

necessitous poor. Wealthy cases will be provided for and freely admitted, for the terms they will pay will be high, and will procure for them comfortable and even luxurious quarters, so that the profits arising from their payments will go towards defraying the cost of the poorer inmates. To a great extent it is expected the colony will become self-supporting.

We heartily wish the scheme all the success it most rightly deserves.

Saint Amable.

During a holiday visit to the Auvergne last autumn we visited the quaint little town of Riom, which has, as we shall see, a certain interest for the alienist. It has always been a rival to the more flourishing city of Clermont Ferrand, and although it has had to give place to Clermont as capital of the district, it still retains the Courts of Appeal for the whole neighbourhood. By this means the town continues to hold its own and keeps some of its past importance, although at the present time it can only boast of a population of some ten thousand persons.

The first object which attracts one's attention on entering Riom from the Railway Station is the long façade of the Courts of Justice, built on the spot where in the 14th century once stood the Palace of John of France, Duke of Berry and Auvergne. Nothing, however, remains of the original building but the beautiful little Sainte Chapelle, with its 15th century windows.

Passing into the main street we noticed several houses of the 15th and 16th centuries, with fine sculptured fronts, also a belfry tower of the time of Francis I. Continuing our route we reach on our right the Church of Saint Amable, first consecrated in 1120, and retaining three apsidal chapels of the 12th or 13th century, and a triple 12th century nave, which was, however, reconstructed during the last century. The choir, transepts, and spire were rebuilt in 1859. It is not so much, however, with the church we have to do, as with the Saint to whom the church is dedicated. He is represented to have had the power of healing sick people, but more especially those who were insane. We cannot do better than quote from a book by Monsieur Bernet-Rollande a few further particulars of his life and work:—

“According to tradition a chapel, or perhaps a church, existed in Riom at the beginning of the 5th century, dedicated to Saint Gervais and Saint Protas—twin brothers—who received the palm of martyrdom at Milan in the days of the persecution of Nero. It is in this church that we like to picture to ourselves a young man on his knees—Saint Amable, the future priest of Riom.

Gregory of Tours tells us that a priest of Riom existed, whose tomb in the 6th century was an object of universal devotion in the Auvergne. People made pilgrimages to it, and flocked thither at all the Christian feasts. After having prayed at this holy sepulchre sick people were relieved, those bitten by serpents were cured, and the ravings of maniacs were appeased."

The life of Saint Amable has been described in a manuscript preserved among the Archives of the Church, which is said to have been written in the 12th century by a priest of the name of Juste. From this manuscript it has been gathered that Saint Amable was born at a place called Chauvance, near Pontaugur, about the year 400, and that he was a member of an important family, which took its name from this locality. The house of Chauvance figures amongst the aristocracy of Auvergne in the middle ages, and was strengthened by an alliance with the house of La Rochebriant. However that may be, the name of Amable has been kept up from one generation to another in the house of La Rochebriant Chauvance, and the oldest member of it exercises the immemorial right of attending the *fête* of Saint Amable clad in canon's robes, and takes his place in the procession close to the shrine of the Saint, upon which he places his hand.

The village of Chauvance is marked to this day by a stone cross, called the Cross of Saint Amable (apparently of the 15th century), which is covered with carvings of little full-length figures, heraldic designs, and inscriptions, which latter, however, it is impossible to decipher. At some little distance from the cross an enormous block of stone is to be found, which has always been called Saint Amable's Rock, and which, tradition says, bears the mark of the Saint's foot.

In the district which lies between Chauvance and Riom the name of Amable has always been very widely known, and is given to girls as well as to boys, but it is not to be met with in other parts of the Auvergne.

During the 5th century a church dedicated to Saint Benigne was built close to the Sanctuary of Saint Gervais and Saint Protais. The general opinion is that Saint Amable built this church at his own expense, and this well accords with the idea that he belonged to a rich and influential family.

