

reformatory for men, and the Inebriate Reformatory Committee (32, Charing Cross, S.W.) appeal for funds, not to relieve the counties of their obligations, but to meet the pressing wants of the day.

Many cases have been reported showing that the law is being brought into disrepute by the inability of existing homes to receive the persons sentenced. For instance, on the 14th July, the *Times* reports that Annie Bennett was ordered to be detained at Duxhurst for twelve months, and it was found later in the day that there was no room for her. The Chairman of the County of London Sessions said that the Act was practically a dead letter.

In February last the London County Council appointed a committee to submit a scheme whereby the powers conferred by the Act might be exercised. The committee was to consider whether it would be better for the Council to erect a new building or to acquire one already erected. A provisional estimate was given that a reformatory for 100 inmates would cost from £14,000 to £22,000, according to the character of the building. From inquiries previously made it appears that it is not improbable that during the first year about 100 males and 200 females will be dealt with under the Act. They were also to consider whether the Council should contribute towards the establishment or maintenance of a retreat for the reception of persons who, being habitual drunkards but not convicted, are willing to place themselves under care for a period. As the Council under the new Bill has become the licensing authority for retreats in London under the Act, it is directed to report also as to what committee should be referred the duty of considering and reporting on applications for licensing for retreats.

In June, Dr. Collins, the Chairman, presented a report setting forth the state of matters, and stating that they recommended that the Council should establish their own reformatory, although temporary arrangements might be made with existing reformatories. This course has been adopted with the Duxhurst and St. Joseph's Homes for a year.

A conference of the Lancashire County and Borough Councils was held in June, when the chairman, Sir John Hibbert, moved that it was desirable that one inebriates' home for men and two for women should be established for Lancashire. The motion was carried unanimously.

The National United Temperance Council met in July, and it was reported that £2000 had been offered to build an inebriate reformatory, so that the matter would receive immediate consideration.

The counties contributing to the Bristol Homes are Gloucester, Warwick, and Worcester. Dr. Cotton, a member of the Medico-Psychological Association, was appointed medical officer and has given careful attention to his duties. The rules of the Secretary of State prescribed that he should live within two miles of the institution; but considering the chaotic condition of affairs this has been wisely relaxed until the numbers reach 100.

Notwithstanding the activity manifested in these various quarters it is to be hoped that the Government will lose no time in assisting to remedy the present unsatisfactory state of matters by the erection of a model State institution in each of the three divisions of the kingdom. Such an institution should be largely self-supporting when the initial cost is met, and the money could not be more wisely spent. The Government is assuredly, without loss of time, bound to relieve the law courts from the stigma of unfulfilled sentences.

OBITUARY.

SERAFINO BIFFI.

The death has lately been announced of Dr. Biffi, who, next to Verga, with whom he was closely associated, may be regarded as one of the founders of modern Italian psychiatry.

Serafino Biffi was born at Milan in 1822 and studied medicine at Pavia. As a student he took special interest in experimental work, which was then an entirely new method, and was still a student when, with Morganti, he published his researches demonstrating the function of the lingual nerve and his experiments on the innervation of the iris. After graduating with honours he turned from experi-

mental work to devote his energies to the ordinary clinical duties of an assistant at the University of Pavia. In 1848, however, he accepted the post (in succession to Verga) of assistant at the Casa privata dei Pazzi at San Celso, in Milan, and from that time he gave himself entirely to psychiatry. He became Director of San Celso in 1853, and henceforth took a leading part in all that concerned the advance of psychiatry, alike on the scientific and the practical sides. He advocated the establishment of chairs for instruction in mental disease, and was, with Verga, chiefly concerned in the formation of the Società Freniatria and in promoting the first Italian journals devoted to psychiatry. As a medico-legal expert his opinion was always very highly valued, and his reports are regarded as models of sobriety and good sense combined with wide scientific knowledge. He was much interested in criminological and penal questions, and one of his longest studies is a history of the ancient prisons of Milan. He also published a study of tuberculosis, being among the first to recognise its infectious character, and another study of cretinism. His death occurred on the 27th of May.

In an address to the Società Freniatria, Prof. Tamburini dwells on Biffi's amiable character. He was greatly loved by his patients, and took the warmest interest in them, an interest which by no means ceased when they were no longer under his care. He was ever ready to give help and advice, if necessary money also, to patients and students, in a quiet and unostentatious manner.

NOTICES BY THE REGISTRAR.

The following gentlemen were successful at the examination for the Certificate in Psychological Medicine, held on July 13th, 1899.

Examined at Bethlem Hospital, London: Richard Michael Ralph.

Examined at the Royal Asylum, Morningside, Edinburgh: J. Forsyth Falconer, A. J. Martin, and H. J. Maclean.

The following is a list of the questions which appeared on the paper:

1. Give a brief description of the mental symptoms of a case of epileptic insanity, and their relation in point of time to the fits.
2. What are the forms of climacteric insanity? Detail the symptoms of each.
3. Mention the physical and mental symptoms most common in puerperal insanity.
4. State fully how you would treat a case of acute delirious mania.
5. What is meant by melancholia attonita? Mention the different points between it and acute primary dementia.
6. Give a short description of the symptoms, course, prognosis, and treatment of acute alcoholic insanity.
7. What hypnotics are most in use in the treatment of insanity? Mention the dose of each, and in what class of cases it is most serviceable.
8. Mention the points to be attended to in filling up a medical certificate of insanity for a patient's admission to an asylum.

The Bronze Medal has been awarded to F. G. Crookshank, M.D.Lond., Assistant Medical Officer, Northampton County Asylum.

EXAMINATION FOR THE CERTIFICATE IN PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDICINE.

The next examination will be held in December, 1899. Due notice of the date will appear in the medical papers.

EXAMINATION FOR THE NURSING CERTIFICATE.

The next examination for the Certificate of Proficiency in Nursing will be held on Monday, November 6th, 1899, and candidates are earnestly requested to send in their schedules, duly filled up, to the Registrar of the Association not later than Monday, October 2nd, as that will be the last day upon which, under the rules, applications for the examination can be received.

For further particulars respecting the various examinations of the Association, apply to the Registrar, Dr. Benham, City Asylum, Fishponds, Bristol.

NOTICES OF MEETINGS.

MEDICO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

General Meeting.—The next General Meeting will be held in London on 9th November. The meeting will consider the question of Phthisis in Asylums.