healthy mind between a delusion—a monomania—and an act; and yet it may exist, and have been the cause of that act. If we admit the existence of unsoundness of mind to any degree—and, *à fortiori*, to such degree as to give rise to a definite delusion—it is most unphilosophical to apply to that mind, in their entirety, the laws which regulate our own thoughts and motives of appreciable relationship between this thought and that. It is admitting the existence of a sound and unsound mind in the same individual, and using the former to explain the movements of the latter. I use the term “individual” advisedly, because I do not think that we can in such way, or in any such way as the legal doctrine admits and sanctions, recognise the mind of a man as susceptible of division and subdivision.

The view that I take of so-called “partial insanity” may perhaps be rendered more apparent by an illustration or analogy from disease of the heart. I select a well known malady, aortic regurgitation—the failure of one or more aortic valves to close, and by their closure to prevent the reflux of blood from the great vessels into the left ventricle. This condition may exist alone; that is to say, the muscular substance of the heart may be healthy; the action of the other three sets of valves may be perfect; the pulse may be regular; the person so circumstanced may be unaware of his malady; he may feel no discomfort of any kind; he may live to the ordinary term of life; he may die of some affection totally unconnected with his heart-disease. The valvular state may be recognised by its special sound, or by the condition of the pulse; but it often happens that it is discovered accidentally by the physician in examining for the purpose of life-assurance, or on account of some ailment quite unconnected with the heart, such as dyspepsia or a common “cold”, which may chance to bring the individual under observation. There is a partial unsoundness or insanity of the heart, the effects of which may vary widely; they may be *nil*, or they may be such as to render life most miserable, inducing in some attacks of anginal suffering, in others dropsy, in others hæmorrhage. We may explain some of these consequences; we may foresee them; may guard against certain sources of danger; may relieve some forms of distress. But, although the individual with this aortic mischief may live to fourscore years, his life is not insurable for an hour. It is just one of those forms of heart-disease which frequently terminate suddenly, unexpectedly, and without apparent provocation. At any moment the machinery may break down; there is a sudden faintness, a gasp, and all is over. If we were questioned about such case, and the capacities and probable future of the individual, we might reply: “Although he seems well, there is a definite partial disease of the heart. It may lead to this or that; it may be followed by a long series of troubles that shall wear life out; it may go on for many years, and occasion no inconvenience, or it may be fatal at any moment; and why it should be so we cannot always tell.” Sometimes we may trace the connexion between the chronic or sudden troubles that arise, but often they are inexplicable; and I do not know that ever it has been distinctly shown why a mechanical impediment of this particular kind, which is borne so well for many years in spite of work and carelessness, should sometimes come to so abrupt an end.

The man with monomania is somewhat similarly placed. For many years he may go on performing his various mental functions, and filling his place in business or society; he may, to the ordinary observer, display nothing that is wrong; but still there lies the disease, ready to declare itself at any moment, sometimes in a manner that may be connected with the particular delusion, but as often in some other and unexplained direction. The heart is partially unsound in the one case, the brain is partially unsound in the other; but the man is diseased or unsound in both instances, and has not, and cannot have, the full capacities or responsibilities of one who is free from either ailment. The simple fact of the partiality or limitation of the evil is of little moment in estimating the capacity of the patient. With regard to the one, life is uncertain at every turn; and, with regard to the other, reason is insecure at every moment. And so subtle are the relations between each malady and its possible results, that it would be presumption to pretend to predict their course; and it would be monstrous to assert either the presence or absence of direct relation between the malady and certain events that may have happened. Sometimes the relation may be plain enough, but often it is such that we must, with regard to it, confess our present ignorance. The doctrine, the legal position with regard to “partial insanity,” requires revision, for it is out of harmony with what we know of disease.

