

IRISH DIVISION.

THE SUMMER MEETING of the Irish Division of the Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland was held, by the kind invitation of Dr. M. J. Nolan, at Downpatrick, on Thursday, July 4th.

Members present: Dr. J. Colles, Dr. Considine, Lieut.-Col. Dawson, Dr. Drapes, Dr. J. O'C. Donelan, Dr. Nolan, Dr. Hetherington, Dr. Smyth, Dr. Graham, Dr. Greene, Dr. Gavin, Dr. O'Mara, Dr. Grimbly, Dr. Cotter, and Dr. Leeper (Hon. Secretary).

Dr. Nolan having been moved to the Chair, the minutes of the previous meeting were read and signed.

Letters of apology for unavoidable absence were read from the following: Dr. Rainsford, Stewart Asylum; Dr. Mills, Ballinasloe; Dr. McKenna, Carlow; Dr. Lawless, Armagh; Dr. H. Eustace, Dr. Redington, Portrane; Dr. Irwin, Limerick; Dr. Revington, Dundrum; Dr. Fitzgerald, Waterford; and Dr. Martin, Letterkenny.

The CHAIRMAN asked, before the regular business of the meeting was proceeded with, to draw the attention of the members to the loss which the Association and the whole faculty of Psychological Medicine has sustained by the death of Dr. Maudsley. The following resolution was proposed by Dr. Drapes, seconded by Dr. J. O'C. Donelan, and passed in silence, the members standing in their places:

"We, the members of the Irish Division of the Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland, desire to place on record our deep sense of the loss Psychological Medicine has sustained by the death of Dr. Henry Maudsley, and of our appreciation of his munificent endowment of the London Mental Hospital."

A letter was read from the Inspectors of Asylums, Dublin Castle, acknowledging the receipt of the resolution passed at the Spring Meeting *re* recent conduct of attendants in Irish asylums.

The following candidates having been duly balloted for were declared elected:

The Right Hon. MICHAEL COX, M.D., R.U.I., Hon. Causa., F.R.C.P.I., Physician, St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin; Lord Chancellor's Consulting Visitor in Lunacy for County and City of Dublin.

Dr. SAMUEL JOHN GRAHAM, Resident Medical Superintendent, Villa Colony Asylum, Purdysburn, Belfast.

The CHAIRMAN proceeded to introduce a discussion on the proposed alteration of the Lunacy Laws, in accordance with the work now under the consideration of the Parliamentary Committee of the Association. He stated that this matter had received much attention from the Irish Division and that so long ago as March 26th, 1907, at the Spring Meeting of the Division, the whole question of Lunacy legislation in Ireland engaged the attention of the members, and all he considered that could be done by those now assembled was to reconsider the recommendations then made and to obtain the general sense of the meeting as regards the proposals for new Lunacy legislation now before the Parliamentary Committee. The Hon. Secretary read a letter from Dr. Cole, Hon. Sec., Parliamentary Committee, stating that three recommendations were now being made by the Lunacy Legislation Committee and that he hoped to report further progress. The three recommendations were as follows:

(1) The establishment of Clinics (for the treatment of early cases of mental disorders by local authorities).

(2) The approval of Homes for borderland Mental cases received for payment.

(3) The extension of Voluntary Boarders to the County and Borough Asylums.

The Hon. Secretary read a reply to the letter which he had sent to Dr. Cole.

The Chairman and the members discussed these three proposals, and the sense of the meeting was obtained from each member present, Dr. Colles, Dr. Considine, and Lieut.-Col. Dawson giving the meeting valuable information as regards the legal points raised.

The opinions of the members were generally as follows:

Firstly, as regards the establishment of Clinics for the treatment of early cases: That these were undesirable, except as hospitals attached or adjacent to existing asylums where patients could be received without certification.

Secondly, the meeting was unanimously opposed to the proposal for setting up approved Homes for borderland cases for paying patients.

Thirdly, as regards the question of the admission of Voluntary Boarders to County and Borough Asylums, the Irish Division approved of such procedure, and desired that a similar facility be extended to Ireland as existed in England and Scotland for the admission of voluntary patients.

It was proposed by Dr. W. Smyth, seconded by Dr. Graham, and passed unanimously:

"That the following committee be elected as a sub-committee of the Parliamentary Committee of the Association to co-operate in securing alterations in the Lunacy Laws as affecting Ireland: Dr. Gavan, Dr. J. O'C. Donelan, Dr. Nolan, Dr. Eustace, Dr. Drapes, Dr. Rainsford; Dr. Leeper to act as Hon. Secretary."

The CHAIRMAN proceeded to draw the members' attention to the recommendations approved at the meeting of the Irish Division held on March 26th, 1907, when the Irish Councils' Bill was before the House of Commons.

The first matter dealt with in the memorandum then drawn up was as follows: "In order to check retrograde or otherwise undesirable movements, there should be a strong Commission at the head of the Lunacy Administration of the country, possessed of ample powers, which should not be merged into any other Government department."

