Report of County Asylums for Monmouth, Hereford, Brecon, Radnor.

Dr. M'Cullough notices a fact which we also have had occasion to observe, that the supposed immunity of women from general paralysis appears to be contradicted by recent experience:

"The mortality during the past year, though only about an average, was nearly two per cent. greater than in the previous year. The increase was amongst the females, and the cause was chiefly general paralysis; the very unusual number of seven having died from that disease, which is comparatively infrequent in women."

Are the habits of women approximating more nearly to those of men, so as to render them more equally liable to this fatal disease?

Report of the Lincolnshire County Lunatic Asylum.

We are sorry to observe that this model institution is suffering from the chronic disease of asylums, that is, from the inward plethora which oppresses the respiration and stagnates the circulation. The wards are overcrowded, and parts of the asylum are used for dormitories, for which they were not intended and are ill adapted. The Commissioners have recommended that a new chapel should be erected, the present chapel used as a dining-hall, and four rooms now used as dining rooms be converted into dormitories: a very good plan for killing three birds with one stone.

Report of the Devon County Lunatic Asylum.

In this the Superintendent comments upon the deaths which occur in asylums from phthisis, as a kind of health-gauge or hygienometer of the institution. He says:

"The number of patients who die of phthisis is always a source of peculiar anxiety, inasmuch as the development of this disease may be regarded as a test of the sanitary conditions of the institution. Some of the patients who are carried off by it are indeed admitted with the disease already developed, and sometimes far advanced; others are admitted with the seeds of the disease in the constitution, which the progress of time would under any circumstances bring to maturity. But, in a certain number of cases, patients long resident in an asylum pass from a state of good bodily health into one of tubercular degeneration, from influences which they experience, but from which they ought to be guarded during the time that they are emphatically placed under medical care and treatment; of these influences, the bad air of overcrowded dormitories is unquestionably the most potent, and although it is one from which the poor do not escape in their own close and narrow sleeping rooms, it

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is yet an anti-hygienic condition to which the patients in an hospital ought never to be exposed. An overcrowded condition of an asylum, which is an hospital for the insane, is the worst possible condition in which it can be placed both for the physical and moral welfare of its inmates. But in addition to this cause of consumption acting directly upon the body, there is one which may act upon it through the mind, namely, the influence of a monotonous and cheerless existence, which a long continued residence within the walls of an asylum is apt to become to patients of a certain mental constitution; not only, therefore, are efforts made to relieve the monotony of a forced detention for the saks of those patients whose malady admits the reception of curative influences, but also for the sake of the hopelessly insane, ought proper efforts to be made to stimulate the flagging interest, and to give colour to a dreary life."

(*To be continued in our next.*)

Roll of the Royal College of Physicians of London.
By William Munk, M.D. Longmans.

These two handsome and ably written volumes are, as the learned author says, an attempt to supply a complete series of the fellows, licentiates, and extra-licentiates of the college from its foundation, in the tenth year of Henry the Eighth, to the passing of the Medical Act, in the twenty-second year of the reign of Victoria. Of course the series contains the names of many worthy and useful men in their day, the mute and inglorious record of whose existence now is only marked by a date; but of more eminent men Dr. Munk gives a brief biographical sketch, in which the leading incidents of life and traits of character are drawn with scholarly skill, and gentlemanly feeling, qualifications which were, indeed, essential to an author who should be able to draw up a record of our professional predecessors, in which their frequent and not very dignified quarrels could be presented in a manner devoid of all offence to the present standard of good taste.

The study and treatment of mental disease as a distinct branch of medicine is of so recent a date, that we cannot expect Dr. Munk's roll to contain the names of men who would be specially interesting to us as psychologists. There were, however, some physicians of the college upon whom the medical care of institutions for the insane devolved; such was Dr. Thomas Allen, admitted a Fellow of the College of Physicians in 1671. "Dr. Allen (says the author) was physician to Bethlem Hospital, and to his credit let it be recorded, that he refused to accede to a proposition, which had met with general approbation at the Royal Society, to make the first experiment of the transfusion of blood in this country, "upon some mad person in Bedlam."

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