

progress. He felt grateful for Col. Thomson's remarks, also for the goodwill with which the Colonel allowed him to take up the threads of his own pioneer work. That speaker laid stress on the reluctance of general hospitals to confer facilities for studying mental cases, and in that he was only speaking what was the fact. But if staffs of hospitals based their experience upon the effect of one acute case in their wards, that they should take up a hostile attitude on this question was what one would expect, because the mixture of mental and general cases in the same wards must be profoundly bad for both. One wanted to see them in wards under the same great label as the wards for general cases, namely the name of the general hospital in question. What Sir Frederick Mott said would surely give them food for thought. Some of Sir Frederick's comments sounded as if he took some exception to the formidable nature of the diplomas; but he, Dr. Bond, laid stress himself on not trying to teach too much detail, and upon concentrating upon the "institutes" of the required subjects. Therefore he felt that Sir Frederick and he were at one on the matter. He was also glad Sir Frederick insisted upon particular attention being paid, in whatever teaching psychiatrists were able to do, to the relation of this branch to general medicine, an insistence which, if included in any scheme—and there was a precedent in the case of the diplomas—would probably abolish such terms, which he disliked, as "alienism" and "alienists." Dr. Steen declared that what the paper did was to preach to the converted. He knew Dr. Steen was right in that remark, and in bringing this paper before the Association it was with no such ideas as that the members stood in need of conversion on these points. His hope had been that the reading of the paper here might lead to some decision being taken—by way of the formation of a Committee or any other means—again to carry out propaganda work in this and other places where there appeared to be some stagnation. With regard to the idea of Dr. Peachel that a *précis* of the paper should be printed and circulated to medical superintendents with a view of it getting into the hands of members of visiting committees and others, that was a flattering suggestion, but he thought there should be pause before it was adopted, and that time should be taken for consideration as to the best means of securing progress in our speciality. Still, whatever the Association chose to do with regard to the paper was a matter entirely for them. He desired to express his thanks to Sir Robert Armstrong-Jones for what he had said. It was with great difficulty Sir Robert reached the meeting at all. It was particularly interesting to know that a mental department had been founded at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, with all its ancient traditions. That gentleman was right when he assumed that the object of the present paper was to kindle a wide interest in the subject, not among members of this Association, but among the public. And the point in the letter from Dr. Auden was important. He, Dr. Bond, was not sure that the syllabuses of the different Universities granting the Diploma dwelt sufficiently on the question of mental deficiency, yet it loomed so large now that it might be well to press on the University authorities this Association's opinion as originally expressed in their memorandum—that there should be optional subjects provided for in the Diploma conditions.

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#### IRISH DIVISION.

THE AUTUMN MEETING of the Irish Division of the Medico-Psychological Association was held on Thursday, November 6th, 1919, in the Royal College of Physicians.

Members present: John M. Colles, K.C., LL.D., in the Chair, Lieut.-Col. W. R. Dawson, Drs. Hetherington, Gavin, Nolan, Greene, H. Eustace, Keane, Harvey, Mills, J. O'C. Donelan, Rutherford, and Leeper (Hon. Divisional Secretary).

Before the business of the meeting was proceeded with, it was proposed by Dr. Hetherington and seconded by Dr. Eustace:

"That this meeting of the Irish Division of the Medico-Psychological Association desires to place on record its extreme regret at the loss which the Association has sustained by the death of Dr. Drapes, who was one of its oldest and most valued members, and this meeting expresses itself fully in accordance with the action of the Hon. Secretary, Dr. Leeper, in sending, at the time of the sad event,

to the members of the deceased's family a wreath and letter of sympathy in the name of the Irish Division."

The resolution was passed in silence, the members standing in their places.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and signed.

It was proposed by Dr. Nolan, seconded by Dr. Mills and passed unanimously:

"That in the appointment of an Editor to the *Journal of Mental Science*, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of the late lamented Dr. Drapes, the Irish Division desires unanimously to place the name of Lieut.-Col. Dawson before the Council as a suitable successor and as representing this country."

Dr. MILLS drew attention to the fact that the date of the Summer Meeting fixed in 1920 would possibly interfere with the Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association, and it was decided that the date fixed for the Summer Meeting should again be considered at the next meeting.

Dr. NOLAN next introduced his discussion upon "The Irish Asylum Service and Its Relation to the Ministry of Health Act."

"I venture to introduce this discussion with some degree of doubt, as I am not quite sure that there exists an Irish Asylum Service in a departmental sense, and if there is, that it has any relation to the Ministry of Health Act, at least so far as the Public Health Council in Ireland, as created under that Act, is concerned. In any event, a discussion may help to throw light on many doubtful matters, and possibly be the means of shaping a policy or plan of campaign, to enable this Division of the Medico-Psychological Association to express reasoned opinions as to the future of the Irish asylums, their patients, staff and administration, as well as on allied matters of public health.

