indicated very strongly that such a verdict was inapplicable to the case; and there is no doubt that the verdict is indefensible, alike in logic and in law. The facts seem to be, however, that a great deal of sympathy was felt for the prisoner. It was known that the conduct of his wife had given him very great distress, and to this were attributed his intemperate habits. Mr. Sargood, the person chiefly aggrieved, had spoken in the witness-box most charitably and generously of the prisoner, had looked after the prisoner's child, and had disclaimed any resentment against him. The act itself was undoubtedly an irrational one, not traceable to any reasonable motive. The attitude of the jury seems to have been to consider, not under what technical legal description the crime could most logically be classified, but how the prisoner ought to be dealt with, admitting that he had done the act, but making allowance for the desperate trouble in which he was; and they concluded that, while they must mark their reprobation of the crime, they would yet let the criminal down as lightly as possible. The verdict was against the strict letter of the evidence, and in the teeth of the judge's ruling, but it seems to have fitted pretty fairly the merits of the case.

## Occasional Notes.

### *Benedikt: aus Meinem Leben.*

Our distinguished and venerable colleague, Professor Moriz Benedikt, of Vienna, has given the world a most interesting account of his life, in a substantial volume of some 400 pages. He is a born traveller, has known distinguished men and many cities, and his interests are of the widest. For a quarter of a century he has been an honorary member of the Medico-Psychological Association and a kind friend to those of us who venture as far as his home in the Austrian capital.

Professor Benedikt begins with a clear account of his childhood, in well-remembered detail. At the time of his birth, July 4th, 1835, Austria was a feudal and autocratic state, yet his education was fortunate in the era of a new development of

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liberal ideas. His earlier years were passed in Eisenstadt, whence he removed with his father to Vienna in 1845. Professor Benedikt records his interest in music from his childhood. That form of fine art has always deeply impressed him. As a youth, he was excited to physical pain by a performance of Beethoven's "Ninth Symphony," and he was so roused by the music of Don Giovanni that he rushed through the streets for hours in a snowstorm until he was sufficiently calmed to seek his bed. The fine arts generally have always affected him deeply, and much of his book is occupied with reminiscences of architecture, paintings, sculptures, etc., for he enters on the details of *wanderjahre*, campaigning, journeyings to Italy, Turkey, Russia, Northern Europe, and so on. Thus the experiences and opinions of Professor Benedikt are not merely referable to affairs of medicine, but elucidate the laws, the customs, the ideals of a great variety of nations in an intensely personal and critical spirit, which is continually illumined by the kindly humour which is characteristic of the man. Evidently strong opinions dominated him from youth onwards. He says that he was a fanatical deist of the Jacobi materialist school, and just as fanatical in his morality, so that adverse opinions were most painful to him. Having early arrived at the decision that he could not be a creative mathematician, he made up his mind to study medicine, with the mental reservation that he would devote himself to experimental work. Professor Benedikt's decision has proved fruitful and happy. While yet a student he read politics with avidity, finding sustenance in *The Times*, *Journal des Debats*, *Independance Belgique*, *Angsburger Allgemeine*, especially in the supplements—a fair selection of representative *weltpolitik* for a medical student.

Professor Benedikt refers to his first journey and his troubles with his outfit. Besides well-nailed shoes, a pair of tweed trousers and a smock frock, he carried a heavy cloak and an umbrella. His slight reserve of underwear went in his pockets with the faithful *Baedeker*. One day he was reading *The Times* in an inn, when two ladies whispered to one another something about "the mad Englishman," so he exclaimed in Wiener jargon "*Z*oolen!" which no doubt completed the little surprise.

Professor Benedikt records his early appreciation of Rembrandt and the masters of the old German school, and he recalls an æsthetic ecstasy in London when he first entered the

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chapel of Henry VII. He was so moved that he incontinently expressed his admiration to a young Englishwoman, who recoiled from him with trepidation.

These brief extracts from his travel pictures may have one more illustration. When he was retracing Rokitanksy's footsteps in Paris, Professor Benedikt overheard a conversation between two pathologists. "Who is the successor of Rokitansky?" "A certain Heschel." "And who is Heschel?" "The successor of Rokitansky." So have we heard the mere man described as Mrs. Blank's husband.

On his attaining his degree in surgery, three days before the Battle of Solferino, Professor Benedikt desired to enter the army and was posted as surgeon. This part of his career gave him a large experience in campaigning, before he returned to Vienna to resume civil life. Griesinger visited him, to have a course of electro-therapy before his removal from Zurich to Berlin, at a time when Griesinger was combating the opinion of Remak that the seat of the soul is in the base of the brain, and when he was instructing Hitzig and Eulenberg and many others. A remark on specialists might be quoted, although there is so much of interest that we can only present a very few opinions within these narrow limits. Professor Benedikt has no fear of the specialist. When he believes that a patient should consult a physician or a surgeon with exceptional qualifications he so advises him, on the ground that although the patient may have full confidence in his adviser's competency he must further have confidence in his recommendation of another.

Passing over many chapters on foreign countries, we may refer to his first arrival in London in the early seventies. London specially attracted him, with its wealth o historical monuments which had been familiar to him in description since his early childhood. It is characteristic that Professor Benedikt made short stay in the Terminus Hotel, where he was precluded from smoking his cigar in his bedroom, and hurried to the National Gallery to study Turner's pictures. At a later date, 1884, Professor Benedikt became more intimate with the medical profession of this country. He refers to his studies of criminology, and his declaration against the existence of an absolutely free will, and the stupid remark of a Viennese dignitary to the effect that "Benedikt wanted to save all crimi-

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nals from punishment." The sum and substance of his opinions in this respect are to be found in the *Journal of Mental Science* for 1884, p. 592.

Professor Benedikt declares that one of the happiest times in his life was spent in Glasgow in 1888, when he was promoted to the degree of LL.D., and replied for the guests at the subsequent banquet, referring to the ladies as exquisite poems, and concluding with the expression of his surprise that we islanders remain so clear-sighted in the midst of so much fog.

No doubt these long and varied memoirs will find many readers among those whose motto is *quidquid agunt homines*; and we congratulate Professor Benedikt upon his latest achievement, wishing him long life and happiness in all his journeyings and studies which are not yet ended.

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### *The Cost of Providing Asylums.*

The County Councils Association has had under consideration the cost of providing asylums and isolation hospitals, and we publish in "Notes and News" a reprint of the information given in reference to asylums by *The County Council Times* of February last. The important letters of the English Commissioners and Mr. Hine will be read with sustained interest, for the questions at issue are of special importance. The latest developments in asylum architecture at Aberdeen (Kingseat) and at Edinburgh (Bangour) are widely different from the plans of the last century. Perhaps the earliest indication of these new ideas is to be found at Chester, where Dr. T. N. Brushfield erected a separate building for chronic patients. Of late years separate hospitals served to show that good results would be obtained by proceeding further on the same lines, and the success of Alt-Scherbitz has encouraged the new system at home and abroad. It would appear that the time has come when the Association might profitably engage in a discussion on asylum planning. Mr. Hine's letter directs attention to many important points, and his great experience and authoritative opinions cannot fail to awaken renewed interest in this practical subject, which intimately affects the insane and those directly responsible for their welfare.

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