

Thirty-six surgical beds were under the care of M. Lallement, who has died within the last few weeks.

The deranged patients are committed to MM. Pariset and Mitivie, and the fools to M. Falret. The number amounts to about 1,060, and the average of receptions to 500 per annum, of whom 200 die, and 300 are cured,—a very high proportion of the latter, if we reflect on their vast age, and that many have only recourse to the hospital as a last resource, when they have been pronounced incurable elsewhere.

The prevailing feature of the treatment in this portion of the hospital is extreme gentleness; and violent measures are never had recourse to under any circumstances. Isolation and moral impressions are the main remedies trusted: these are seconded by baths, mild purgatives, and means proper to recal the evacuations, which in many of these cases are suppressed.

BICETRE.

This hospital, analogous to *Salpetriere*, is destined for indigent or deranged old men. The number of beds amounts to 3000. The physicians of this establishment are, MM. Ferrus, Rochaux, and Prus; the surgeon is M. Murat. The diseases and affections most common are, paralysis, chronic bronchitis, rheumatism, cataract, and contused wounds. This latter circumstance is only to be accounted for by the existence of a canteen in the hospital, at which the old gentlemen daily get drunk. Notwithstanding the most pressing efforts of the medical men for its suppression, the administration has not yet assented, merely because the sale of the brandy brings in 18,000 francs per annum.

There is a division of incurable cancerous patients, amounting to 76. The general mortality is 1 in 6.86, or, amongst the indigent, 1 in 7: deranged patients, 1 in 6; epileptic, 1 in 11; and cancerous, 1 in 7.

Those affected with mental alienation are under the care of MM. Ferrus and Lelut, the former of whom gives most interesting lectures on his special subject. By their activity, all the improvements projected by Pinel have been executed, and *Bicetre* has now become a model of establishments for the alienated. The treatment resembles that pursued at *Salpetriere*; but *Bicetre* possesses the advantage of having attached to it a farm, upon which 60 of the deranged patients daily work.

CONGESTIVE CEPHALALGIA.

BY A. T. THOMSON, M.D. OF THE NORTH LONDON HOSPITAL.

A CASE of considerable interest and instruction is that of Ellen Langridge, who was admitted on the 21st of November. The account which she gave of herself was the following. On the Sunday prior to her admission, she was attacked with a violent pain of the head, and throbbing at the temples. Leeches were applied without any relief being afforded. She can assign no cause for the attack. Her bowels are habitually constive. The pulse, on her admission, was 100, and oppressed. The pupils were dilated, and impatient of light; the tongue was slightly fur-

red ; and she stated that the catamenia was regular. She has suffered, at intervals, from palpitation, and pain at the chest.

These symptoms were sufficient to lead me to regard the case as one of *congestive cephalgia*, a disease which often affects the delicate and irritable ; and thence, as in the case before us, it appears more frequently in women than in men. Its exciting causes are, emotions of the mind, irregularities in diet, or in the condition of the bowels. Now these are more likely to produce in such individuals an increased impetus of blood to the head than in the more phlegmatic ; and as the quantity of blood in the arteries is augmented, and that in the veins necessarily diminished, under such circumstances, owing to the nature of the cerebral circulation, congestion must necessarily take place. This causes heat and excitement ; and, from the disturbance of the brain, the headache which ensues is often accompanied by flashes of light, floating phantasms before the eyes, and, occasionally, with singing and other noises in the ear. The feet also become cold, and the circulation, from being quick at first, is afterwards languid and oppressed. When these symptoms are not relieved, a morbid condition of the brain ensues, and the disease assumes a new character, and is more difficult to remove. The treatment of such cases consists in fulfilling two distinct indications :—

1st. To relieve the cerebral congestions.

2ndly. To subdue, by augmenting tone, the susceptibility of nervous impression, so as to prevent its recurrence.

In endeavoring to fulfil the first of these indications in this case, the patient was cupped behind the ears ; and the bowels were freely opened with a pill, containing gr. viij. of calomel, followed by a strong cathartic. This is a large dose of calomel ; but I have already pointed out to you the great influence of such doses in allaying irritability of the stomach ; and in affording that stimulus to the common orifice of the biliary and pancreatic ducts in the duodenum, which is required for emptying those organs when they are overloaded. Much bile and pancreatic juice are poured into the gut, and placed in a situation to be swept away by the subsequent purgative.

On the 26th our poor patient had derived little benefit by the treatment adopted ; the head was, therefore, ordered to be shaved, and an evaporating lotion applied over it. Cold, in such cases, does not operate in so limited a manner as is usually supposed ; it acts upon the rest of the body, by nervous sympathy, abating general excitement ; and, probably, more is to be attributed to this than to any abstraction of caloric which the evaporating fluid can carry off. I fear, gentlemen, that this case may prove to be one of those which often resist every means of management ; and seem, at length, rather to wear themselves out than to be cured.

I have seen tonics salutary in such cases ; but in the present instance, the excitement is too great to permit their employment. You should, however, be aware that excitement is not always a legitimate reason for not ordering tonics ; and nothing is of more practical importance than the fact that tone and excitement are two very opposite conditions of the system.—*Lancet*.