

instructive discussion, which was taken part in by Drs. Bruce, Clouston, Havelock, Hotchkis, Carlyle Johnstone, Macrae, and Urquhart. (Dr. Robertson's paper, with the discussion, will appear in the April number of the Journal.)

Dr. CARLYLE JOHNSTONE drew attention to some of the more important points in the working of the Asylum Officers' Superannuation Act, which were discussed by those present.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman concluded the business of the meeting.

The members afterwards dined together at the Caledonian Railway Station Hotel.

IRISH DIVISION.

The AUTUMN MEETING of the Irish Division took place at the Royal College of Physicians, Kildare St., Dublin, by kind permission of the President and Fellows of the College, on Saturday, November 5th, 1910, at 2.30 p.m. Dr. T. Drapes, President-elect, was voted to the chair, and there were also present—Drs. R. R. Leeper, E. O'Neill, J. Mills, M. J. Nolan, and W. R. Dawson (Hon. Sec.). Apologies were received from Drs. C. E. Hetherington, F. O'Mara, W. Graham, Jas. J. Fitzgerald, and P. J. Dwyer.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and signed.

A short discussion took place regarding the refusal of the Council to pay the expenses of officers in attending meetings, and it was proposed by Dr. O'Neill, seconded by Dr. Nolan, and passed unanimously—

"That the Council having declined to accede to the request of the Irish Division that the Secretary's expenses in attending meetings be paid, we hereby resolve that in future his expenses be paid, by special subscription, by the members of the Irish Division."

The Secretary was accordingly directed to furnish an account of his expenses at the end of his year of office.

A letter from Sir George P. O'Farrell was read, conveying his thanks to the Division for their resolution of regret at his retirement.

The following was ballotted for and declared unanimously elected an ordinary member of the Association: Geoffrey Scroope, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O.Univ.Dubl., Assistant Medical Officer, Central Asylum, Dundrum (proposed by Drs. G. Revington, J. O'C. Donelan, and W. R. Dawson).

It was decided to ask Dr. Donelan to allow the Spring Meeting of the Division, fixed for April 27th, 1911, to be held at the Richmond Asylum, Dublin.

The HON. SECRETARY reported (in the absence of Dr. W. Graham) that the Sir George O'Farrell Presentation Committee had collected a sum of £228 4s. 6d., of which £10 10s. had been spent on a silver tube to hold an Address, and £4 14s. 6d. on expenses, leaving a balance of £213 for a portrait. The presentation had been made at the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin, on October 5th, 1910.

A general discussion then took place with reference to the recent reduction of the capitation grant from Imperial funds towards the support of the pauper insane. Eventually a unanimous resolution was passed strongly re-affirming "the absolute necessity of a grant in aid towards the maintenance of pauper lunatics in District Asylums, at a minimum sum of 4s. per week per head, if efficient care and treatment are to be kept up." It was directed that this should be sent to the Chief Secretary, the Inspectors, and all the Irish Members of Parliament.

A discussion followed on the hours of duty of asylum attendants, and there was a general expression of opinion that there should be a uniform scheme of leave for attendants in all district asylums, and that representations to this effect should be made to the Inspectors of Lunatics.

It was reported that the Divisional Committee for promoting interest in the work of the Association amongst the assistant medical officers of Irish asylums had taken place that day. No response had been received to their invitation for collective reports, and it had been agreed to defer further action pending the establishment of the system of Divisional Prizes.

Dr. Dwyer being absent, it was agreed to postpone his paper, and Dr. O'NEILL then read his "Notes of a Case of Melanotic Alveolar Sarcoma of the Liver

characterised by Rapidity of Growth and Abnormal Weight." The paper was illustrated by naked-eye and microscopic specimens (see p. 112).

Dr. LEEPER remarked that the case presented by Dr. O'Neill was of great interest to him. In these cases the production of melanin in such an enormous quantity in the body in such a short period was very astonishing. He understood that melanin was produced by the action of an enzyme upon a proteid. In a case somewhat similar to the case of Dr. O'Neill which he had treated in St. Patrick's Hospital, the first noticeable symptom was a small black nodule the size of a pea on the skin of the patient's forearm. Within one fortnight this patient's whole body was covered with multiple round-celled melanotic sarcomata, and at the autopsy granules and round pea-like tumours were found in the cerebral cortex and cerebellum. The primary growth seemed to have been in the great omentum. Dr. Leeper wondered why these melanotic sarcomata did not appear to spring from those seats in the body where melanin was a normal constituent, like the *locus niger* and elsewhere. In his case, although melanotic sarcomata were freely scattered through the frontal and parietal lobes and the cerebellum, no increase of melanin was observed in the *locus niger* or *locus ceruleus*, which seemed to point to the fact that the melanin found in the sarcomata was a different substance chemically from the normal melanin of the body.

The SECRETARY said that the microscopic preparations seemed to bear out Mr. Handley's view that the propagation of sarcoma took place by continuous growth of the cells along the lymphatics, as lymphatics containing pigmented sarcoma-cells were to be seen in many places in the specimens shown.

Dr. O'NEILL, in replying, stated he had shown the liver to an Army surgeon of nearly twenty years' experience in India, where diseases of the liver are so prevalent, and said he had never come across such a remarkable case. It was a cause of great regret that there had been no examination of the brain, but, as he had already stated, this was not possible. Coley⁽¹⁾ refers to a case where a small tumour was found in the palm of the hand, and although removal was urgently suggested the patient refused. Later on she placed herself in the hands of Christian Scientists, who persuaded her that she was getting better, but ultimately the arm had to be amputated. Coley has also recommended treatment of inoperable sarcoma with mixed toxins of erysipes and *Bacillus prodigiosus*. The liver appears to be the largest ever recorded.

The meeting terminated.

NOTE ON THE USE OF PADDED ROOMS AND THE PRACTICE OF LOCKING UP PATIENTS BY DAY IN SINGLE ROOMS.

By GEORGE M. ROBERTSON, M.B., F.R.C.P.Edin., Physician-Superintendent, Royal Edinburgh Asylum, Morningside.

In the October number of the Journal I have been taken to task (p. 750) for having "been indiscreet in classing as undesirable some practices which have been shown to be uncontrovertibly sound on grounds of reason, as well as of emotion, and only to be inapplicable when wrongly applied." These practices are the use of padded rooms and what is technically called "seclusion," but which is simply and accurately described as locking up patients by day in single rooms. I must again say that I do consider these practices *undesirable*, that I do not admit them to be *uncontrovertibly sound*, and that the propriety of their application at all times is *open to doubt*. As I have had an experience of twenty-one years' duration full of experimental research into methods, and as the opinions expressed above have been founded on this personal experience, I feel myself on fairly solid ground.

In the first place I consider the two practices as essentially undesirable as they can possibly be, and I place them, though on a lower level, in the same category as mechanical restraint, which is only resorted to most exceptionally and in the direst necessity. Of course, it is possible to say that if mechanical restraint be necessary and does good in one case for one day in 100,000, that to that extent the practice of it is desirable. A similar limited desirability may be claimed for the padded

(1) *Phil. Medical Journal*, 1901.