

cases this year—are most of them not preventable. Only lately had it been fully realised how the mere natural process of building up and development of the organism from infancy up to full manhood and womanhood was attended by innumerable risks to the brain and nervous system. From idiocy, the great mental risk of the earliest age of development, to the insanity of adolescence which comes on from the age of 18 to 25, and is the last risk of development, there are many intermediate stages. Epilepsy, with insanity, appeared more frequently during the developmental period than any other, and 14 such cases had been sent during the year. Throughout Great Britain 40 per cent. of all mental defects are due to errors in development. In this relation the high nervous death-rate before 25 should be noted. Further, unrelational development accounted for much insanity and neurosis.

Unphysiological Old Age.—Dr. Clouston next referred to the mental and nervous risks of growing old. Of the 103 such cases received during the year many resulted from a limited and unrelational decay of single functions and faculties before their time. About 5 per cent. of the whole insanity of the country is due to faults of decadence, but that does not represent the real risk of growing old, for over 20 per cent. of the yearly occurring mental disease is due to it. Nature lessened the output of energy of the brain as years went on. No man has his natural force unabated at 70; 33.2 per cent. of the general population die from nervous diseases from 51 to 75; but calm wisdom was an easy process to the nerves. The recent views of Krepelin were referred to and a warning note given to men and women over 50 to the effect that they should be more careful of alcohol excesses, of avoiding the causes of rheumatism, gout, bronchitis, and other diseases. They succumb for want of nerve energy. Rules for growing up and growing old safely were a desideratum. To have altogether prevented certain cases of insanity Holmes says we should have begun 200 years ago. Our position then must be, *Obsta principis*. The difficulty was to interpret early signs.

Recovery and Death-rates.—Three hundred and two patients were discharged during the year, of whom 163 were recovered and 94 relieved of their worst symptoms—that is a recovery of 36 per cent., 4 per cent. less than average of the past sixty years; 66 per cent. left in six months, 90 per cent. within the year. The death-rate was high, 11.3 per cent. on the average number resident, but many old broken cases were sent in; 51 per cent. die within the year after admission. This class was becoming more numerous. The death-rate did not differ much from that of the county and borough asylums of England. Irish lunatics lived longer. A striking fact in regard to the death-rate was that it went up from 8.8 per cent. on the average numbers resident (the average rate for the ten years previous to 1890) to 13.1 in 1890, and had kept up to 11.9 for the nine years 1890-98. Influenza was largely responsible for the increase; a larger number died from pulmonary consumption and tuberculous diseases. Probably this was due to overcrowding of the West House.

Miscellaneous.—The report concludes with references to the new drainage system for the West House, to the meeting of the British Medical Association in July last, to the favourable opinion of the medical profession given of the Edinburgh asylum, to the reunion of the old staff of the asylum, and to the subjects then discussed, to the meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association, to Dr. Ford Robertson's continued successful work in the laboratory of the asylums, to the need for extension in the range of work in that laboratory, to the changes in the staff of the asylum, and, finally, to the fact that Dr. Clouston had himself now completed twenty-five years' service.

ROYAL MEDICAL AND CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY.

THE annual general meeting of this Society was held on Wednesday, March 1st, Mr. T. BRYANT, M.Ch., F.R.C.S., President, in the chair.

REPORT OF COUNCIL.

After the minutes of the last annual general meeting had been read and confirmed, the report of the Council for the past half year was read by Dr. NORMAN MOORE, the Senior Secretary. The affairs of the

Society were in a satisfactory condition; 35 new Fellows had been elected, of whom 24 were resident, while 11 Fellows had died and three had resigned. The changes of hours for the use of the library had been found to work well, and to be for the greater convenience of the Fellows. During the temporary absence of the resident librarian from ill health the work had been admirably performed by the assistant librarian, Mr. Clarke. The Committee on Suspended Animation reported that arrangements were being made for further investigations at Claybury. The Committee on Climatology and Balneology were making progress, and reports on Ireland and on the Midlands were nearing completion. The treasurers had altered the arrangement of the financial statement, so as to show more clearly the exact position of the Society. There had been 351 volumes purchased for the library, and 241 works and pamphlets had been presented during the past year.

