branch of the medical art, the latter not being able to develop independently; and because the education of the nation has established the means requisite for its practical application. Philanthropists and physicians can thence surpass antiquity with the inspiration, power, and perseverance, necessary in a reform, and break new ground.

Der Hypnotismus. Von Prof. HEINRICH OBERSTEINER. Wien, 1885.

Prof. Obersteiner, of Vienna, has given a sketch in this pamphlet of 46 pages (reprinted from the "Monatsblättern des Wissenschaftlichen" Club in Vienna) of the past history of hypnotism. He frequently refers to Heidenhain, to whom Germany owes its present interest in the subject. A German physician has recently stated that the Dane Hansen, eight years ago, knew more about hypnotism than all the German doctors put together! It is not necessary to notice this short essay at further length.

The Asclepiad. Third Quarter, 1887, Vol. iv., No. 15.

This journal, altogether written by Doctor Benjamin Ward Richardson, is conducted with as much spirit as ever, and bears as a motto on the title-page *Terar dum prosim.* Another motto might appear on Dr. Richardson's periodical, from Horace, *Omne capax movet urna nomen,* for the capacious Richardsonian urn sends forth every name in turn. In this number we have presented to us "Medicine under Queen Victoria," and the well-known Dr. John Snow, a native of York, is selected as the representative of medical science and art of the Victorian era. An excellent portrait accompanies the sketch. Of more immediate interest to the readers of the "Journal of Mental Science" is the first chapter of the epitome of the advancement of medicine under our Queen. The subject is "The Treatment of the Insane." A copy of the well-known engraving of William Norris, who was chained in the days of Haslam to an upright bar in a cell in Bedlam, is given. The only recompense accorded this unhappy American has been the notoriety of his case wherever the history of the past treatment of the insane has been related. The print having been a familiar sight as long as we can remember, we were not aware that it was extremely rare. Haslam seems to have had no advanced views in regard to the management of the

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.33.144.597-a Published online by Cambridge University Press

insane, and he could not conceive it possible that the system which had been for years in operation at the York Retreat, when he gave his evidence before the House of Commons in 1815, was really carried out in that institution. Dr. Richardson describes the treatment of patients in old times by causing them to revolve on a wheel. When we visited an asylum on the Rhine in 1853 a large box in the form of a wheel, capacious enough to admit an excited patient, had been disused only three years. And we have recently seen it exhibited in that institution as a curiosity, useful in reminding the world of the change that has taken place in all civilized countries in the treatment of the insane. The use of such a machine is now restricted to dogs, which are made to revolve by Fürstner and others, for enormous periods of time, in order to ascertain whether they can produce general paralysis of the insane. Had such experiments been made in order to deter the superintendents of asylums from adopting the revolving-wheel treatment, by showing its effects in producing general paralysis, the motive would have been intelligible. As, however, no one is now barbarous enough to employ this apparatus in lunatic asylums, there does not seem any occasion to confirm by experiments on animals the conviction of the ill-effects likely to follow from such a mode of treatment. Unhappy dogs!

Dr. Richardson gives a rapid but excellent sketch of the reform in the treatment of lunatics. "For some time previous to the Victorian era there had been a few good and humane efforts to relieve the insane of a certain amount of the oppression to which they were subjected. Three names in connection with this effort deserve especial mention—Pinel, of the Bicêtre in Paris; the elder Tuke, in the Retreat at York; and Dr. Charlesworth, in the City of Lincoln Lunatic Hospital, in which institution the grand final and triumphant experiment of entire freedom of the insane was carried out."

A description of the treatment pursued at the Lincoln Asylum follows, and due credit is given to Charlesworth and Hill. Of the latter Dr. Richardson speaks from personal knowledge: "I was with Gardiner Hill in his last hours, and told him once again, as I had often told him aforetime, that he had not lived in vain, and that some day the world would recognize him as one of its greatest benefactors. He could not speak, for his speech was paralyzed, but his close grasp of my hand conveyed to me, with all the eloquence of

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.33.144.597-a Published online by Cambridge University Press

death, how the hope cheered him in the valley of the shadow."

Then comes Dr. Conolly, with "unexampled opportunities equalled only by unexampled zeal and industry, who showed at Hanwell how grand an advance was secured."

It is a compliment to our department of medicine, for which we thank Dr. Richardson, that he has put "the treatment of the insane" as the most prominent and important instance of progress in his epitome of the good work done during the Victorian era.

An Address to Asylum Attendants "Off Duty"—"Invalided." By the Reverend Henry Hawkins, Chaplain of the Middlesex Asylum, Colney Hatch.

The above has been printed this year, and is characterized by the same qualities as the tracts for attendants which have preceded it. As in everything else, so does it hold good, unfortunately, in the sphere of asylums for the insane —there are chaplains and chaplains; those who hold their office for no higher purpose than to make a livelihood, and those who, like Mr. Hawkins, perform their duties as a labour of love.

We take the opportunity of drawing attention, not only to the tractate above mentioned, but to those which have been in circulation for some time. They are as follows:— "Work in the Wards by Asylum Attendants," "Made Whole, a parting Address to Convalescents on Leaving an Asylum," "Friendly Talk with a New Patient," "Visiting Day at the Asylum." It must be gratifying to Mr. Hawkins to observe the increasing interest which is felt in the welfare of asylum attendants. Nothing can be more certain than that the well-being of an asylum depends upon no one circumstance more than the status of those who are placed hour after hour in the immediate charge of patients. Much is necessarily left to their honour and unseen conscientiousness. Everything, therefore, which is being done at the present day to raise the standard of this class of well-deserving officers merits cordial support and encouragement. There may be two opinions as to how far it is desirable to proceed in the direction of teaching special subjects, including a quasi-medical knowledge of insanity; indeed, we think mistakes may easily be made in this way. But there can be no question as to the desirableness of levelling upwards

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.33.144.597-a Published online by Cambridge University Press