8. *Colonial Retrospect.*

By Frederick Needham, M.D., and D. Hack Tuke, M.D.

New South Wales.—Report of the Inspector-General of the Insane for 1885.

Dr. Manning is able to give an encouraging account of lunacy matters in the Colony which has been fortunate enough to secure his services, and of the several asylums which have come under his supervision during the year 1885.

Many of the defects which formed the subject of his unfavourable comments in previous reports would appear to have been remedied, and in his remarks, and in the details furnished to him by the superintendents of the various institutions, there is very satisfactory evidence of efficient administration and progressive improvement in the care and treatment of the insane, which are creditable to the Colony and its officials.

"The number of insane persons in the Colony under official cognizance on 31st December, 1885, was 2,643.

"The increase in number during the year was 119; but large as this increase is, there was a decrease in the proportion of insane to the general population, which increased by 59,444 during the year.

"The proportion of insane to population in the Colony was, at the close of the year, 1 in 374, or 2·67 per thousand, and compares favourably with the proportion in England, which, on 31st December, 1884, was 1 in 345, or 2·89 per thousand, and in the neighbouring colony of Victoria, which was 1 in 297, or 3·35 per thousand, at the same date.

"There has been no real increase in the proportion of insane to population during the last fifteen years. The proportion increased slightly up to 1881, when it was 1 in 352, but has since receded to exactly the same proportion as at the end of 1871.

"The admissions numbered 567, 338 males and 229 females, and were 74 more than in any previous year. The proportion of females was more than usually large, the number being 46 in excess of that for 1884. So far as can be seen there is no special reason for this influx of female patients, but it is evident from the unusual number of idiotic and imbecile children and old and demented people of both sexes among the admissions, that the general condition of depression throughout the Colony has continued to operate in inducing people to send to hospital helpless relatives whom they are able and willing to maintain in more prosperous times.

"The admissions for the year, though unusually numerous, have not been much in excess of the average for the last fifteen years in proportion to the general population, so that neither in the accumulated

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nor in the 'occurring' cases does there appear any reason to think that insanity is increasing in this Colony.

"The following returns show, 1st, the number of insane persons and the proportion to the population in New South Wales and in England during the last fifteen years; and, 2nd, the ratio of admissions into institutions for the insane to the population of the Colony for the same period :—

Year.	Population of New South Wales.	Total Number of Insane in New South Wales on 31st Dec.	Proportion of Insane to Population in New South Wales.	Proportion of Insane to Population in England.
			Per M.	Per M.
1871	519,182	1,387	1 in 374 or 2·67	1 in 394 or 2·53
1872	539,190	1,440	1 in 374 or 2·67	1 in 387 or 2·58
1873	560,275	1,526	1 in 367 or 2·72	1 in 381 or 2·62
1874	584,278	1,588	1 in 367 or 2·72	1 in 375 or 2·66
1875	606,652	1,697	1 in 357 or 2·80	1 in 373 or 2·68
1876	629,776	1,740	1 in 361 or 2·77	1 in 368 or 2·71
1877	662,212	1,829	1 in 362 or 2·76	1 in 363 or 2·75
1878	693,743	1,916	1 in 362 or 2·76	1 in 360 or 2·77
1879	734,282	2,011	1 in 365 or 2·74	1 in 363 or 2·75
1880	770,524	2,099	1 in 367 or 2·72	1 in 353 or 2·83
1881	781,265	2,218	1 in 352 or 2·84	1 in 352 or 2·84
1882	817,468	2,307	1 in 354 or 2·82	1 in 348 or 2·87
1883	869,310	2,403	1 in 361 or 2·77	1 in 345 or 2·89
1884	921,129	2,524	1 in 364 or 2·74	1 in 345 or 2·89
1885	980,573	2,643	1 in 374 or 2·67	

Year.	Admissions.	Population.	Proportion to Population.
1871	340	519,182	1 in 1,527
1872	303	539,190	1 in 1,779
1873	342	560,275	1 in 1,638
1874	330	584,278	1 in 1,770
1875	356	606,652	1 in 1,704
1876	360	629,776	1 in 1,749
1877	457	662,212	1 in 1,449
1878	424	693,743	1 in 1,636
1879	440	734,282	1 in 1,668
1880	476	770,524	1 in 1,618
1881	494	781,265	1 in 1,581
1882	473	817,468	1 in 1,728
1883	476	869,310	1 in 1,826
1884	493	921,129	1 in 1,868
1885	567	980,573	1 in 1,729

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The deaths bore a proportion to the average number resident of 6·58 per cent. The recoveries amounted to 41·26 per cent. of all the admissions and readmissions of the year; but excluding one hospital which is specially set apart for imbecile and incurable cases, the percentage was 42·39.

