did not become lunatics, only feared that they would. On the other hand, the fact is equally certain that numbers of prisoners have passed through the process of feigning insanity without the alleged result ensuing. Among these a case is reported of a prisoner who simulated deaf mutism and imbecility for no less than three years, another case which continued for 10 months, and a third which lasted 14.

We are therefore in full accord with M. Parant in his conclusion that the direct transformation of simulated insanity into the true disorder ought not to be admitted among the proved medico-legal facts of mental medicine. T.

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2. *American and Colonial Retrospect.*

By D. Hack Tuke, F.R.C.P.

The Longue Pointe Asylum, Montreal.

The Canadian press has been again greatly exercised in regard to the condition of this notorious institution. One paper contains the following :—

"In addition to the horrors which have been pictured on account of small-pox having broken out in this asylum, where are about 1,000 lunatics, harsh treatment has just come to light. A young man whose appetite for liquor was uncontrollable was placed there as a private patient. Being allowed considerable freedom, he crossed the road through the asylum gate without any intention of running away, when he was placed in the idiotic ward, and all attempts to get taken away from these incurables has been unavailing. Even the Government Inspector, Dr. Howard, is powerless in the matter. In an interview today Dr. Howard said, 'There is no supervision of private patients. The law enforces it, but it is not carried out. Any sane person might be placed in the asylum and kept there for an indefinite time. I have no control over private patients, and know nothing about them.'"

Another paper says :—

"To a reporter who called upon Dr. Henry Howard, Government Medical Superintendent of Longue Point Asylum, he said (in reply to inquiries respecting the prevalence of small-pox), 'Whatever information I can give you I will cheerfully do. I must preface what I have to say by a few general remarks. . . . On the 12th Sept., 1879, under the Jolly Government, an Act was passed by the Provincial Legislature by which the sisters were empowered to have their own physician for the treatment of the insane in the establishment. By this same Act I became Government Visiting Physician of the asylum, my power being very limited, and having nothing whatever to do with the treatment of the insane. Patients could not be admitted without my authority, and the power to discharge was supposed to be vested in me, but it seemed, upon investigation, that it must be recommended by the

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resident physician. This again caused public scandal, as it was generally believed that many were detained who should have been discharged. It was not unreasonable that the public should think so, seeing that the greater the number of patients in the asylum, the greater would be the profit of the contractors; and their physician being their paid servant, would be obliged to do whatever they required. Under these circumstances, the Government had another Act passed, 47 Vic., chap. 20, which came into force August 10th, 1884, by which the contractors were obliged to report upon all private patients in their asylum to myself. This Bill was resisted by the contractors, and the law became inoperative. Another Act was then passed by the Quebec Legislature, 48 Vic., chap. 34, by which the Government gained the control of all lunatic asylums in the province, not only to have them supervised by a Medical Board, but to have the insane patients treated by the said Board, which was to be appointed by the Government. This Act, which was most liberal, was approved of by the entire medical fraternity, and I was appointed medical superintendent, with Drs. Perrault and Duquet as house physicians. This Act took all power out of the hands of the contractors and placed it in the hands of the Medical Board. This law has been set at defiance by the contractors, who have refused up to the present to submit to its provisions. When the small-pox became epidemic, in September last, I wrote to Drs. Perrault and Duquet, by the advice of certain members of the Central Board of Health, instructing them to proceed at once to vaccinate all patients and employés in the asylum. They proceeded to the performance of their duties, but were met at the door by the Mother Superior, who absolutely refused to allow them to proceed. No further action was taken until the 2nd of December, when it was reported to me that small-pox had actually broken out in the asylum, when I again wrote to the doctors, sending them a letter which I had received from the Central Board of Health, and instructing them to go again and demand as a right, by virtue of the Government authority, admission to vaccinate all patients and employés in the asylum. They were again refused admission by the Mother Superior. On Monday last I went, by the advice of the Central Board of Health, to the asylum, accompanied by Drs. Perrault and Duquet, and again demanded to be allowed to vaccinate the patients, when we met with a positive refusal. She stated that she was having the work of vaccination carried on by her own medical men. We examined 274 patients out of the 975 in the asylum, and found that 128 had been successfully vaccinated, and I believe that this constitutes the whole number vaccinated. We then went to examine the hospital in which the sick small-pox patients were kept, which is over the laundry. The Mother Superior said that if I entered that hospital the doors of the institution would be afterwards closed against me. I did not go inside. All of the facts were made known to the Central Board at their meeting to-day, and a report was sent to the Provincial Secretary at

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Quebec. The rule is for the contractors to furnish me every fifteen days with a list of all patients admitted into and discharged from the asylum, as well as of those who have died. Yesterday's report for the period above named showed the names of two patients who had died from small-pox, and a letter accompanying states that there were others who had died from the disease whose names would be furnished in a report to be sent in within the next two days.' "

The newspaper adds, " It was learned, on what is considered good authority, last evening, that there have been 20 deaths from small-pox in the asylum within four weeks."

There appears to be an extraordinary want of power in the Executive Government to enforce the provisions of the Acts of the Provincial Legislature. It passes comprehension how the law is allowed to be contravened by the female head of this asylum. Dr. Howard is obliged to confess that while the new law gives him and his associates full power to superintend and administer to the wants of the insane patients, he is not permitted to do as the law contemplated he should do, and that he is sick and tired of the farce which is daily enacted in regard to their treatment. How long is this state of things to be allowed to last?

Dr. Benjamin Rush.

