

chemical agents in destroying them. Nor can any objects be conceived more likely to convey a powerful lesson or more surely point a moral, than the ocular demonstration of the germs which work such disaster amongst us...Further, the knowledge of the existence and life history of germs will never be of much service to humanity so long as it is confined to the medical profession only. Hence the importance of the present laboratory in connection with the International Exhibition at South Kensington, serving as it does to bring before vast numbers of the public the germs themselves, and expose in tangible reality the existence, specificity and characteristics of each."

ON THE INCREASE OF INSANITY, Dr. T. More Madden, in a paper read at a meeting of the Academy of medicine in Ireland in August, inst., said, although the recent increase of insanity had been disputed as a popular fallacy, even by psychological authorities, including Lunacy Commissioners, the statistical evidence of the fact was incontrovertible. At present, one in every 414 of the population of England and Wales is a registered lunatic; while in 1800, there was only one lunatic in 7,300 of the population. In 1806, there were 2,248 lunatics in England and Wales; in 1819, 6,000; in 1823, 8,000; and in 1826, 14,000. In 1845, there was one in 800 of the population insane, and thirty seven years later, one in 414. In Ireland, since 1851, the population decreased 12 per cent., and there has been an increase of 41 per cent. in the number of lunatics. In 1851 the number was 9,980, or one in every 1,291; but last year it had risen to 13,820, or one in 369. The increase had been greater amongst women than men.

EXCRETA AND DISEASE.—In an editorial in a late number of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* the editor writes: "The progress of civilization has demonstrated no one thing more clearly, than that soil and water contaminated by the presence in them of excretory and refuse matters are capable of engendering several of the most distressing and fatal diseases we have to encounter. And yet such contamination has commenced, and

is progressively increasing wherever the excretions and refuse are either deposited in cesspools, sunk in the soil, or turned through sewers into the neighboring waters, whether of brook, river, lake, or sea. The evil has chiefly attracted attention in connection with the sewerage of cities and manufacturing towns, but it exists to a greater or less degree wherever human beings become permanent residents.

A SANITARY CONVENTION, under the auspices of the Michigan State Board of Health, will be held at East Saginaw (Mich.) on December 2nd and 3rd; to which we have received an invitation, and hereby tender our thanks for the same.

THE 'REFUSE DESTRUCTOR' is the name of a very useful furnace recently invented by a Mr. Stafford, engineer of Burnley, which has been doing such efficient work in consuming street and other refuse by fire that it promises to be extensively adopted. Street sweepings, the offal from slaughter-houses and fishmongers' shops, and unpleasant waste matters of all kinds treated in this furnace are rendered not only harmless, but are converted into a residuum which can be utilized for mixing with mortar, and for other purposes. Hence the machine can be made almost self-supporting.

NEW AMBULANCE.—The medical officer of the Metropolitan Asylum board has invented a new ambulance. The improvement consists in a double layer of perforated metal enclosing an absorbent material saturated with a 'germicide,' or destroyer of the minute microscopical particles which tend to propagate disease. Fresh air is admitted through modified improved 'Tobin ventilators' of a horn-shape, with the large end opening externally, whilst the smaller extremity inside the van is provided with a disinfecting air-chamber, constructed like those attached to the other apertures or windows. These improved ambulances are in use by the Metropolitan Asylum Board.

THE LAST NUMBER of the *Glasgow Sanitary Journal* reports another outbreak of enteric fever, evidently connected with a contaminated milk supply. "And