

RAMPTON STATE INSTITUTION.

Dr. F. E. E. Schneider, M.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.M., has been appointed Medical Superintendent in succession to Dr. W. Rees Thomas. Mr. J. H. Cobb, M.B., F.R.C.S., has been appointed Honorary Consultant for Diseases of the Ear, Nose and Throat.

PATHOLOGICAL, BACTERIOLOGICAL AND BIOCHEMICAL
SUB-COMMITTEE.

Attention is drawn to the fact that a number of eminent scientific men have agreed to act as Advisers to the Pathological, Bacteriological and Biochemical Sub-committee, and any institution or member of the Association desirous of technical advice in research should communicate with the Honorary Secretary, Dr. F. A. Pickworth, Hollymoor, Northfield, Birmingham.

OBITUARY.

WILLIAM FRANCIS NELIS, M.D.Durh., L.R.C.P.Edin., L.R.F.P.S.Glasg.

We regret to record the death, in his 76th year, of Dr. W. F. Nelis, late Medical Superintendent of the Newport Mental Hospital. He was born in Australia, of Irish parentage; he came to this country to study medicine and proceeded to Anderson College and Glasgow University. He took the Scottish Triple qualification in 1879, and in 1896 proceeded to the M.D.Durham. After qualifying, he was House Surgeon at the Glasgow Infirmary, and then sailed for a short sea voyage as ship's surgeon. On his return he decided to take up psychiatry as his life's work. He was Medical Officer to the Carmarthen Mental Hospital for a year, and subsequently Assistant Medical Officer at the Monmouthshire Mental Hospital, Abergavenny, for twenty-five years. In 1905 he was appointed Medical Superintendent of the newly erected Newport Mental Hospital at Caerleon. This post he held until his retirement in January, 1929.

The opening of the new Hospital entailed much hard work and foresight, and under his fostering care it grew to maturity. He took the greatest delight and pride in it, earning the confidence of the Committee, who were as zealous as himself in promoting the well-being of the patients under their care. His relations with the patients were of the kindest; time and custom never dimmed the sympathy he felt for them in their tragic affliction, and his ear was ever ready to listen to their grievances, however trivial.

He had an extensive knowledge of psychiatry, though an innate modesty and shyness prevented him from giving vent to his views in public. He realized that there was a long road yet to travel before the secrets of mental diseases were laid bare, and to this end he thought that the best chances of their elucidation lay in the establishment of coordinated research centres staffed by specialists and supplemented by clinical experience.

Dr. Nelis was under middle height, but in spite of lack of inches, he had a dignified personality; his eyes were keen and shrewd, and he was endowed with common sense and excellent judgment. In addition he was blessed with an extraordinarily retentive memory, which remained unimpaired to the end. He could recall by name patients who had left the hospital many years before, together with their peculiarities.

He had more than a passing acquaintance with botany, and the fine avenue of trees leading from the hospital gates to the main building, with shrubs arranged throughout the grounds (the laying-out of which he personally supervised) is a tribute to his skill as a botanist and to his artistic bent.