

of great intensity, the centre of which passed eastwards south of Dublin, where the wind backed through E. and N.E. to N. and N.W., with a heavy fall of cold rain and sleet. A S.W. to W. gale of exceptional violence blew in the English Channel. A curious effect of the arrival of this depression was to cause a temporary calm in Scotland, accompanied by sharp frost, the thermometer falling to 21° at Aberdeen on Thursday morning and not rising above 28° at that station during the day. A final area of low barometer reached Ireland on Friday night. It brought high temperatures and a strong S.W. gale. In Dublin the mean height of the barometer during the week was only 29.207 inches. The mean temperature was 41.3° . The rainfall amounted to .983 inch on six days—.504 inch being registered on Wednesday the 22nd.

Although still changeable in many respects, the weather moderated considerably after Sunday, the 26th, on which day a fresh S.W. gale was felt. Both on the 26th and 27th the barometer over the south of France stood about two inches higher than it did off the W. coast of Norway, and consequently westerly winds of great strength prevailed. In Dublin Sunday's gale was accompanied by a very heavy rainfall—more than eight-tenths of an inch being registered in 12 hours. In Dublin the mean height of the barometer in the week ending Saturday, February 1, was 30.123 inches. The mean temperature was 43.2° . Rain fell on four days—the total measurement being 1.204 inches, of which .843 inch fell on Sunday, the 26th.

PERISCOPE.

ALCOHOLIC TRANCE.

A SUGGESTIVE paper was read before the International Medico-Legal Congress at New York, in June last, by Dr. T. D. Crothers, of Hartford, Conn., in which evidence is adduced of the existence, in some cases of alcoholic intoxication, of a paralysis of memory, similar to that known to occur in cases of epilepsy. To such condition the author gives the name, "alcoholic trance." The importance of the question whether such failure of memory exists, or, if existing, can be inferred, on grounds satisfactory to the legal mind, in criminal cases, is obvious. "This condition," says Dr. Crothers, "should be fully recognised by court and jury, and the measure of responsibility and punishment suited to each case. They should not be punished as criminals, nor should they be liberated as sane men. They should be housed and confined in hospitals." It is admitted that an epileptic state exists in which acts are performed which leave no trace in subsequent memory; and that for such acts the doers are not criminally responsible. It is probable that an analogous condi-

tion exists in certain drunkards. Are they to enjoy similar irresponsibility? There are signs that the old distinction between unavoidable disease and voluntarily incurred intoxication is, as regards responsibility for crime, losing its power over the public, and even over the legal mind.

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Intestinal Surgery. By N. SENN, M.D., Ph.D. Chicago : W. T. Keener. 1889. Pp. 269.

IN these two hundred and sixty-nine pages are collected the contributions which Mr. Senn has made to surgical literature during the past few years. We have had an opportunity of referring to them in these pages as they appeared, and we are glad to welcome the volume before us, as it contains the results of careful clinical observation and experimental research.

The volume before us contains, in the first part, an exhaustive account of the surgical resources in the treatment of intestinal obstruction. The author has collected the views of most of the notable writers on this subject, and his *résumé* is very readable, and decidedly instructive. The details of the operative measures necessary are clearly and definitely given, rendering this part of the work a very valuable contribution to the literature of abdominal section.

In the second part of the work Mr. Senn gives the results of his researches, experimental and otherwise, in reference to operations on the intestines. The use of gaseous distension in the diagnosis of obstruction and perforation is dealt with at great length, and this section will well repay perusal.

This collection of papers contains all that is worth knowing of the subjects treated, and should be in the hands of every surgeon interested in the advance of abdominal surgery.

A NEW CARDIAC TONIC.

DRS. *SPILLMAN and HANSALTER, of Nancy (*Revue de Thérapeutique*, December 1st, 1889), after trying coronille, conclude that—1st. Coronille is a valuable cardiac tonic. 2nd. Its good effects are quickly produced. 3rd. It increases the power and volume of the pulse; acts as a diuretic; lessens œdema; and gets rid of dyspnœa. 4th. In cardiac degeneration coronille is unsuitable. 5th. It is suitable for the same class of cases that derive benefit from digitalis. 6th. In some cases vomiting and diarrhœa are produced by the medicinal use of coronille. [The plant belongs to the Natural Order *Leguminosæ*, sp. *Coronilla Scorpioides*. In October, 1884, Mm. Schlagdenhauffen and Reeb (*Jour. Ph., Alsace-Lorraine*) isolated from the seeds of the plant a crystallisable alkaloid, which they believed to be the active principle.—ED.]

the absurdly small fees for examining cases for policies of small amount. As regards females, as a rule men insure for women, not women for men; but there were ways of examining the urine or the rectum, and if there was a question of fissure or piles an examination should be made. He was not as trustful as Professor Purser, and he believed that alcoholism and morphinism were habits deteriorating the organ of truth. Tobacco, taken in large quantities, especially the coarse, common tobacco, handicapped the nervous system.

The Section adjourned.

FELONY DE SE.

A FEW months ago the *New York Medical Record* discussed briefly whether the legal prohibition of suicide has any effect in diminishing the frequency of the "rash act." It is but a few years since suicide was made a crime in New York State; and statistics seem to show that legislation "does prevent or rather restrict self-murder." Previously to the anti-suicidal enactment suicides in New York State averaged 144 per million inhabitants. Since, the number of suicides has, indeed, increased; but not proportionally to the increase of population. The punishment for attempting suicide is imprisonment in State prison not exceeding two years, or fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, or both. This mild deterrent acts, the editor suggests, by discouraging attempts which are not intended to be successful. Is not, he asks, suicide accidental in some cases? Do not some "make a feint at suicide without really intending or wishing to end their lives, led to their foolish act, perhaps, by a desire to create sympathy, or in the hope of calling back an offended lover, the feigned attempt becoming, unfortunately, only too real in its fatal issue?" The decline is most notable in women. "Having no intention of killing themselves, they would be more likely to be deterred from making a pretence of so doing by the threat of a punishment held over them, whereas those who really wished to end their existence would be little influenced by a penalty which they would take care to escape by insuring a successful termination to their attempt."

PROGRESS OF CREMATION.

THERE are now 39 crematories in various parts of the world. Italy leads easily with 23, then comes America with 10, while England, Germany, France, Switzerland, Denmark and Sweden are satisfied so far with one apiece. In Italy there were 2 cremations in 1877; the number rose to 15 in 1877, and in 1878 the number was 226. Since 1876, 1,177 cremations have taken place in Italy, whilst the combined numbers from other countries bring the total only to 1,269.

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