The following statistics and remarks as to the nationality of the patients under care during the year are interesting :—

"Out of the 3,203 patients under care during the year, only 856 were natives of New South Wales, and 105 of other Colonies. The number born in Great Britain and Ireland was 1,887, and of these 947, or more than one half, were natives of Ireland. The number of Irish patients is, as I have before shown, out of all proportion to the number of persons of Irish birth in the general population. The total number of Foreign patients, 56 of whom were admitted during the year, was 355; they include 23 French, 77 German, and 70 Chinese, together with representatives of almost all the European States, South Sea Islanders, African blacks, and a motley assemblage of wanderers from every part of the world. A large proportion of the Foreign-born patients, exclusive of the French and Germans, are able to express themselves only very imperfectly in English. Not a few are in all but complete ignorance of it, and some when most insane will only speak in their native tongue. Owing to these circumstances, and to a want of knowledge of their peculiarities of thought and feeling, on the part of both officers and attendants, and to the impossibility of making any impression by kind and timely persuasion or advice, they are most difficult to deal with, and form on the whole an intractable class among whom the recoveries are comparatively few. Those among them who belong to the darker-skinned races are often dangerous, vindictive, and uncertain. When recovery does take place, it is found extremely difficult to find for them a fresh start in life, and the opportunities of getting them returned to their native countries are few."

Dr. Manning gives the following particulars with reference to the proportions of epileptics and general paralytics among his patients :—

"On the 30th June, 1885, at which date the number of patients under care was 2,579, 1,573 males and 1,006 females, I caused special returns to be prepared showing the number of epileptics and general paralytics among them. They show that about $\frac{1}{13}$ of all the patients under care suffer from epilepsy, and that this disease is about equally common in each sex. The number of general paralytics was 42, and only 8 of these were women. At the close of the year the number of general paralytics had fallen, owing to the death of a considerable number, to 25. Taking the admissions for the year, it appears that the percentage of epileptics and general paralytics admitted to the total number of patients admitted was 6·3 and 2·1 respectively.

"The number of epileptics among the insane in this Colony appears

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to bear about the same proportion to the general asylum population as in England ; but the proportion of general paralytics, taking into consideration the number admitted and the number under care, is decidedly less, and would, so far as can be judged from the English returns, appear to be not more than $\frac{1}{3}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$ of the proportion in England."

Such are some of the most generally interesting contents of Dr. Manning's comprehensive and practical report.

F. N.

Dr. Manning, in a paper read before the Medical Section of the Royal Society of New South Wales, entitled "A Contribution to the Study of Heredity," gives a result of an inquiry into the family and life history of the idiots and imbeciles in the New Castle Hospital for the Insane, his object being to determine the cause, more especially in regard to heredity. Unfortunately, no history was forthcoming, many of the inmates being deserted children, picked up by the police, and therefore Dr. Manning restricted himself to those cases in which there were two or more of a family weak-minded, as being more probably congenital than accidental. As the distinction between idiots and imbeciles is very indefinite, it may be useful to state that Dr. Manning found it the most practical to class under the former those who can speak and under the latter those who can not.

We regret that we have only space for the following conclusions :—

1. Idiocy is, in a large proportion of cases, due to heredity.
2. Cases of direct heredity are as common as those in which it is transmitted in the collateral or reversional form, a conclusion differing entirely from that of Dr. Seguin.
3. Double heredity much more potent than when on one side only.
4. Nervous disorders are often transformed in their transmission ; the children of an insane or epileptic parent being sometimes idiots or paralytics.
5. Consanguineous marriages lead to idiocy and imbecility more than to insanity. Dr. Manning believes—at the same time agreeing with Mr. Huth—that such marriages are not injurious by the mere fact of consanguinity. Unfortunately, however, comparatively few persons are free from some physical or mental imperfection, and in the marriage of relations such imperfection will probably be intensified. Hence Dr. Manning holds that the marriage of persons who come of families in which insanity exists in a pronounced form should be discouraged, and that the intermarriage of persons from neurotic or insane families, and the marriage of near kin, especially when there is any mental peculiarity, should be discountenanced by medical men.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity of conveying our thanks to Dr. Manning for a series of beautiful photographs illustrative of the

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Hospital for the Insane at Gladesville. One of these represents the administrative building and offices; another the gardens and the Medical Superintendent's house; and the third the "Cricket Paddock," with a number of patients engaged in play. One represents the entrance-gate and lodges, another the Branch Hospital for 160 patients, while another shows one of a ward of the Hospital with some patients standing and sitting in front.

