

of September. Violent emotion causes fainting, acting in the same way by paralysing the great centre; fright gives rise to a very large percentage of our epileptics; but the fright does not act so immediately, causing the fit; the ganglia are only disordered functionally at first; sometimes days or weeks of uneasiness in the epigastrium, sinking, and mental uneasiness precede the convulsion. Chorea, also, acknowledges fright as its chief cause. Neither is the effect of fear shown in at once producing chorea. A disturbance of nutrition precedes it, and the regulation of nutrition is the great function of the ganglionic system. Given, then, a case of ganglionic epilepsy, our chief and first business is to restore power to the great nervous centre. How this was accomplished in the patient J. H., is mentioned in the short history of his case."

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#### PART IV.—NOTES AND NEWS.

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##### *The Charity Commissioners and Bethlehem Hospital.*

(See 'Journal of Mental Science,' January, 1864.)

"On the 9th of April, Mr. F. O. Martin, one of the Inspectors of Charities, resumed his inquiry into Bethlehem Hospital in the Court Room of Bridewell, New Bridge Street. Amongst those present were the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, Mr. Alderman Copeland, M.P., Mr. Gaskell (Commissioner in Lunacy), Mr. Johnson, Mr. Baggallay (Treasurer of St. Thomas's Hospital), Deputy Obbard, Dr. Webster, Dr. Hood, Dr. Wood, and others. The special object of this day's investigation was to ascertain the desirability or otherwise of removing the hospital, and erecting one elsewhere in the country. This question had arisen from the fact that the Lunacy Commissioners, acting upon a report of Dr. Conolly, had strongly urged upon the governors the necessity for removing, upon the ground that the locality was unhealthy, that the quantity of ground was insufficient, and that the construction and arrangement of the building were unsuitable to the purposes of the institution. Sir George Grey had also written a letter to the governors recommending the removal.

*The Inspector*, in opening the proceedings, said he had no charge to bring against the governors, and the only question for them to consider was, whether with the means in their hands they could not extend the benefits of the charity. The Lunacy Commissioners were of opinion that the hospital should be removed to a more healthy locality in the country; but upon that question there was some difference of opinion. He had recently visited the new county asylum at Brentwood, which pleased him much. There was an entire absence of anything like a prison appearance or restraint, and he believed that the governors could build an hospital after that style to accommodate their requirements for about £60,000, including every requisite.

*Mr. Alderman Copeland* had had some experience in these matters, and he found that £60,000 would fall very far short of the sum necessary to erect such a building. He observed further that the Commissioners in Lunacy,

having recommended to Sir George Grey that the hospital should be removed from its present site to the country for the purpose of making room for St. Thomas's Hospital, the governors were prepared with evidence in favour of the present site.

*The Treasurer* (Mr. Johnson) also said that the question of removal had arisen in consequence of St. Thomas's Hospital asking for the Bill, they having been removed for railway purposes. The governors of Bethlehem Hospital replied that St. Thomas's should have the site provided that they erected a new Bethlehem on an eligible situation, and in every way equal to the present. The governors of St. Thomas's answered, "No; let the matter go by arbitration," which the governors of Bethlehem Hospital declined.

*Mr. Lawrence*, who was for many years officially connected with Bethlehem Hospital, put in a very long statement, in which he replies to all the objections made by the Lunacy Commissioners, whose object, he declared, was to take down one of the handsomest and best constructed hospitals in London, and a structure that was perfectly fitted for all the purposes of the institution. The present site of Bethlehem was perfectly suited in healthiness either for a lunatic or general hospital; the grounds were very extensive, and the arrangements all that could be desired. Many distinguished foreign physicians admitted that it was the best institution of the kind, and in several respects superior to those in other countries.

