

known neuropathologists in Italy. Professor Sciamanna has been, since 1882, Professor of Neuropathology in the University of Rome, and all the physicians whom your correspondent mentions as representatives of the Roman School have been his pupils.

Since Professor Sciamanna assumed the directorship of the clinic and impressed a clinical and neuropathological character upon its scientific movement, its importance has greatly increased. There are now six assistant physicians, and in connection with the clinic a monthly journal is published, which has the honour of exchange with yours.

From Dr. FERRARI.

Dr. Pardo's correction is in accordance with facts, and I regret that omission, as well as several others apparent to the specialty in Italy—notably Professor Bonfigliis, *Association for Idiots*. I also regret various mistakes in printing which arose in consequence of my not having had a proof of my article.

From Dr. F. W. MOTT.

Dr. F. W. Mott, Pathologist to the London County Council and a member of the Tuberculosis Committee of the Medico-Psychological Association, wishes to state that his experience with regard to tuberculosis on the post-mortem table of Claybury Asylum, in no way corresponds with the small percentage given by Dr. Noott in the report of a discussion on page 33 of this present volume of the JOURNAL. At Claybury the percentage is at least 25 per cent. This disclaimer is necessary, owing to letters received from Dr. Crookshank and others, by Dr. F. W. Mott, showing that they were under the impression that he was the speaker on that occasion.

January 21st, 1901.

[We regret to find that the mistake was caused by an unfortunate misprint, Dr. Noott's name appearing as Dr. Mott.—ED.]

#### OBITUARY.

##### JOSEPH GUSTAVUS SYMES.

We regret to have to record the death of Mr. Joseph Gustavus Symes, formerly Medical Superintendent of the Dorset County Asylum, at Southfield, Weymouth, on January 14th, 1901.

Born at Crewkerne, Somerset, February 10th, 1825, he was the only son of the late Admiral Symes, who served through all the wars in the early part of the century. The late Mr. Symes came into Dorset in 1842, as a pupil of the late Mr. Fox, then practising at Cerne Abbas, but who shortly afterwards moved to Weymouth. After the pupilage usual for medical students in those days, Mr. Symes became a student at St. George's Hospital. During his student days he made many fast and long-lived friends, all of whom pre-deceased him. He was strongly in favour of the pupilage system, as being calculated to turn out thorough, practical men. He obtained the qualifications of M.R.C.S. and L.S.A. in 1848, and for some few months afterwards was House Surgeon at the Southampton Infirmary. After leaving Southampton he returned to assist Mr. Fox, and his vivid description of professional visits to the plague-stricken hulks in the harbour about the year 1850 was exceedingly interesting. In 1852 he went to Devizes in Wiltshire, where he practised and had charge of a small private Asylum. It was while here that he received the appointment of Medical Superintendent to the old Dorset County Asylum at Forston, on the death of Dr. Sandon, and commenced his life's work on December 1st, 1854.

Finding the Asylum overcrowded, he worked hard for new and better accommodation, and soon the real work of his life—the new Asylum at Herrison, a mile distant from the old Asylum—was to engage his attention. In 1863 he had the great satisfaction of organising and opening the new buildings on an inclusive site of fifty-five acres. It should here be mentioned that in face of much opposition he secured a detached house (afterwards joined by a conservatory) for the Medical Superintendent, which was a great achievement forty years ago.

From this date until his retirement in 1887 he directed the affairs of both institutions, and many and great were the changes he had been an eye-witness to during his long tenure of office.

When he originally undertook the management of the old Asylum at Forston, the "staples and chains" of by-gone days were in several rooms, though he was assured they had not been used for many years.

From his earliest asylum days he was a strong advocate of non-restraint, though not to the degree he was enabled to witness in the happy years of his retirement. As an administrator he had few equals, and those who knew him best will ever bear witness to his singularly clear judgment and well-balanced mind. Above everything he was punctual and methodical in all his ways and habits—qualities which cannot be shorn from the successful administrator.

His fine commanding presence, his massive head, his soft silken hair showing far below his well-known broad-brimmed hat, made him a very conspicuous figure; and when to all this is added an individuality of wonderful sympathy and tenderness, it is easy to understand the great hold he acquired over those who came under his sway. It was during his years of greatest activity that the late Lord Shaftesbury offered him a Commissionership in Lunacy, which on private grounds he felt himself unable to accept.

When in 1886 he intimated his desire to be relieved from the arduous labours of his office, the Committee of Visitors awarded him the fullest pension it was in their power to grant, but through an unworthy opposition this was not adopted by the Court of Quarter Sessions, and he had the humiliation of having his thirty-two years of ceaseless toil and devoted services rewarded by a pension altogether unworthy of his claims.

Mr. Symes was one of the few remaining links between the past and the present in our own special branch of the profession. He was the intimate friend of the late Dr. Sherlock of Worcester, Dr. McCulloch of Abergavenny, Sir John Bucknill, and Dr. Thurnam, of Devizes. He lived to see the original home of his asylum labours torn asunder and every brick removed, also to see the bare chalk down on which he spent so much personal labour grow into a huge estate of 400 acres with a large modern asylum surrounded with avenues, trees, and shrubberies of great beauty and perfection.

He was retiring almost to a fault, which prevented him from being better known, either amongst his profession or the general community. Two bereavements, one in 1863 and the other in 1891, greatly affected him. The former was the loss of his first wife, for whom no words could describe his love and attachment, and the other was the death of his second son, when an Assistant Medical Officer at Rainhill Asylum.

He leaves a widow and four children to mourn his loss, and never were children the poorer for the loss of a parent, for he was indeed the most loving and affectionate of fathers.

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#### NOTICES BY THE REGISTRAR.

##### CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY IN MENTAL NURSING.

The next examination will be held on Monday the 6th day of May, 1901, and candidates are earnestly requested to send in their schedules, duly filled up, to the Registrar of the Association, not later than Monday the 8th day of April, 1901, as that is the last day upon which, according to the rules, applications for examination can be received.

##### CERTIFICATE IN PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDICINE.

The next examination will be held in July, 1901.

The examination for the Gaskell Prize will take place at Bethlem Hospital in the same month, and the Examiners are authorised to award a second prize in this competition, should one of the candidates attain such a standard as would justify them in doing so.