New Zealand.

We have before us the report on the lunatic asylum of this Colony for 1885, and we regret to observe that the Inspector, Dr. G. W. Grabham, takes leave in it of his office. In his retrospect of his work during the period he has held the appointment, he observes that many plans and suggestions made by him from time to time remain unacted upon, although approved by the Ministry of the day. It appears that no provision has been made for the future increase of insanity in New Zealand. This is certainly a short-sighted policy. It is satisfactory, however, to find that some improvements have been effected during Dr. Grabham's tenure of office, though bearing a small proportion to those suggested by him. The superintendents are men possessed of special knowledge and ability, but it would seem that they are underpaid, and that the asylums are overcrowded. Fortunately, however, the proportion of the insane to the population has decreased from 1 lunatic to every 390 persons, to 1 in 401. The overcrowding is, therefore, due to accumulation. At Auckland this is "positively disgraceful." In buildings intended for 217 patients, there are stowed away no less than 347, the cubic space for each person in the bedrooms averaging 350 feet. Dr. Grabham does not hesitate to assert that five of the single rooms resemble fowl-houses in all respects but the roosts, the only window being an aperture made by knocking out a brick from the back wall. Strange to say the funds necessary for enlarging the asylum have been voted by the Legislature for some time, but there the matter ends. It must be a thankless task for an inspector to be continually proposing reforms and rarely seeing them adopted by those whose duty it is to carry them out, who have not even the excuse of being refused money by the Legislature. Of the Seacliffe Asylum, containing 450 patients, for whom the provision is sadly insufficient, Dr. Grabham writes, "I take this last opportunity of stating that the whole of my previous statements are correct, and borne out by the facts of the case; and although I have been openly contradicted in Parliament, and received hints of intended law proceedings with demands for apologies, I will again assert that the site of the asylum is ill chosen, the establishment badly designed, and out of date, the buildings defective in construction, and showing everywhere bad workmanship, which should never have been accepted." The only satisfactory feature about this institution is the efficient services rendered by the superintendent and other officers. We ought

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to add those of the minister of religion, who performs divine service in the asylum, which we are assured "is of a character suited to the intellects of those who attend." We suspect that there are not a few asylum chaplains in England of whose discourses the same might be said with too much truth. It may be stated, for the benefit of those assistant medical officers in our own country who are desirous of becoming superintendents in the Colony, that while the wages of attendants are thrice as high as in the old country, the salaries of superintendents are lower than those paid in England.

There were in the asylums of New Zealand on the 1st Jan., 1885, 1,452 patients. During the year 454 were admitted, while 171 recovered, 15 were relieved, 102 were discharged not improved, and 95 died, leaving 1,523 patients in the asylums December 31st, 1885.

It only remains for us to express our regret that Dr. Grabham's energetic and well-intentioned efforts should have been thwarted by local ignorance and parsimony, and our hope that in whatever field of labour he may enter in future, he may meet with more encouragement and success in endeavouring to carry out the work in which he may be engaged.

D. H. T.

PART IV.—NOTES AND NEWS.

THE MEDICO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

The quarterly meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association was held at Bethlem Hospital on Tuesday, the 9th November, 1886, the President (Dr. Savage) presiding. There were also present Drs. S. H. Agar, A. H. Boys, G. F. Blandford, David Bower, Edward East, Hyslop, W. M. Harmer, D. G. Johnston, A. Maclean, W. J. Mickle, H. Hayes Newington, Percy Smith, H. Sutherland, H. R. O. Sankey, A. H. Stocker, C. W. Sherrard, Hack Tuke, Thos. S. Tuke, Charles M. Tuke.

Mr. A. Aplin, M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lon., Medical Superintendent of the Notts County Asylum, Sneaton, Nottingham, was elected a Member of the Association.

The PRESIDENT exhibited the brain of a woman who died from general paralysis of the insane, the whole symptoms running their course within twelve months. Its chief interest was that it showed extremely well the local wasting about the motor areas. There were in life marked symptoms of exaltation and marked tremor, the reflexes greatly exaggerated. The lower extremities became so contracted and the muscles so wasted that one expected to find very great degeneration in the lateral columns of the cord, but they showed next to nothing to the naked eye. There was, in the brain, a very marked wasting just behind the ascending parietal convolution; and there were two large lakelets marking wasted convolutions. So, in this case, we had, with marked wasting of motor cortical areas but slight evidence of secondary cord degeneration, and this was probably due to the rapidity of the whole process. There was excess of fluid, and but few adhesions.

Dr. HAYES NEWINGTON read a paper on "What are the Tests of Fitness for Discharge?" (*See* Original Articles).

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