*Dr. Webster*, on the contrary, strongly advocated the removal of Bethlehem to some suburban rural situation, and said that now, in consequence of much additional evidence which he had since obtained, his opinions on this point had become even more confirmed than when the subject was previously discussed by governors. Indeed, on no question was the whole profession more unanimous; and he could say confidently that, throughout Europe, continental governments, medical authorities, and municipal bodies were all but unanimously favorable to placing lunatic asylums in country districts, away from towns, and not among crowded populations. From St. Petersburg to Gibraltar, and from Hungary to Britain, such convictions seemed universal, and were being actively carried into operation. Amongst numerous recent instances, he said, the French Legislature had voted ten million francs—£400,000—to construct new asylums near Paris, instead of the Salpêtrière; while the Italian Government intended to replace the Sindavra Asylum at Milan by a more modern establishment. Again, the old hospital at Glasgow had been removed to Gant-Navel—one of the finest of rural localities; and the most ancient chartered asylum in Scotland—namely, that of Montrose—was now at Sunnyside, a few miles in the country. Dr. Webster next referred to the continually decreasing number of admissions into Bethlehem during recent years. Thus in the five years ending December 1847, 1592 curable patients were received, and 1420, up to December, 1852. In the next five years they fell to 982; while at the end of December, 1862, the total had decreased to 888, or about half the number received only twenty years before. Besides this feature, the proportion of cures lately reported at Bethlehem ranged only a little beyond fifty per cent., in contradistinction to the seventy-two per hundred admissions as then stated by the Inspector of Charities to have been effected at Brentwood, the patients in both establishments being all classed as "curables." This marked discrepancy in the ratio of recoveries, and the late diminished number of admissions at Bethlehem, however remarkable, had not been explained. After various other observations, Dr. Webster concluded by saying he yet hoped that Bethlehem would be removed to the country, more especially seeing the London Corporation had just built a new asylum near Dartford for the insane poor of the city, which was a good example to imitate.

*Dr. Hood*, who had had ten years' experience in connection with the hospital, and *Dr. Wood*, of St. Luke's, and formerly of Bethlehem, both spoke warmly in favour of the present site; some of the chief arguments used by these physicians being, the great convenience afforded to relatives visiting the insane residents; its easy access for patients, who could, besides, more readily promenade the metropolitan streets when approaching convalescence, or when such amusement was deemed advisable; and lastly, the acknowledged salubrity of the present hospital.

*Lord Shaftesbury* next expressed his continued adhesion to the same decided opinions he had enunciated in the House of Lords last year respecting the important advantages of constructing a new Bethlehem Hospital in a rural site near London, and in which were comprised various improvements adverted to on that occasion.

Afterwards *Mr. Gaskell* gave some statistics as to the percentage of cases in town and country asylums, and he especially mentioned that in English country hospitals analogous to Bethlehem, the ratio of cures there reported during late years was larger than at the metropolitan institution in question. He also spoke in favour of moving Bethlehem to a rural situation, and believed, amongst other benefits often derived from breathing pure air and residing in the country, the inmates' bodily health being thereby more likely to improve, their mental malady would hence become simultaneously ameliorated. *Mr. Gaskell* likewise entirely concurred in *Dr. Webster's* remarks regarding foreign governments, as also other authorities, preferring rural sites for building lunatic institutions, and added that in England the same system is now being adopted; as, for example, at Cheadle, to which locality the Manchester Asylum has been removed, and near Gloucester a similar proceeding would be soon followed.

After a lengthened conversation on other topics bearing upon the question at issue, and in reference to resident pupils,

*Mr. Martin* asked whether it was possible to have an institution in the country in connection with Bethlehem Hospital?

To this question, *Mr. Johnson*, the treasurer, replied that they had already done so to a small extent by sending inmates to the seaside; and a recent report stated that during the summer months eight patients visited the coast for some weeks, in company with their nurses and attendants, which produced a marked improvement in their physical health.

Some additional remarks, both in favour of the present site and of the removal of the hospital, having been made, a vote of thanks was passed to the chairman, and the meeting adjourned *sine die*, unless another conference should be deemed requisite to obtain further information.—'The Lancet,' April 16.

