

the atlas with the occipital is also much more frequent than in normal crania. He remarks that Lombroso came to the same results from his examination of the skulls of criminals.

The most interesting articles in the new "Annali di Freniatria" are two on *acetonuria* in the insane. Having examined the urine in 87 insane persons, Dr. Rivano found it to contain acetone 37 times; most often (nine out of ten times) in general paralytics, but also frequently (13 times in 21 cases) in melancholiacs. He connects its presence with malnutrition, and in melancholiacs found it particularly associated with refusal of food. The subject is continued in a subsequent number of the same journal by the editor, Dr. Marro, of Turin. He has found acetonuria especially frequent in cases where there has been terror, frightful hallucinations, etc.; and he believes the connection between them is a causal one. He refers to Prof. Lustig's recent experiments, in which faradic stimulation of the coeliac plexus has produced temporary acetonæmia, and suggests that fear acts in the same manner.

Dr. Bozzolo gives, in the "Rivista Clinica," an interesting account of a case of *Hereditary Chorea*, which I notice because of the unusual association of this variety of chorea with mental disturbance. The case recorded had all the typical characteristics described by Huntington and others since. The voluntary inco-ordinated movements differ from those of ordinary chorea only by the possibility of checking them for a time by an act of the will. The disease attacks males and females alike; and appears between 30 and 55. It is transmitted from parents who have suffered from it. The mental symptoms seem to have been maniacal excitement with delusions.

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#### 4. American Retrospect.

By FLETCHER BEACH, M.B., F.R.C.P.

##### *State of New York.—First Annual Report of the State Commission in Lunacy.*

The asylums of the State are divided into the public, the quasi-public, and the private. Exclusive of idiots and feeble-minded women, the number of insane under custody on the 1st of October, 1889, was 15,507. The Commission consists of three members, a physician, a barrister, and "a citizen of reputable character." The medical and legal commissioners are required to make 132 visits each year; the medical commissioner is expected to make 22; and the whole Commission, or a majority thereof, have to make 106, being a total of 260 visits to the various State institutions during the year. Literal compliance with the requirements of the Act of 1889 is physically impossible, and the Commissioners detail certain arrange-

ments which will facilitate the performance of their duties. The systems of accounts and statistics in vogue at the several State asylums show a lack of uniformity, and the Commission believes that these systems can be unified; to this end they have suggested a conference of asylum managers and superintendents with itself. The first effort towards intervention by the State in the case of the insane was made by Governor Throop, in January, 1830, but it was not until January 16th, 1843, that the New York State Lunatic Asylum was opened. In the course of a few years the asylum was filled, and it became necessary to send back to the poor-houses those patients who had received what was supposed to be the limit of beneficial treatment. Their treatment in these poor-houses was so bad that the Legislature passed what is known as the "Willard Asylum Act," which provided for a State Asylum for the chronic insane. The Willard Asylum was opened on October 13th, 1869, but soon became overcrowded. At this time the debt incurred by the State in aiding the prosecution of the civil war was most grievously felt, and in 1871 the Legislature passed an Act, by which counties might, upon showing that they had made proper provisions, care for their chronic patients. On October 1st, 1889, there were 5,371 patients in the county poor-houses and State asylums for the chronic insane. The Commission inquired into the two systems of care and treatment—the one conducted by the States and the other by the counties—and found that the latter did not provide the facilities which one would expect to find in every well-managed custodial institution or in any ordinary hospital. Some illustrations of evils inherent in the system of county care of insane patients in county alms-houses are related, and the Commission concludes that the system "in practical operation has been found to have failed and fallen short of the hope entertained for it when the Act of 1871, sanctioning its trial, was passed." The Commission makes many recommendations, of which the most important are: (1) that all of the insane in the county poor-houses in all the counties of the State, except New York and Kings, be transferred at the earliest possible date to State asylums; (2) that all laws having for their object the division of the insane into the so-called classes "acute" and "chronic" be repealed, and that all the insane be treated solely with reference to their curability; and (3) that an asylum be provided for the helpless and unteachable idiots.

*Report of the Government Hospital for the Insane, Washington.*

It appears from this report that on the 30th June, 1888, there were 1,361 patients resident in the hospital; during the year ending June 30th, 1889, 280 patients had been admitted, 130 had been discharged, and 114 had died, leaving 1,397 under treatment. The recoveries are reported as 70, being 28.68 per cent. of the discharges, including deaths. The daily average number in the hospital has been 1,373, and the percentage of deaths to the daily average number resident is 8.30.