In an interesting address delivered by Dr. Thomas G. Morton before the Association of Resident Physicians, Pennsylvania Hospital, held in Philadelphia, Dec. 17th, 1885, there is a reference to the celebrated Dr. Rush which ought to be made generally known. It appears that Dr. Morton has recently discovered some papers in the old hospital which add to the claims which Dr. Rush already has on the respect and admiration of all who are interested in the history of the reforms effected, whether in America or elsewhere, in the condition of the insane. Among these papers is a letter written by Rush to the managers of the hospital, in Nov., 1789, in which he says:—

" Under a conviction that the patients affected by madness should be the first objects of the care of a physician of the Pennsylvania Hospital, I have attempted to relieve them, but I am sorry to add that my attempt, which at first promised some success, was soon afterwards rendered abortive by the cells of the hospital.

" These apartments are damp in summer and too warm (?) in winter. They are, moreover, so constructed as not to admit readily of a change of air; hence the smell of them is both offensive and unwholesome.

" Few patients have ever been confined in these cells who have not been affected by a cold in two or three weeks after their confinement, and several have died of consumption in consequence of this cold.

" These facts being clearly established, I can see the appropriating of the cells any longer for the reception of mad people, will be dishonourable both to the science and humanity of the city of Philadelphia.

" Should more wholesome apartments be provided for them, it is

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more than probable that many of them might be relieved by the use of remedies which have lately been discovered to be effective in their disorder."

In the same address, Dr. Morton, passing from Dr. Rush's letter, gives some curious proofs of the treatment of the insane in former days by restraint. A bill, dated 1752, contains a charge to "ye hospital for a pair of handcuffs and 2 legg locks and 2 large rings and 2 large staples, 5 links and 2 large rings, and 2 swiffells for leg chains." In a letter from a patient to the manager, 1788, the writer says, "I am confined here in chains at the instance of a relation of my wife's. I hope you will desire the steward to unchain me, but as his duty he could not do less." And again he writes a few days afterwards, "The present serves to inform you that pursuant to your orders I am unchained." Dr. Morton justly remarks that "Although the Pennsylvania hospital, early in its history, naturally followed the prevailing custom which harshly coerced the more violent cases, we should likewise remember that in this house nearly 70 years ago (1817), far in advance of the times, were introduced those enlightened and humane views which later became more generally accepted."

The whole address by Dr. Morton (the son-in-law of the late Dr. Kirkbride, and an active member of the Committee on Lunacy of the Board of Public Charities in Philadelphia) will well repay perusal, and will be found in the "Philadelphia Medical Times," Dec. 26th, 1885, under the title of "Reminiscences of Early Hospital Days."

Dr. Earle's Retirement.

In a former number we referred to the retirement of this well-known physician from the superintendency of the Northampton Hospital for the Insane, Massachusetts. The last report of the Board of Managers is now before us, and we append the Resolutions passed by them on accepting his resignation. The Board is fortunate in having Dr. Nims for a successor. We hope that the leisure thus afforded Dr. Earle will favour contributions to medical psychology from his able pen. A retrospective glance at his experience in cases of insanity would be of much value, and perhaps the writer of it might not object to send it for publication to this Journal.

Resolved, That in accepting the resignation of Dr. Pliny Earle, superintendent of this hospital, the Trustees have reluctantly yielded to the conviction that his advancing years and impaired health demand rest and relief from the responsibilities and labours of his position.

Dr. Earle has been at the head of this institution twenty-one years, and, during nearly all that period, has also been its treasurer. In its management he has combined the highest professional skill and acquirements with rare executive ability. By his thorough knowledge, his long experience, his patient attention to details, by his wisdom and firmness, his absolute fidelity to duty, and devotion to the interests of the hospital, he has rendered invaluable services to the institution and to the community which it serves.

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The Trustees are deeply sensible of the assistance which he has given them in the discharge of their duties, and follow him, in his retirement, with the assurance of their highest respect and esteem.

Resolved, That the Trustees indulge the hope that Dr. Earle will continue to make his home in this institution, that they may continue to profit by his counsels; and they will provide that his rooms shall always be open and ready for his use.

Lectures to Attendants and Nurses.

We have received an unassuming little book of 70 pages by Dr. Williamson, Assistant Medical Officer of the Hospital for the Insane at Paramatta, entitled "Lectures on the Care and Treatment of the Insane, for the Instruction of Attendants and Nurses." While it is certain that no mere book-reading will make a good attendant out of a bad one, and that it may result in the acquirement of superficial and theoretical knowledge in place of that which comes of practice and experience, we nevertheless believe that a few well-chosen practical directions will help to make a good attendant still better. Probably the best way to secure the end in view would be for one of the asylum medical officers to give a course of lectures and demonstrations to the attendants, which might then be supplemented by the perusal of such a book as that before us.

Dr. Williamson's book consists of ten lectures, of which the first five treat of the qualifications necessary for attendants and nurses and the characteristic symptoms of the chief classes of mental disease, special sections being devoted to the consideration of epilepsy, suicide, restraint and seclusion, and artificial feeding. The next four lectures deal with bandaging, the treatment of wounds and sores, bruises and burns, &c., together with the care of the sick and the bathing of patients. The concluding lecture treats of the value of occupation for patients and of amusements and religious services.

Though this book does not cover the whole ground, its directions are generally well-considered and practical, especially those concerning epileptic and suicidal patients. The advice given in the opening lecture on obedience and discipline, personal neatness, courtesy to patients, and the avoidance of ridiculing their delusions is very good, and the comfort of all in asylums would doubtless be promoted were such advice universally followed. We agree with Dr. Williamson that "black eyes, cut faces, bruises, and scalp wounds received by epileptics or by other patients in conflict with them are in a large number of instances evidences of a lack of proper supervision and precautions on the part of nurses and attendants."

Dr. Williamson has done well to omit all description of the anatomy and physiology of the brain in a book intended for the use of attendants and nurses.

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