The SENIOR TREASURER (Dr. W. S. Church) explained the alterations of the financial statement. This had been done on the advice and by the help of Mr. T. Mundy, the auditor, who had been at great trouble to help the Society. This alteration put the affairs of the Society on a thoroughly business-like footing. After some discussion, in which Dr. C. T. WILLIAMS, Dr. ABERCROMBIE, and Dr. CHURCH took part, the report of the Council was, on the motion of the PRESIDENT, seconded by Dr. N. MOORE, adopted.

THE AWARD OF THE MARSHALL-HALL PRIZE.

The Committee appointed for this purpose unanimously recommended Professor C. S. Sherrington, M.D., F.R.S. This recommendation having been adopted, the PRESIDENT in graceful terms congratulated Professor Sherrington, handed him the diploma and prize, and expressed a hope that the Society would have an opportunity of hearing from him an account of his researches. Professor SHERRINGTON returned thanks to the Society.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

The PRESIDENT then delivered the annual address. All the reports, and especially the Treasurer's, showed good results. The papers had been valuable, but he should have preferred to have seen larger attendances. He expressed his appreciation of the valuable services of the retiring Secretary, Dr. Norman Moore. He read obituary notices of Sir R. Quain, Sir W. Jenner, Dr. Charles West, Dr. C. J. Hare, Mr. H. Lee, and Professor A. A. Kanthack.

Dr. DICKINSON proposed that the best thanks of the Society be given to the President for his address, and that he be requested to allow it to be printed in the *Transactions*.

Dr. R. L. BOWLES seconded this, and it was carried unanimously.

The usual votes of thanks to the retiring Vice-Presidents (Dr. Marce and Mr. Gant), Librarian (Dr. Gee), Secretary (Dr. Norman Moore), and members of Council (Drs. Allchin, Bowles, Mitchell Bruce, and Savage, and Messrs. Cheyne, Clutton, Eve, and Meredith) were passed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COUNCIL.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing session:—*President*: Thomas Bryant. *Vice-Presidents*: George Fielding Blandford, M.D.; *Samuel Jones Gee, M.D.; *Henry Greenway Howse, M.S.; Reginald Harrison. *Honorary Treasurers*: William Selby Church, M.D.; J. Warrington Haward. *Honorary Secretaries*: *Thomas Barlow, M.D.; Alfred Pearce Gould, M.S. *Honorary Librarians*: *Norman Moore, M.D.; Rickman J. Godlee, M.S. *Members of Council*: Francis Henry Champneys, M.D.; *Stephen Mackenzie, M.D.; *Seymour John Sharkey, M.D.; *Eustace Smith, M.D.; *Francis Warner, M.D.; *W. Bruce Clarke; *George Henry Makins; *Robert William Parker; *Edward Albert Schäfer, F.R.S.; Edgcombe Venning. (Those Fellows against whose names asterisks are placed were not on the Council, or did not fill the same office last year.)

BILE INOCULATION AND RINDERPEST.—The Ceylon Government Veterinary Surgeon, Mr. G. W. Sturgess, has published a report on the successful experiments he has recently made with bile inoculation as a preventive against rinderpest. The disease appeared among the cart bullocks belonging to Messrs. Lipton, Limited; 80 were attacked, 50 yielded to treatment and recovered, and 30 died. Mr. Sturgess then obtained permission to try the bile inoculation method. He inoculated four healthy bulls, and tied them up for a week by the side of an infected animal in an infected shed, but none of them contracted the disease, nor were any of them ill. Mr. Sturgess describes the method as very simple, and quite harmless if properly carried out.