The meeting strongly expressed the opinion that it would be most desirable to increase and strengthen the powers of the Inspectors of the Irish Asylums, and a policy of obtaining powers for the Irish Government Lunacy Officials, similar to those in the hands of the English Lunacy Commissioners, was endorsed by the meeting. Dr. COLLES kindly explained the legal aspects of the case, and Lieut.-Col. DAWSON, Dr. CONSIDINE, and Dr. J. O'C. DONELAN expressed their views on the matter, which were of valuable help to the members in forming their opinion on the subjects. Dr. J. O'C. DONELAN spoke as regards the danger of the Irish asylums being merged under the authority of the Local Government Board, a procedure which, if it ever occurred, would be disastrous to Irish asylums, and prejudicial to the interests of the insane poor.

The question of the amendment in the modes of admission of patients to asylums was next reconsidered. The necessity for such amendment was unanimously felt, and Dr. GAVIN spoke in favour of the "Dangerous Lunacy Act" being repealed, and, after much discussion, in which almost all present joined, and cases of gravity having been mentioned, where great hardships were inflicted upon patients and murder had resulted from failure to have patients promptly sent to asylums owing to the present obsolete and cumbrous procedure, the meeting almost unanimously recommend:

(1) "That the law as regards the admission of patients to district asylums be assimilated to that in England and Scotland.

(2) "That, so far as possible, lunacy should be dissociated from criminality, and that the insane poor should not be treated as criminals in order to receive treatment for their mental disease. That the so-called 'House Form'—'Form D'—be universally used, and that it be obligatory upon asylum governors to admit patients on the so-called 'House Form.' Certification should be uniform, and either one medical certificate, or two, if thought necessary, should be accepted, altering the present anomalous procedure where a patient requires only one certificate on one form and two on another."

The question of bail, in the case of patients being removed from asylums, was discussed, and the present law as regards recognizances in the case of patients was considered unsatisfactory, as they seemed never to be or to have been enforced.

Dr. COLLES kindly expressed the opinion that the existing English Lunacy Act is an admirable procedure, and covers all the disabilities from which the procedure in this country suffers.

The question of the conveying of patients to district asylums was next considered, and the opinion expressed that policemen should not be in charge of

female patients so sent, although it was understood that this duty was now always assigned to a married sergeant of the R.I.C. Nurses should be employed in this service and not the police.

Dr. COLLES drew the attention of the meeting to the present mode of granting and renewing licences to private asylums, which procedure was similar in Ireland to that of granting ordinary publicans' licences, and suggested that these licences should be granted by the Lord Chancellor on the recommendations of the inspectors of Irish asylums.

The CHAIRMAN spoke as to the advisability of deleting the word "destitute" from Form "D," which was thought desirable, as this was obviously an error in a form for a paying patient.

Dr. HETHERINGTON, as the oldest member present, proposed a cordial vote of thanks to Dr. and Mrs. Nolan for their kindness and hospitality in entertaining the members. Dr. J. O'C. DONELAN, in seconding the resolution, wished to express to Dr. Nolan the congratulations of the visitors upon the wonderful improvements in the asylum since his last visit in 1907, and to state the great appreciation by all those who visited the asylum of its high standard of efficiency and the admirable condition to which it had been brought by Dr. Nolan. This resolution having been passed by acclamation, and Dr. NOLAN having replied, the meeting ended.

SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION.

THE SPRING MEETING of the South-Eastern Division of the Medico-Psychological Association was held at 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, London, W. 1, at 2.30, p.m., on Wednesday, May 1st, 1918.

The following members were present: Drs. D. Bower, A. W. Daniel, E. L. Dunn, F. H. Edwards, L. O. Fuller, A. H. Griffith, G. H. Johnston, H. J. Norman, E. S. Pasmore, R. P. Smith, and J. N. Sergeant (Hon. Divisional Secretary).

Dr. R. P. Smith took the Chair.

The minutes of the last meeting, having been printed in the Journal, were taken as read and confirmed.

Dr. J. N. Sergeant was elected Hon. Divisional Secretary, and Major Sir R. Armstrong-Jones and Drs. D. Bower, M. Craig, and A. W. Daniel Representative Members of the Council for the year 1918-1919.

Drs. Daniel and Fuller were elected to fill vacancies on the Committee of Management.

Dr. Walter Follitt Blandford was elected an Ordinary Member of the Association.

It was decided to leave the place and date of the Autumn Meeting, 1918, to the discretion of the Hon. Divisional Secretary.

It was proposed by Dr. Sergeant, seconded by Dr. Edwards, and carried, "That the meeting requests the Council of the Association to consider the advisability of asking the Board of Control to act by giving badges or otherwise to help the superintendents of institutions to retain their staff."

Capt. Hubert J. Norman, R.A.M.C., then read his paper, "Evolutionary Progress in Psychiatry: A Plea for Optimism." (This paper appeared in the April number of the Journal.)

A short discussion of the paper followed, in which Drs. Percy Smith, E. S. Pasmore, J. Noel Sergeant, Francis H. Edwards, and A. Hume Griffith took part. Capt. Norman replied, and so brought to a conclusion an enjoyable and instructive meeting.

ASYLUM WORKERS' ASSOCIATION.

MEETING AT THE MANSION HOUSE.

(Abridged Report.)

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the Asylum Workers' Association was held at the Mansion House, London, on May 29th, the Lord Mayor (Alderman Charles A. Hanson, M.P.), in the chair. This was the second occasion on which the Association had been fortunate enough to foregather in the famous building, the first