I have thus endeavoured to shew that the legal tests of insanity are at variance with the facts of science: 1. That the general notion of the value of delusion is unsatisfactory, because delusion may be absent, and because, when present, its value varies from extreme to extreme; 2. That the test of the knowledge of right and wrong, and of the consequences of actions, is again untrustworthy, because it may exist in

the lunatic, and exist to an exaggerated degree, and because its application to particular acts is of character varying in the insane as it does in the sane; 3. That the doctrine with regard to partial insanity is untenable, because there is no such thing as a sound and unsound mind coexisting in the same individual, and because it is impossible to determine the limits of disturbance which may be occasioned by what we term a localised or partial ailment.

The final object of this paper is to propose some mode of remedying the evils which at present exist; and that which occurs to me to promise the best results is to inaugurate a conference between the medical and legal professions upon this matter, with the purpose of taking such steps as may be thought most conducive to the end in view. It is not my wish to forestall anything that such conference might adopt as desirable; but I may be allowed to suggest that the following points should be considered.

1. The arrival at a better definition of insanity generally.
 2. A revision of the tests of insanity; (a) that based upon the existence of delusion; (b) that turning upon the knowledge of right and wrong, and of the consequences of actions.
 3. An examination, in all its bearings, of the doctrine of partial insanity, and its responsibilities.
 4. A revision of the distinction between responsibility for criminal acts and capacity for civil acts.
 5. An inquiry into the mode of dealing with those whose mental condition is impaired, but who are not, in the popular sense of the word, “insane”.
 6. An examination of the possibility of dealing with those bordering upon insanity, as at present recognised.
 7. A determination of the mode to be adopted in dealing with cases, both civil and criminal, when insanity is alleged as a plea of innocence, or as a bar to disposing power.
 8. The possibility and desirability of doing away with the present mode of investigation in a court of law; viz., by the calling of skilled witnesses on different sides.
 9. The possibility or desirability of a court or of a commission to report on all cases of impending legislative inquiry, in regard of those who are alleged to be insane.
- I cannot but believe that, if the legal and medical professions were to meet upon this matter in a friendly manner, and with a common object—not as they do when they are called upon to determine the merits of this or that particular case which may or might be brought before them, but to aim at some general principles of consideration and of action which should be applicable to all cases—the result would be the discovery of some mode of remedying or of diminishing the evils which now exist, and of enabling them in the future to attain in practice that which is the common object set before each of them in theory—viz., the discovery of truth.

NOTES ON SOME POINTS IN PREVENTIVE MEDICINE.*

By C. G. WHEELHOUSE, F.R.C.S., Surgeon to the General Infirmary, Leeds.

[MR. WHEELHOUSE, after thanking the members of the Branch for electing him President, commented briefly on the importance of taking every few years—in accordance with the advice of Sir W. Jenner in his address on Medicine at a General Meeting of the Association—a review of the progress of medicine. He regarded the present age as essentially one of progress, especially in medicine; but at the same time there were failings, of which Therapeutics afforded an example. He then proceeded to speak especially of Preventive or Public Medicine.]

This, gentlemen, is one of the channels into which I would wish to lead your thoughts; and I am well assured that, if I can only induce you to think deeply on the subject, to consider how vastly more numerous are the illnesses which you could prevent than those which you are able to cure, the few minutes I am occupying will not have been badly spent. It will bring to your minds the whole subjects of drainage, of ventilation, of water-supply, of overcrowded dwellings and schools, of impure and unwholesome feeding, of ill-assorted marriages, and finally of the two other great subjects on which I have asked your permission to say a few words.

Now, let me put a question to the whole of this assembly; let me ask each one of you individually, what, in your opinion, as medical men, are the greatest curses and scourges of our race in the present

* Part of the President's Address delivered at the annual meeting of the Yorkshire Branch, June 1872.

day? Two, at all events, I will name; and I think it will be difficult to find any others to which more or greater evils can be traced as sources—I allude to drunkenness and syphilis.