The patients admitted come from the army, the navy, marine hospital service, and civil life, and are composed of white and coloured people. The extension of the lodges for the coloured insane has changed the character of many of the patients; chronic turbulent cases forget to be noisy or destructive, and go to work in an orderly manner. Howard Hall, for the convict and criminal class of the insane, has been erected, and 63 patients have been moved into it; it is provided with 60 single rooms. A pavilion for the sick has also been opened. The statistics of the hospital for the last ten years show that it is necessary each year to provide additional accommodation for 50 patients. There is a night medical service. The pathological supplement to the report gives an account of 29 post-mortem examinations; of these 15 were made on patients who had suffered from general paralysis, and three on cases of acute organic dementia; eight patients had suffered from acute mania, and three were cases of acute insanity with maniacal symptoms, dependent upon organic brain disease. The symptoms, naked eye and microscopical appearances in each case are given, and the report is illustrated with fourteen woodcuts made from drawings of microscopical sections of the brain. Dr. Blackburn's work is good, and Dr. Godding is to be congratulated upon having a pathologist of such high order.

*Annual Report of the Department for the Insane of the Pennsylvania Hospital.*

Dr. Chapin reports that the number of patients in the hospital on April 22nd, 1889, was 393; during the year 178 patients had been admitted, 137 had been discharged, and 27 had died. The number remaining on April 22nd, 1890, was 407, and the daily average during the year was 404. On comparing the statistics of the present with the preceding year, it was found that there was a moderate increase in the number of patients admitted and discharged. The proportion of recoveries calculated upon the admissions was 25 per cent.; and the mortality calculated upon the average number resident was six per cent. Fifty per cent. of the admissions were regarded as recent cases, or of less than six months' duration. A larger number of recent cases now recover than at a former period, and the mortality at this stage is decidedly reduced. A gymnastic pavilion has been opened, and systematic instruction is given to a class twice daily. The physicians attend at the out-patient department of the hospital twice weekly, and have delivered sixty-one lectures to the attendants. At the request of Dr. Morton, Chairman of the Lunacy Committee, Dr. Chapin addressed him a communication on the subject of "the preparation of medical certificates," and he has included it in his report.

*The Family System in Practice.*

This is a report by Dr. Stedman of the condition of the boarded-out insane in Massachusetts. "The observations and conclusions

reached are drawn, with the exception of certain statistics, solely from personal investigation on the spot, of the operation of this system in Massachusetts after a trial of more than three years." Each patient was visited and examined in the house in which he or she resided without the previous knowledge of the householders or patients. The number of boarded-out insane on Nov. 3rd, 1889, was 66, 21 being men and 45 women. The patients selected for this treatment all belong to the harmless, chronic, demented class, which are so common in all asylums. They were found in (1) houses in which the surroundings were exceptionable; (2) houses reasonably well-kept; (3) houses more or less squalid and scantily furnished; and (4) dwellings in which the surroundings were extremely poor. Dr. Stedman says that with few exceptions these patients were generally found to be comfortable and contented. He makes suggestions for the complete efficiency of the system in Massachusetts, and concludes the paper by recommending some minor improvements, which the State Board of Lunacy and Charity might carry out.

*Seventh Annual Report of the McLean Asylum Training  
School for Nurses.*

In 1879 it was determined to establish a school, not only for the training of the attendants in the asylum, but also to fit young men and women, as in general hospitals, to undertake general nursing; and since the inauguration of the system four classes of women and two of men have graduated. In 1884, Miss L. E. Woodward, who had been for fourteen years supervisor, was appointed Superintendent of Nurses, and her long experience was supplemented by the privilege of attending a six months' course of practical study in the wards of the Boston City Hospital. There she learnt the technique of school work. The first seven years of the existence of the school show as results: 64 graduates, 19 remaining in the service, and 54 pupils under training. An arrangement was made in 1886 with the Boston Training School at the Massachusetts General Hospital, by which any female graduate of the school has the privilege of entering that school and receiving her diploma after completing satisfactorily the studies of its senior year. The graduates of that school are received at the McLean Asylum upon like terms. All the nurses are carefully instructed in giving massage and in other forms of physical exercise and movement treatment. Dr. Cowles says "the outcome is even better than was expected in so short a time, in respect to the number of graduates who remain in the service." As a result of the new order of things the asylum becomes a hospital in truth, and "both the humane and scientific spirit are invited to dwell in it." A circular of information to applicants, the course of instruction and the list of "graduates" of the school from the beginning are given at the end of the report.