuable and interesting, although we fear that the method proposed of dealing with the subject-matter of social science in articles which are never to exceed three columns in length, and which are always to be complete in themselves, that is, to admit of no continuation in future numbers, that such a plan, however well adapted it may be to store the bricks and mortar of information will leave no scope for the design of any temple of science, no, not even for a portico. The promoters of the

'Social Science Review,' appear to have imitated the method of the Social Science Association, which, in limiting the papers to be read at their meetings to a delivery of twenty minutes, have adopted the surest means of providing themselves with an interminable supply of shallow talk on every possible variety of subject which can be supposed to influence the welfare of the human individual. Now, society reduced to its most elementary condition cannot be less than the society of man and woman, or that of man, woman, and offspring; and any question not involving the relations of human beings towards each other in some state of society, which may be thus narrow, may be a question of science, but it cannot be a question of social science. Social science, as it was understood by Auguste Comte, who first investigated its laws and who gave it a name, was meant to be the comprehensive survey of all other sciences as they affect society. His scheme for the new science was grand and vast, though it was vague and obscure; but we may well doubt whether since he has left us, any progress has been made in the development of his idea. His thought, which was a noble generalisation, which it might take ages to work into the definite formulæ of knowledge, has been succeeded by the day of small things, in which three columns of a newspaper, or twenty minutes of an address, are thought to suffice for subjects embracing the most intricate problems which can be propounded to man's intellect. Social science, as we take it, is, in the first place, the investigation of the laws of nature as they relate to man, in his relation to his fellow-men; in illustration we would say, that the causation and treatment of disease is not a question of social science unless the disease is capable of being occasioned by one human being's influence upon another. In the second place we would say, that social science exists only in the relation of other sciences to each other; thus, we would say that neither the science of jurisprudence nor that of medicine, nor any other penfold of knowledge taken separately, deserves the name of social science; and going further even than these artificial divisions in our knowledge of the laws of nature, it would perhaps even be true to say that neither the physical sciences nor the moral sciences can alone be considered to constitute social science. It is the mixed and interchanging action of all law as it affects human society which can alone be considered the science of society, and it is this broad generalisation of all science as it affects society which appears to have been so strangely overlooked in the promoters of the so-called social science of our day. We trust that the able men who have commenced the 'Social Science Review' will keep themselves free from the service of the rag and bone collectors of social science; or if they do take these rags of science under their notice, that they will reduce them into pulp and expand them into paper, and write upon them the great and noble generalisations of true philosophy.

The Scotch Lunacy Bill.

The Lord Advocate having withdrawn the objectionable clauses in this bill, by which the present able and distinguished Commissioners of Lunacy for Scotland would have been reduced to the position of inspectors of asylums, under the control of a board of lawyer commissioners, there is little now remaining in the bill to comment upon, unless it is that the constitution of the board of commissioners for only two years very needlessly imposes a limit of duration which will tend greatly to weaken the power and authority of the board.

When the condition of the lunatic poor in Scotland first became known to the public, it might be wise, in the surprise and novelty of the situation, to pass an Act constituting a Scotch Board of Lunacy for a limited time. This mode of legislating, however, has been attended with evil effects of a grave nature, inasmuch as the persons upon whom the duty fell of erecting pauper lunatic asylums in certain parts of the country knew that if they could postpone the discharge of this duty for a certain time it could not be imposed upon them until a new Act of Parliament had been passed; and these persons unwilling to raise the funds for the erection of asylums for pauper lunatics, instead of discharging their own plain and simple duties, have in fact thought fit to raise an agitation against a new lease of power being granted to those who have authority over them in the matter. The English Board of Lunacy is constituted with no limit in point of time, and no such encouragement is offered to agitate against its authority, which would, undoubtedly, be given if it were the creation of a biennial Act of Parliament.

In passing through committee of the House of Commons, Mr. Blackburn unsuccessfully divided the house on the sixth clause, which appears to have been expressly framed to check-mate the procrastinating tendencies of the gentlemen who are appointed to build asylums, and who don't like to do it. The clause enacts that when a district board fails to provide the requisite asylum accommodation, the Secretary of State may authorise the commissioners to apply to the Court of Session to appoint a person to perform the duties of the district board relative to the provision of such accommodation. Mr. Blackburn thought it was unfair to override all the counties by this clause, because a few of them had neglected their duty; not permitting himself to perceive that it would only apply to such counties as did neglect their duty.

J. C. B.