And now, how do we, as a profession, stand with respect to these two scourges? Can we honestly lay claim to having done our best towards either prevention or cure in either of these matters? The mind of the whole nation is at last fairly roused on both subjects; the public is discussing them freely; our statesmen are canvassing them eagerly; our legislators are actively engaged in endeavouring, as far as is possible, to bring the machinery of the law to bear upon both; for the feeling is abroad—widely spread through the length and breadth of the land—that to these two evils may be attributed a large share, at all events, of our diseases, of our accidents, and of the deterioration of our national health and vigour.

To us, as a profession, all parties appeal both for information and for help; and in the former case, though I regret to have to say it, yet truth compels me to admit it, that we are looked to not only as helpers and advisers, but, in many cases, even as primary offenders. Nothing, I take it, can be more true than the assertion that men cannot be made sober by Act of Parliament; but is it not equally true that both men and women may be made drunken, and that only too easily, by misdirected and unwise advice? In how many of the cases of the intemperate is the evil primarily laid to the charge of the doctor? "I should never have taken to the use of wine or spirits if I had not been advised, in the first instance, by my medical man," is the excuse that has many and many a time been made to me when I have felt it my duty to speak plainly to unhappy patients on this subject; and though I know that very often this is only an excuse, yet I cannot hide from myself the fact that, in many cases, there is a grain of truth in the assertion. Many of us have been in times past, and some are still, too much in the habit both of recklessly prescribing stimulants and of fostering the idea that they are an essential part of our aliment. It is against this habit that I would make an earnest appeal. That they are often of the greatest value, and to be replaced by no other remedies, I am quite ready to admit; that without their aid, many a case now saved would sink hopelessly away, we can none of us deny. Ammonia, æther, and such like substitutes, are very well sometimes, and sometimes are of even greater value than either wine or brandy; but to say that they can always take the place of these latter, is a doctrine against which all experience is emphatic, and which, I am sure, will come readily home to every one of us.

Gentlemen, I am no teetotaler, and I do not desire to speak from any teetotal platform; but I am anxious, if I can do so without impropriety, both to speak a word of wholesome warning, and also to save a class of remedies, invaluable when rightly used, from the consequences of careless administration and abuse. Let us take the subject to heart, I entreat you; and especially in the cases of the young and of females, let the prescription of alcohol in any form be a matter of as serious consideration as that of opium or of strychnia, or of any other deadly poison; and when the necessity for their use has passed away, let their discontinuance be as carefully prescribed. The habit of indulgence, when once established, cannot easily be checked; and I would fain wipe away from the hands of the profession the stain of its careless initiation. If, after this course has been adopted, a patient wilfully drifts into their abuse, the fault will clearly be his own, not ours.

And lastly, gentlemen, of syphilis. Of how many frightful maladies would the world be rid of could we but put our heel on this hydra-headed monster and stamp it out of existence? How many hundreds—aye, thousands—of sufferers would learn to bless our endeavours if they only knew to what source rightly to attribute the origination of their ailments? How many of these ailments baffle our utmost skill? How many existences are rendered miserable from the cradle to the grave? and yet how possible is it for us to stretch out a helping hand in this direction? By some far-seeing philanthropists the Contagious Diseases Acts were first promulgated; and though a cry of horror has been raised concerning them throughout the land, it is raised simply in ignorance.

I know that I am speaking to an audience of gentlemen whose opinions may differ somewhat upon this much-vexed question; but I feel that the subject is one of such vital importance that I should be morally guilty if I did not speak out plainly upon it. The cry of horror and of shame that has swelled up throughout the land with respect to these Acts has been a source of infinite satisfaction to me, for it has shown me that the heart of the nation is right in the matters of morality and modesty, and that in this old England of ours the purity of our women is still, as it has ever been, one of the great bulwarks of the nation; but it is a cry raised in ignorance, though fostered from most worthy motives. God forbid that I should seek to further any step that should

tend to lessen the purity of pure English women; but you and I know only too well how deeply changed is the nature of those to whom, and to whom alone, these Acts can apply, and how infinitely below all ordinary standards they have fallen. Surely she who can make prostitution her occupation is beyond the pale of everything but reclamation; and for the sake of humanity, both living and as yet unborn, we are, in my opinion, bound by an inflexible chain of duty to endeavour by every means in our power to check the spread of the illimitable evil which prostitution is capable of inflicting.

