

LUNACY IN SPAIN.

ALTHOUGH heretofore slow in adopting modern improvements, it is satisfactory to find that even Spain now begins to imitate more northern nations as regards the proper treatment of lunatics. In proof of this the following remarks, respecting insanity and asylums in that country, made by a physician who has lately visited the Peninsula, may be quoted from a recent number of the *New Monthly Magazine*. The writer here alluded to says:—

"Granada possesses several useful beneficent establishments which will interest strangers. Besides the large general hospital and that for foundlings, there is likewise an asylum for orphans, each of which was visited by the writer. Being a physician, they all had considerable value in his estimation, particularly the medical school attached to the first named institution. To these, however, he would add another, which not only to himself was most interesting, but to non-professional observers would likewise be esteemed worthy of more than a casual notice—namely, the Lunatic Asylum, founded by Queen Isabella after the Moslem expulsion. This 'Hospital de los Locos' is the most ancient receptacle for insane patients now existing throughout Europe, being instituted prior to Bethlehem Hospital, in London, which ranks the second oldest public asylum for the same class of sufferers. Considering the period when constructed, it is highly creditable to the royal foundress, and when first opened must have been greatly in advance of the spirit of the age, as also popular notions regarding the insane or their proper management. When visited by the writer, he found one hundred and fifty-two male, and sixty female lunatics; thus showing that insanity, here as elsewhere in Spain, prevails oftener among the former than the latter sex. The interior was clean; and the arrangements were better than could be expected. A judicious separation of patients did not always prevail, while occupying and amusing them was of secondary moment; many being allowed to associate together, without making much attempt to alleviate their afflicting malady. Several were in strait-waistcoats; the most dangerous being, however, kept separate from those more quietly disposed. As usual, female patients appeared much more noisy and talkative than male inmates.

"Contrasted with analogous institutions in France or England, the Granada hospital is far inferior. Nevertheless, remembering how isolated this country has been lately from the rest of Europe, and the severe trials, political as otherwise, she has passed through, foreign critics must not be too severe if Spain has lately lagged behind more northern nations in treating lunacy; and still less forget she set them a good example more than four centuries ago, which they showed for a long period of time little inclination to imitate. Indeed, it may be mentioned to her credit, while other Europeans did little or nothing towards the humane treatment of lunatics, an asylum for their protection was opened at Valencia in 1409, through the efforts of Friar Joffre, another at Saragossa in 1425, one at Valladolid in 1436, a fourth the same year at Sevilla, and a fifth at Toledo in 1483; thus showing they were then far in advance of adjacent kingdoms. Until very recently, little progress has been made, but in this, as in other respects, Spaniards are becoming awake; and it is now proposed to erect six large establishments for the insane, according to modern principles. These will prove a great boon to suffering humanity, seeing the ratio throughout Spain is about one lunatic to every 1667 inhabitants; while it is an established fact that, men much oftener lose their senses than women, seeing it has been found among 6851 demented patients, 4060, or nearly sixty per cent., were of the former sex, and therefore different from England, where females are oftener victims."

EXCESSIVE HEAT AT MALTA. Our Malta correspondent, under date of the 21st of August, reports the thermometer as having, for a week previous, ranged at from 88 to 96 degrees, with light winds and calms. In fact, so hot a season had not been experienced since 1847. There had been several fatal cases of fever among the natives, but upon the whole the garrison was healthy. A very prudent sanitary precaution had been adopted on board the ships of war in port, under the considerate command of Rear Admiral Codrington, C.B., the senior naval officer in port, with the best results. The usual routine of exercising guns, sails, and such like, is judiciously deferred to the cool of the evening, when the heat of the day is deprived of its extreme intensity. (*Standard*.)

HEALTH OF LONDON—AUGUST 25TH, 1860.

[From the Registrar-General's Report.]

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	Births.	Deaths.		
During week	{ Boys.. 827 }	{ 1607 .. 937 }		
Average of corresponding weeks 1850-9	{ Girls.. 780 }	{ 1563 .. 1175 }		
Among the causes of death were—bronchitis, 46; pneumonia, 41; phthisis, 118; small-pox, 4; scarlatina, 33; measles, 40; diphtheria, 8; whooping-cough, 22. The deaths from pulmonary diseases (exclusive of phthisis) were 104, being 20 above the corrected average.				
<i>Barometer:</i>				
Highest (Tu.) 29.791; lowest (Wed.) 29.333; mean 29.636.				
<i>Thermometer:</i>				
In sun—highest (Tu. & Th.) 115.0 degs.; lowest (Wed.) 82.0 degs.				
In shade—highest (Tu.) 70.1 degrees; lowest (Th.) 47.4 degrees.				
Mean—57.5 degrees; difference from mean of 43 yrs.—3.0 degrees.				
Range—during week, 22.7 degrees; mean daily, 12.9 degrees.				
Mean humidity of air (saturation = 100), 91.				
Mean direction of wind, W.—Rain in inches, 1.30.				

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE MEDICAL DIACONATE. We beg to assure Dr. Swayne that we have no desire to act otherwise than with fairness and impartiality; but we must adhere to our determination expressed last week, not to make this JOURNAL the medium of a controversy—perhaps an angry one—between parties in religion. That the objectionable phrase in Dr. Watson's letter was inserted, arose entirely from an oversight on our part; but we cannot see that this act of oversight obliges us to open our pages to a series of replies and rejoinders. We trust that Dr. Swayne will at once see the reason for the course we have taken, and accept, for himself, our assurances of respect.

ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENTS should always enclose their names to the Editor; not for publication, but in token of good faith. No attention can be paid to communications not thus authenticated.

Members should remember that corrections for the current week's JOURNAL should not arrive later than Wednesday.

POSTAGE OF MANUSCRIPT AND PRINTED MATTER.

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Communications have been received from:—DR. D. NELSON; MR. T. L. PRIDHAM; DR. C. BARHAM; MR. WM. MARTIN; MR. SQUARE; DR. SWAYNE; DR. PURSELL; DR. R. T. WOODHOUSE; MR. R. FAIRCLOTH; MR. W. SANDS COX; DR. J. Z. LAURENCE; and MR. P. C. PRICE.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

[* An Asterisk is prefixed to the Names of Members of the Association.]

1. Clinical Researches on Disease in India. By Charles Morehead, M.D. Second Edition. London: Longman & Co. 1860.

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