and activity of the nerve-cell, and will probably to that extent be more resistant to the immediate action of alcohol.

The paper is illustrated by a plate showing the various photographic results referred to.

W. C. SULLIVAN.

Medico-Legal Report on a Case of "Moral Insanity" [Rapport sur l'État Mental du Nommé D—— inculpé d'Outrages]. (Arch. de Neurol., Oct., 1903.) Raynaud.

This detailed report is published by its author as an illustration of the difficulty of dealing with a type of "borderland" case which is unpleasantly familiar in asylum and prison experience.

The individual to whom it refers is of insane heredity; he suffered from sunstroke in youth, and he is addicted to absinthe, and shows a characteristic susceptibility to its influence. For over twenty years—he is now 41—he has pursued a career of insanely criminal conduct. He has been repeatedly in prison for assaults, swindling, threats, slander, etc.; he has been on ten occasions the object of special medico-legal inquisition, and has twice been sent to a lunatic asylum, from which, however, his relative clearness of intellect, and still more, perhaps, his perversity of conduct, have speedily secured his discharge. When at large he devotes himself to playing malevolent practical jokes on the asylum and prison officials and on others who have had to do with him, or pesters them with abusive and obscene post-cards, or makes fantastic "revelations" of their misconduct to the Press.

The author regards the case as one of *folie morale*, involving legal irresponsibility, and founds on its history a plea for institutions of the prison asylum type, in which criminal imbeciles of the sort may be detained on indeterminate sentence.

W. C. SULLIVAN.

Bacteriological Researches on the Dust in Music-halls [Ricerche batteriologiche sul pulviscolo delle feste da ballo.] (Ann. di Freniat. vol. xiii, fasc. 4, Dec. 1903.) Tirelli and Ferrari-Lelli.

The observations recorded in this paper have an interest in connection with asylum hygiene, more particularly in regard of the transmission of phthisis. They are to be followed by a series of similar observations on the dust in asylum wards.

The dust for culture was collected by means of a Miquel's filter, that for animal inoculation in a Strauss and Wultz apparatus. The observations were carried out in a number of music-halls and theatres, some urban and some rural, differing in the social position of their clients, in the system of flooring, lighting and furnishing, in the methods of cleaning and in other respects.

The dust was not taken from surfaces, but was collected from the air so as to represent accurately the conditions under which micro-organisms are liable to be inhaled in such rooms. Doubtless for this reason the number of colonies found on plate culture was in nearly all cases much below that noted in published researches of the same nature.

The results, set out in detail in a series of tables, went to show

that the thoroughness with which the room was cleaned and the social position of the frequenters were the factors of most importance, entirely masking, for instance, the influence of the mode of flooring, and that of the situation, urban or rural.

The pathogenic organisms found were few and relatively unimportant, being limited to the pathogenic cocci and Fraenkel's diplococcus of very attenuated virulence. In no instance, whether by inoculation or otherwise, could the presence of the tubercle bacillus be detected. This negative result, taken in connection with similar findings by other observers, lead the authors to suggest that current ideas as to the diffusion of this organism may be somewhat exaggerated.

W. C. SULLIVAN.

7. Asylum Reports for 1903.

Some English County and Borough Asylums.

Derby Borough.—A new detached villa block for private patients has been opened, and has given relief to the main asylum. Dr. Macphail is forced, by the consideration of increased first admissions, to the conclusion that there is in the borough an appreciable increase of mental disease requiring asylum treatment. He also states :

It is worthy of remark that in this asylum the average period of residence of patients who recover is gradually increasing. This has also been the experience of other medical superintendents, and the only explanation seems to be that an appreciable change is gradually taking place in the type of cases of mental disease. Not only are the mental symptoms more severe and prolonged, but the general vitality of the patients is lower.

The "Brabazon morning" is now a regular institution, and is looked forward to by the patients as the event of the week.

Hereford County and City.—A new system of electric lighting has been installed, but it has been found that the work was done in such a way that the insurance company raised objection to certain parts of it, with the result that the issues between the Committee and the contractor have been referred to arbitration.

The new works and an epidemic of scarlet fever have led to an increase of 2s. 10d. in weekly cost per head. This increase Dr. Morrison accounts for satisfactorily. It is an object lesson, apparently, in the results of doing the right thing at a wrong time.

Lancashire, Prestwich.—The population of this huge asylum creeps on, and at the end of last year it was within one of 2700. Of the 849 admissions chronic and senile insanity claimed only 81 cases, the others being mostly in an active condition, and all requiring more than average care.

We consider that Dr. Perceval is near the mark when he writes :

In connection with the deaths due to phthisis, the question of isolation hospitals immediately occurs to one. We have such a building, of small dimensions, upon