the examiners should not even know from what asylum the papers came. There were three divisions in England, one in Scotland. and one in Ireland, and that could give them an examining board or council of ten. He did not think it was fair so to burden two men. If there were a council of ten they would keep the arrangements right.

Dr. TURNBULL said he seconded that with great pleasure, more especially as he had himself suggested it in conversation with another member. The only point he would refer to in Dr. Yellowlees' remarks was that he thought that the examiners should examine the papers from their own division, beeause if there was any difficulty in any case they could more easily get at the candidate.

Dr. YELLOWLEES was strongly of opinion that they should *not* get at the person, that the examination of the papers should be independent of the person who wrote them. The only doubt he had about it was whether ten was not too large a number.

The PRESIDENT said it was moved that there should be two representatives from each division of the Association for the inspection of the written papers and the setting of the questions—the practical part to be taken as before, the assessor examining in the Superintendent's presence.

Dr. YELLOWLEES did not see how, in the face of the multitude of people, they could improve on that. They could not expect the members of the Board to go round the country to all the different asylums. The fees should also be increased, so that those who examined the papers should get some remuneration for their services.

Dr. TURNBULL said that that came on a little later, and he had no doubt that they would agree with the Educational Committee, who thought that the additional fee was necessary.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was unanimously agreed to

A vote of thanks to the President for his conduct in the Chair terminated the proceedings.

RECENT MEDICO-LEGAL CASES.

REPORTED BY DR. MERCIER.

[The Editors request that members will oblige by sending full newspaper reports of all cases of interest as published by the local press at the time of the assizes.]

Reg. v. Prince.

The *cause célèbre* of this quarter was the trial of Richard Arthur Prince, an actor, for the murder of the popular actor known as William Terriss. The case attracted a great deal of attention in consequence of the circumstances of the crime, but is of no great medical or legal interest. The prisoner waited for Mr. Terriss at the door of the Adelphi Theatre, and as the latter was stooping down to insert the key in the lock the prisoner stabbed him twice in the back. The deceased turned round, and the prisoner stabbed him to the heart. It was proved that the prisoner was extremely poor: that he had many times applied for, and received, assistance from the Actors' Benevolent Fund, and that he had received this money on the recommendation of the deceased. The managers of the fund at length refused to assist him further, and the prisoner appears to have attributed this refusal to the influence of the deceased. It was proved that for many years the prisoner had suffered from delusions of persecution, and that he had very often accused different persons of "blackmailing" him; that he had complained that a Mr. Arthur, manager of a theatre, had been "blackmailing" him for ten years, that he had complained that actors generally had "blackmailed" him; that the men where he worked had been sent by Mr. Arthur to blackmail him; that he had complained that his tea was poisoned. After his arrest for the murder the prisoner repeatedly stated that the deceased had blackmailed him for ten years.

Dr. Bastian stated that he had examined the prisoner at the request of the Treasury, and that the prisoner's mind appeared to be saturated with delusions of persecution. Prisoner's act in killing Mr. Terriss was the result of those delusions. He did not think that the prisoner was capable of exercising self-control at the time. The judge: Would it make any difference in witness's opinion if he thought that prisoner had premeditated the act? Witness: No, because insane persons do premeditate. "I am perfectly certain that the prisoner was insane." Prisoner knew that he was making an assault on Mr. Terriss, but he did not know the quality of the act.

Dr. Hyslop of Bethlem and Dr. Scott of Holloway Gaol gave similar evidence. The learned judge told the jury that there was no doubt that the prisoner committed the act, and there was also evidence that it was premeditated, but premeditation did not prevent a man's being so insane as to be irresponsible at law. The judge then referred to the well-known rule of law, and said that it was clear, according to law, that a person might be insane to a certain extent, and yet be responsible. The mere fact of insanity was not enough to make a person irresponsible.—Guilty, but insane.—Central Criminal Court, January 13, 1898 (Mr. Justice Channell).—*Times*, January 14.

The usual latitude was permitted to the medical witnesses, who were allowed to give evidence of their opinion of the state of mind of the prisoner at the time of crime. The judge summed up in the strict terms of the answers in the McNaghten case, but plainly intimated to the jury that they were at liberty to find the prisoner insane.

Reg. v. Cross.

Prisoner, a coal merchant, aged 22, was indicted for the attempted murder of Annie Drury. Prisoner, disguised with a handkerchief over his face, with two holes cut in it for vision, went to the house at which Mrs. Drury was staying. He had a revolver in one hand, and in the other a dagger made out of the tine of a pitchfork fixed in a wooden haft. He fired the revolver at one of the women in the house, and stabbed another several times. Subsequently he came undisguised to the house in which they had taken refuge, and talked about the outrage, saying that the man who committed it ought to be caught. The plea of insanity was set up, but no details are given in the report. The jury found the prisoner guilty, but recommended him to mercy on the ground that he was of weak mind, although not insane.—Norwich Assizes, February 26, 1898 (Mr. Justice Grantham).—*Times*, February 27.

Another instance of the growing practice of taking into consideration a mental state which, while not involving complete irresponsibility, is yet a reason for mitigation of punishment. In this case, by inflicting only twelve months' imprisonment, the judge appears to have given effect to the plea.

Barnett v. Blagg and others.

This was one of the rare cases in which a will is upset on the ground of insanity. The testator was proved to have suffered from delusions of persecution, which gave rise to a groundless and intense feeling of hostility towards his father, brother, and sister, whom he excluded from benefit by his will. Sir F. Jeune, sitting without a jury, pronounced against the will.—*Times*, December 9, 1897.

THE INSANE POOR IN PRIVATE DWELLINGS IN MASSACHUSETTS.

BY SIR ARTHUR MITCHELL, K.C.B., M.D., LL.D.,

Ex-Commissioner in Lunacy of Scotland.

[In view of the fact that the State of Massachusetts has the near prospect of getting a new Lunacy Law, Sir Arthur Mitchell thought it might be useful to make an effort to secure good provisions in that law, especially in