[Our opinion on the question of the removal of Bethlehem Hospital was fully stated and discussed at the last annual meeting of this Association (see Journal of Mental Science, October, 1863). We have nothing to add and nothing to retract from that opinion. This Association unanimously endorsed the same, passing, it will be remembered, the following resolution:—“THAT THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION HAVE REGARDED WITH ESPECIAL INTEREST THE QUESTION OF THE REMOVAL OF BETHLEHEM HOSPITAL TO A SITE MORE ADAPTED TO THE PRESENT STATE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SANITARY SCIENCE, AND AFFORDING ENLARGED MEANS OF RELIEF TO THE INSANE OF THE MIDDLE AND EDUCATED CLASSES IN IMPOVERISHED CIRCUMSTANCES, AND THAT THEY DESIRE TO EXPRESS THEIR CONCURRENCE IN THE REPRESENTATIONS ALREADY MADE TO THE GOVERNORS OF THAT IMPORTANT INSTITUTION BY THE COMMISSIONERS IN LUNACY.”

The Editor of the 'British Medical Journal' thus meets the arguments here brought forward in favour of a town site for a lunatic asylum:—"Mr. Lawrence

(he writes) argued that the interference of Sir George Grey was repugnant to the governors of Bethlehem; that the present site was open and well suited for a lunatic asylum or a hospital. Dr. Hood concurred, and asked, how could the patients be taken ten or twenty miles into the country? Dr. Wood said that the building was handsome, and the hospital healthy, and the grounds sufficiently large. There is, we take it, no need for us to refute such statements as these. They really amount to absolutely nothing; and, in fact, indicate pretty clearly the weakness of the cause in whose defence they are adduced. The only really valid argument which can be suggested in defence of Bethlehem Hospital remaining where it is, is simply the fact of its existence there—a money question. It does, we confess, surprise us to find gentlemen deeply conversant with lunacy bold enough to affirm that lunatics confined, immured between high walls, with no rural occupations, with none of the happy employments of life which are open to them in the country, are in as good a position as they might be. They seem to have argued us if the mental and bodily occupation of these wretched creatures were a thing of no account. The site is healthy; what more can you desire? How are the lunatics to be got to a hospital ten miles from London? asked Dr. Hood. And said Dr. Wood, the patients at Bethlehem have more space per head than have the patients at Hanwell with their twenty-eight acres and a farm of seventy-seven acres; therefore, the patients are better off and happier at Bethlehem, immured within its lugubrious walls, than they are whilst merrily planting cabbages at Hanwell!" ]

*Dr. Richardson's Report on the Stafford County Lunatic Asylum, and on the Coton Hill Lunatic Hospital.*

(From the "Medical History of England," by Dr. B. W. Richardson. 'Medical Times and Gazette,' March 12, 1864.)

"Whatever other disadvantages Stafford may labour under, there are very few towns that have so admirably conducted an asylum. The County Lunatic Asylum, situated about a quarter of a mile from the town itself, affords accommodation for 500 inmates. It is a noble building, and is as perfect in its internal arrangements as in its external appearance. Through the kindness of Dr. Bower, the superintendent-in-chief, I was enabled to make a careful inspection of every part of the asylum, and was supplied with numerous particulars of great interest to the profession at large.

*Ventilation—Haden's System.*

Not to dwell on the arrangements of the various wards, I may begin by referring to the system of ventilation. This is artificial, and is framed on the plan known as "Haden's." The air is forced in from the lower part of the building by means of steam, and steam is allowed to mix with the air on its entrance. Thus charged with moisture, the air is conveyed through iron shafts to all parts of the building, and enters into the wards and rooms at the *upper part* near to the ceiling. It escapes by a series of openings into shafts of similar size and construction at the *lower part* of the wards or rooms, and is drawn into a common shaft, situated at the upper portion of the building, by means of a fire shaft, so as to ensure for it a constant current and exit. The system works well, and I note the fact specially because it is almost the only plan of artificial ventilation which can be seen in *effective* action. In principle this ventilation is analogous to that known in Paris as "Duvoir's method." The differences are two in number. In Duvoir's