

in out-of-the-way places. A larger proportion of insane are now treated in asylums in Wilts than formerly, but at the same time, more are kept at workhouses and at home than in the more active centres. Dr. Bowes gives most careful tables analysing the causes of insanity, and he shows that in such counties as Wilts heredity plays a very marked part.

HOSPITAL PHYSICIANS AND ALCOHOLISM.

At the meeting of the Hospitals Medical Society, Paris, held last December, M. Legendre, alarmed by the ever-increasing amount of drunkenness, asked if it would not be possible to withstand this by means of meetings, insistence on the dangers of alcohol, and by what he considered an even better method, that of getting up for the instruction of patients lantern shows with exhibitions of anatomical preparations to show the dangers of alcohol. M. Legendre has had printed for the use of all his patients a little leaflet setting forth in the clearest manner the evils which follow the use of alcohol. He gives one of these to every patient of his both on admission to hospital and when he is discharged. Besides this, he has had them stuck up all over his wards and even in the lavatories as being quiet places where the patients will have leisure to read them with the object of bringing about a veritable obsession against alcohol. The text runs as follows:—"Most of the diseases treated in the hospitals arise from alcoholic drinks,—that is to say, they are either caused or aggravated by the abuse of alcohol. All alcoholic drinks are dangerous, and the most harmful are those which contain aromatics in addition to alcohol—as, for instance, *absinthe* and the so-called aperients called *ainers*. Alcoholic drinks are more dangerous when taken on an empty stomach or between meals. A man necessarily becomes an alcoholic, *i. e.* slowly poisoned by alcohol, even if he never gets drunk, when every day he drinks alcohol in the form of liqueur or too much wine, more than one litre per diem. Alcohol is a poison, the habitual use of which destroys more or less quickly, but none the less certainly, all the organs most necessary to life—the stomach, the liver, the kidneys, the blood-vessels, the heart, and the brain. Alcohol excites man, but does not strengthen him. It is no substitute for food, but takes away the taste for it. Those who often drink alcohol or too much wine (more than one litre a day) are much more liable to illness, and when ill are much worse, for the disease is often complicated with fatal delirium. Alcohol is a frequent cause of consumption by its power of weakening the lungs. Every year we see patients who attend the hospitals for alcoholism come back some months later suffering from consumption. Fathers and mothers who drink often have children who are deformed or idiots or who die from fits."

THE "ASYLUM NEWS."

The Asylum Workers' Association is rapidly increasing in members and importance. At the annual meeting of last year Sir James Crichton-Browne took the chair, and delivered an eloquent address which marked a new epoch in the practical outcome of his revered father's aims and labours so many years ago. This year also sees Sir James Crichton-Browne in the presidential chair, and we rejoice that the Association is honoured with his active co-operation. The dignity and importance of the work is gaining due recognition, and we must congratulate Dr. Shuttleworth on the results of his generous labours and assiduous attention. We cannot but quote a passage from the *Asylum News* for March 15th, which bears the impress of his hand and clear brain. Some such declaration is certainly called for while the *Hospital* persists in unfair criticism of a scheme which ought to be adopted in other departments of the nursing profession. The editor of the *Asylum News* says: "It seems to us that one uniform system of examination for nurses and attendants throughout the Kingdom is on many grounds to be preferred to individual asylums examining and certifying their own employés. We know that