Juste's manuscript contains the following lines concerning the death and funeral rites of Saint Amable:—"Monseigneur Saint Amable of holy memory died the 1st of November, in the year 475, after the Passion of our Lord, in the days of Childéric, King of France. The news of his death spread from one part to another, and coming to the ears of the clergy and the faithful of the town, which we now call Clermont, they assembled with candles and torches at the funeral of the Saint. They were joined by a mass of people of all ages and conditions. They laid him to rest in the centre of the Church of Saint Benigne, which he had himself built. The

ceremony was most solemn and impressive, but its principal distinction lay in the number of miracles God performed on all those sick people—whatever the nature of their illness might be—who had the good fortune to touch the shroud of the illustrious dead.”

After mentioning the case of a man being cured who had been possessed by a demon, Juste goes on to narrate that “it is well known that if anyone has swallowed poison or any little venomous insect whilst eating, or drinking, or sleeping with his mouth open, there is an infallible cure in going to pray at the tomb of Saint Amable.”

Three or four ancient hymns are still extant in which the works, virtues, and miracles of Saint Amable are extolled. One line may be quoted here —

“Vous fuyez devant lui, feu, démon et serpent.”

An historian of the name of Chevalier, writing in 1700, gives the following account of a miracle worked by Saint Amable :—

“A lady of high degree had the misfortune to discover that all her children were bewitched through the wickedness of one of her servants. These children appeared to be possessed by a demon which sometimes flung them into the air. Their pitiable condition was much augmented by their tender age—the eldest boy being only seven or eight years old. The unhappy mother, finding no help on earth, implored that of heaven. God heard her prayer favourably. A young monk, who knew of the power of Saint Amable, advised her to visit the shrine of the Saint. She received this advice with great joy, and made a vow to visit Riom with her children. To lose no time, however, she had mass celebrated in the chapel of her castle, and her intention made known. As soon as the words were spoken to these poor afflicted children—‘O Mon Dieu, voyez, voyez un si joli Saint’—they were immediately free from the spell which had been cast over them, and were themselves once more. Their mother, full of gratitude, and anxious to fulfil her vow, travelled to Riom—a distance of full twenty leagues. As soon as they entered the Church of Saint Amable, these children, seeing an image erected above the table where the holy relics were exposed, at once recognized their deliverer, and said to their mother, ‘See, here is the Saint who healed us.’”

Not a vestige now remains of the Church of Saint Benigne, “but we may reasonably suppose,” says M. Bernet-Rollande, “that the present Church of Saint Amable is built over the original spot. Saint Amable still watches over the ancient town, and every year, on the Sunday which follows the 11th of June, the shrine, which contains the relics of the Saint, is carried in procession by twelve husbandmen or vine-dressers, clothed in white, after the custom of their ancestors.”

From a trustworthy source we gather a few more particulars of psychological interest:—

“Every year on the Sunday following the 11th of June the *fête* of Saint Amable is celebrated with great pomp. The people attribute to the relics of this Saint the virtue of curing the insane. On that day a numerous procession promenades the streets. Peasants from the surrounding districts arrive in large numbers, dressed in the ancient costume of the Brayands, which consists of a vest, breeches, and gaiters of white woollen material and a huge cocked hat. Some of them carry the Saint, and others a huge wheel, profusely decorated with flowers, which, whilst it is being carried, revolves constantly on its axis. During the procession the insane are made to walk under it, and by that process are supposed to recover their minds.”

PART II.—REVIEWS.

Lectures on Mental Diseases designed especially for Medical Students and General Practitioners. By HENRY PUTNAM STEARNS, A.M., M.D. With illustrations. Philadelphia, 1893.

Any publication proceeding from the Physician of the Hartford Retreat, Connecticut, is certain to be welcomed by all who are acquainted with his conscientious work in the field of medical practice to which he has devoted his best energies for so many years.

Dr. Stearns traverses the whole ground of psychological medicine in a methodical and exhaustive manner, beginning with the physical basis of thought, and proceeding to the study of hallucinations, illusions, imperative concepts, delusions, melancholia, mania, folie circulaire, dementia, adolescent insanity, senile insanity, climacteric insanity, puerperal insanity, epileptic and alcoholic insanity, general paralysis, and acute delirious insanity.

There is a chapter on the classification of mental diseases, which he admits must be tentative in the present state of our knowledge. The following is his own classification:—

A. Symptomatological.

1. Melancholia. 2. Mania. 3. Primary delusional insanity. 4. Folie circulaire. 5. Dementia.