more pleasant to take, and not so depressing in its effects upon the nervous system and the circulation. A. F.

PSYCHOLOGICAL.

PSYCHIATRY IN ITS RELATION TO MEDICINE.

Prof. Von Kraft-Ebing (*The Medical Age*, September 10, 1890) says that every practitioner should consider the morbid psychic symptoms of his patient and exercise all the influence of a moral therapy. Illustrating the potency of psychic influence, he mentions the cessation of hæmophysis when the longed-for physician appears, thus calming the excited heart and bringing about thrombosis of the bleeding vessels. Many diseases, as neurasthenia, hysteria and hypochondria, begin with psychic morbidity, and a knowledge of this is essential in their management. He regards it necessary to the physician's education that he make the psychic features of a suffering patient the subject of investigation and render himself conversant with their manifestations.

To the immoderate indulgence in alcohol he ascribes twenty per cent. of all mental diseases, and he believes the prophylaxis of these maladies is a goal of the future which shall be achieved when the knowledge of these disorders becomes the common property of physicians and general society. Many a life bearing some psychical abnormality has gone, he says, to mental ruin because the germ of the disease, present in youth and discoverable to the practical eye in the first stages of its development, was not recognized and not weighed in such a manner that by proper education, by bodily and mental discipline and by correct choice of occupation such persons might be protected, and thus the diseases later to break out at least retarded.

A. F.

THE PROPER DISPOSITION OF THE CRIMINAL INSANE.

Dr. Archibald Church (*"Medico-Legal Journal,"* September, 1890) considers the following propositions, viz.:

"1. That in the proper disposition of the criminal insane, criminality alone should be the criterion of classification.

"2. That the criminal insane should be cared for in separate institutions.

"3. That insane criminals committing capital offences should be sequestered during the period of their natural lives.

"4. That insane criminals committing lesser offences should be committed for periods equal to terms of imprisonment for their crimes made and provided, and as much longer as their insanity persists.

"5. That criminal insane may be liberated upon regaining their reason by the pardon of the Governor, with the consent and recommendation of an advisory board."

L. F. B.

ELECTRICAL.

THE TRUE POSITION OF ELECTRICITY AS A THERAPEUTIC AGENT IN MEDICINE.

The "Boston Medical and Surgical Journal" (October 2, 1890) contains Dr. Morton Prince's views upon this subject. Electricity is a most valuable aid to the diagnosis of certain forms of disease. To test electrical reactions requires great care and no little technical skill. Proper apparatus is indispensable. As a palliative for neuralgia, nothing can be more valuable than electricity, particularly galvanism. This is also true of acute and subacute neuritis. The atrophy and paralysis following anterior polio-myelitis, in joint lesions and disuse, in hemiplegia following cerebral hemorrhage, in diphtheritic and pressure paralyzes, in hysteria, muscular rheumatism, articular rheumatism, painful neuroses, it is palliative and sometimes curative.

In neurasthenia it acts as a tonic, relieves nervousness and dispels insomnia, but is in no sense a cure. Conditions following grippe yield to it in a remarkable manner; and in psychoses and neuroses, symptoms disappear like magic, the insomnia often disappearing at once. Electricity is not of the slightest use in curing such diseases as locomotor ataxia, disseminated sclerosis, progressive muscular atrophy of the spinal type, myelitis or general paralysis. Whoever hopes to cure epilepsy and migraine by electricity is doomed to disappointment. Faradism probably works, first, by reflex action through the sensory nerves, inhibiting the pathological process in the nerve centres, upon which the local process probably depends; and, secondly, by direct stimulation of nerves and muscles. It is by reflex action, probably, that pain is inhibited. Galvanism probably acts in the same way, and possibly produces local chemical and physical changes which aid in its therapeutic effects. It is claimed for galvanism that it is electrolytic. In many cases the relief obtained from the electric current is largely through *suggestion*, especially in psychoses and neuroses and in those affections where pain plays an important part.

L. F. B.