They who hold the opinion that the evils which mankind bring upon themselves by their sin should be justly borne by themselves as their punishment, are undoubtedly right; but they have no knowledge, they can have no knowledge, of the dire ramifications of the evil it is sought to check. They forget that the effects of the sins of the father are to be carried by even the third and fourth generations of the children; and it is on behalf of these, the purely innocent, the yet unborn sufferers, that we are pledged to fight. How common to every one of us is the picture of little children brought into the world to pass through a long and weary martyrdom of miserable life; with eyes never destined to behold the glory of God's light; brains never destined to raise them above the level of the brutes; alimentary canals unable to digest the simplest food; bones too rotten ever even to assume the ordinary proportions of health; and bodies defaced, deformed, and crippled, till, instead of bearing the image of the Creator, they become almost too hideous even for the creature to behold.

It is in behalf of such as these that I venture to ask you to turn your thoughts in the direction of syphilis to-day; and I feel sure that, however widely we may differ in our opinions as to the advisability of the remedy applied, we should all be only too thankful if we could venture to hope that, in the end, the disease might perchance be eradicated.

TREATMENT OF ULCERS OF THE LEG.

By W. E. C. NOURSE, F.R.C.S., Brighton.

HAVING treated nearly five hundred cases of ulcerated legs in the outpatient room during the last thirteen years, perhaps I may be allowed to say a word on the question of success. The results have been neither unsatisfactory nor disheartening; the failures few—perhaps ten or fifteen out of the whole number. The cases comprise varicose ulcers, chronic indolent ulcers, eczematous ulcers, irritable ulcers of all sorts (in some cases most acutely painful), inflamed ulcers, sloughing ulcers, and a variety of others depending on struma, syphilis, heart-disease, œdema from Bright's disease or other cause, low vitality from insufficient food and bad air; or the remains of burns, wounds, bruises, abscesses, etc. Scarcely any of the patients have been confined to bed during treatment, and then only for a few days at a time, to allow poulticing or frequent wetting with lotion. Almost all of them have gone about as usual and followed their ordinary avocations, in many instances doing even laborious work. The plan of treatment has been the application of uniform pressure with strapping, bandages, etc.; the sparing use of ointments or lotions, of stimulants to the ulcers, and of internal medicines, and the unsparing use of pains and trouble to do the work properly; the non-disturbance of the healing process by frequent dressings, the wounds being only uncovered once, or at most twice, a week; the recognition of a low vitality as a common cause in most of these cases involving more or less destruction of tissue; and the consequent strict avoidance of mercury, strong or frequent cathartics, and all forms of depressing medicine, and the allowing to the patient his ordinary diet and mode of living, cutting off only whatever seemed positively excessive or injurious, and the removal from the limb of all ligatures, or anything likely to obstruct the circulation, also of irritant or injurious applications. Among the latter must be classed poultices wrongly applied, the unguentum resinæ, and various homely and more or less dirty plaisters, the mere withdrawal of which was a great step towards cure. Surgeons might lessen the mischief done by such things, as also by quack medicines, by recommending to people some harmless applications and remedies for home use in case of need. Some of the legs had been ulcerated for four, six, eight, or even ten years, without healing; others had been healed and treated in different ways, and had broken out again. Some were in a very offensive condition; some with deep, or extensive, or very numerous, ulcers; some with prominent crops of exuberant granulations; many with none at all. Exuberant granulations were scarcely ever touched with caustic; their presence expedited the cure; nor were cauterising, paring, incisions, or other painful proceedings or applications employed. Relief from pain and distress, with increasing power of using the leg, were gene-