Dr. Hallager, who has specially studied epilepsy, communicates his views on the morbid physiology of epileptics. He concludes that the fits are owing to a sudden anæmia of the brain, and this anæmia is always the result of a reflex constriction of the vessels through the vaso-motor centre, which is irritated either from the cortex cerebri or the peripheral parts of the body; only when the irritation is owing to physiological processes (or latent lesions) we call the epilepsy idiopathic. The form of the fit is determined by the degree of irritability of other centres put in activity, so that the same anæmia which in one individual only causes "petit mal," in another with irritable motor centres will be the cause of a fit of "grand mal." In the same manner the aura and the post-epileptic phenomena depend on the condition of the different centres or organs; the post-epileptic mental condition depends partly on the form and intensity of the fit, partly on the predisposition of the individual (*i. e.* his cortical centres).

Dr. D. E. Jacobson has published his observations on *The Pathogenesis of Delirium Tremens*. He seems inclined to regard this mental state as the result of an autotoxic infection in a chronic alcoholic. The reasons he gives for his theory, which is based on a careful investigation of about 250 cases, seem to be very convincing. He denies, on the contrary, the existence of the so-called delirium tremens traumaticum, and supposes that the traumatic lesion as a rule is consequent to the delirium, and not the reverse.

NORWAY.

By Dr. Holmboe, translated by Dr. Lindell.

Dr. Lindell in 1890 sent an account of the provision for the insane in Norway to Dr. Hack Tuke's *Dictionary of Psychological Medicine*. Since that time our Lunacy law of 1848 has been amended by the law of 1891. According to this law, four-tenths of the expenses for the maintenance of the insane poor, which expenses were formerly charged entirely upon the respective towns and counties, are now to be refunded by the Government, but only in the case of pauper lunatics in need of special treatment. The necessity for this special treatment is to be decided by the county physicians ("Amtslæge") of whom there is one for each county. This Government grant applies to pauper lunatics in asylums, and also to those who are cared for in private houses. The law, therefore, has compelled the ministry of justice to increase the general control of the insane in private houses, and to order the district physicians to carefully supervise these patients.

A comparison between the census of 1891 and of 1865 shows

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that the number of insane has increased absolutely as well as proportionally to the population, as may be seen from the following table:

	1865.	1891.
Idiots	2039	2431
Acquired mental diseases	3156	5318
Total	5195	7749

Proportionate to the population—

	1865.	1891.
Idiots	1·835	1·823
Acquired mental diseases	1·539	1·376
Total	1·327	1·258

This increase partly depends upon more careful investigation, but it is too great to be entirely owing to that, especially as regards acquired mental diseases.

Insanity is now as before more prevalent in the southern parts of the country. The want of accommodation is more and more felt, although during these latter years great sacrifices have been made both by the Government and by certain cities to meet the difficulty.

Since 1890 a new municipal asylum has been opened at Bergen, on the estate of Newengaarden. It accommodates at present 224 patients. The State Asylum at Rotvold is enlarged by the addition of a new wing and a farm for fifteen patients. The communal asylum at Trondhjem and the private asylum at Moellendal have also been somewhat enlarged. On the other hand, the old and inconvenient communal asylum at Stavanger has been closed.

The Storthing (Parliament) granted in 1894 the necessary means to build an asylum for the most northern parts of the country on the estate Roewvik at Bodoe. The buildings are far advanced towards completion, but they are in such a remote part of the country that many difficulties have been encountered, so that the asylum probably will not be finished for many years. It is being constructed to accommodate 230 patients.

Furthermore, a very favourable reform has been introduced in our lunacy system. In 1894 the Storthing authorised the reconstruction of an unused building at the prison in Trondhjem as a lunatic department for insane convicts and criminal lunatics, who on account of their moral degeneration and their dangerous tendencies are considered unfit to be cared for in ordinary asylums. The ordinary institutions are thus relieved of their most dangerous and most offensive patients, and consequently a more free treatment of the other patients has become possible.

The total accommodation in the asylums of Norway was 1328 in 1890, and is at present 1549. Notwithstanding the increased

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asylum accommodation, the insufficiency is still very inconvenient. Very many, especially incurable cases, whose condition demands asylum care, continue in private houses, sometimes under very unfavourable circumstances.

The number of establishments for idiots is the same as in 1890, viz. three. One of them has been bought by the Government, and it is under consideration to purchase both the others.

Clinical lectures on psychology have been delivered since 1896 in the University of Kristiania by a specially appointed psychologist. Examination in this science is still not required for medical graduation.

SWEDEN.

By Dr. Lindell.

The first lunacy law of 1858 was repealed, and after careful revision replaced by the Royal Ordinance of 1883, which still is in force. British psychologists will find a very complete description of it in the *Reports on the Working of the Lunacy Laws Abroad* (1885), except that Supplements A and B were modified and improved in 1894.

In consequence of a trifling informality on the admission of a patient into a private asylum, a Royal Committee was appointed in 1894. It consisted of five members, only one being a psychologist, who were to revise the law and to draw up a proposal for necessary amendments. The result was in 1896 laid before the Ecclesiastical Department as a proposal for a new lunacy law, but in spite of various proposed improvements it was found such that the psychologists requested to give their opinion had declared unanimously against the proposal, as being essentially a change for the worse. As it has not yet been finally debated, it will be more convenient to postpone a minute account until the result is known. However, it may be stated as evident testimony of the power of the present law to secure legal protection for the insane, as to their admission into, treatment in, and discharge from public and private lunatic asylums, that the Committee, after investigating the few cases—less than ten in a total of 10,000 admissions—of alleged unlawful detention in asylums, were convinced that in reality no one had been unlawfully admitted into a Swedish lunatic asylum.

The increase in the number of the officially known insane until 1890, when the last census was made, may be shown in a tabular form thus:

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