"So far it would seem that the attitude of those responsible for the Ministry of Health Act, beyond the mere statement in that Act, that it is to deal with 'the treatment of mental defects,' has shown, as far as I am aware, no disposition to put that clause into effect, and it is remarkable that the opening address of the Chairman of the Health Council contains no reference to mental disease, nor does the Council itself embrace any expert representation of the interests of the insane and the general question of insanity, its prevention, increase, and efficient treatment.

"Possibly all this is being dealt with by the inspectors of lunatics in secret treaty with the promoters of the Act. If so it is in good hands, and any action of this Division will no doubt be in support of and accord with their proposal. But I submit that the matter is one which should be handled openly and above board, and in the first instance by those who have a practical everyday knowledge of the public asylums. Hence, I venture to ask you to-day to consider what bearings this Act may have on those institutions. Personally, I see great potentialities for good, or for evil, and much must be considered before we can see clearly how to secure the maximum of the good and the minimum of evil.

"I do not propose to read you any hard and fast conclusions, but simply to name the points for consideration.

#### "(1) AS TO INSANITY.

"Pathological research in laboratory work, now optional, to be made obligatory.

"Treatment of incipient insanity by special expert advice, say at several centres in each district.

"Institutional treatment.

"Special specific treatment.

"Boarding-out. Now that conditions of life have improved and labour conditions are so difficult, more toleration would be extended to defectives received into family care.

#### "(2) THE STAFF.

"Its adequate pay and training. Its status as a nursing body restored by making strikes without notice a criminal offence.

#### "(3) ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC ASYLUMS.

"Augmentation of the grant in aid. Adequate medical staff, with special aid in matters of dentistry, etc.

" Other matters—as to the position and powers of the inspectors, etc., and legal amendments to existing Act, as discussed at the Summer Meeting of the Division at Downpatrick in 1918—might also be included in a Bill.

" It would seem to me, in any event, that it is the clear duty of this Division to formulate a constructive policy of action in all these matters, in the event of any legislative measures which may be proposed later. Any such policy should be well considered.

" I would appeal to the members to treat the matter from a broad, unselfish standpoint, keeping only in view as a goal whatever is in the best interests of the afflicted insane."

A full discussion followed Dr. Nolan's opening statement, in which almost all the members present took part. It seemed to be the general feeling that a strong central controlling body co-ordinating the Irish Asylum Service in the interests of the insane and standardising and improving the treatment and general management of asylums was urgently needed, and should be incorporated into any legislative measure dealing with the same. The various points of Dr. Nolan's paper were discussed and generally approved of. It was finally proposed by Dr. Donelan, seconded by Dr. Gavin and passed unanimously:

" That the Parliamentary Sub-Committee of the Irish Division be directed to consider matters relating to the central control of the asylum service and any cognate matters, and to furnish a report to the Irish Division at its next meeting, and that the names of Dr. Colles, Dr. Greene and Dr. O'Doherty be added to the Irish Division's Parliamentary Sub-Committee."

The HON. SECRETARY mentioned that Dr. Eustace kindly invited the Division to hold its Spring Meeting at Hampstead House. Dr. Eustace's invitation was accepted with thanks.

#### NORTHERN AND MIDLAND DIVISION.

THE AUTUMN MEETING of the Northern and Midland Division was held by the kind invitation of Dr. A. J. Eades at the North Riding Asylum, Clifton, York, on Thursday, October 30th, 1919.

The President, Dr. Bedford Pierce, presided.

The following fourteen members were present: Drs. G. L. Brunton, A. J. Eades, S. Edgerley, C. L. Hopkins, G. R. Jeffrey, W. S. Kay, R. M. Ladell, H. J. Mackenzie, H. D. MacPhail, J. Middlemass, J. E. Middlemiss, B. Pierce, J. B. Tighe, T. S. Adair; and three visitors—Drs. H. J. Drake-Brockman, J. Lowther and L. R. Oswald (Scottish Division).

Apologies for non-attendance were received from several members.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

A ballot was taken for Henry George Drake-Brockman, M.R.C.S.Eng., L.R.C.P.Lond., Assistant Medical Officer, the Mental Hospital, Middlesbrough. Proposed by Drs. Geddes, Hopkins and Adair as an ordinary member of the Association, and he was unanimously elected.

On the proposal of Dr. Eades, seconded by Dr. Middlemass, Drs. S. R. MacPhail and Bedford Pierce and Major Street were unanimously re-elected to form the Divisional Committee for the next twelve months.

#### CONTRIBUTION.

Dr. G. RUTHERFORD JEFFREY then read a paper entitled " Notes on Three Cases, showing the Value of Hypnosis and Suggestion as an Aid to Treatment." The first case was that of a lady who was suffering "presumably from mania associated with gestation." She broke down mentally from worry and was very restless and exalted. She was hypersensitive, and as her condition "was only a passing emotional storm" it was thought it might be checked if her mind could be "completely calmed." She was put under a light hypnosis and it was suggested to her that she "would sleep all right and awaken feeling well." She slept for nine hours and awoke feeling much better. From this time she steadily improved and made a good recovery. The second case was one in which a distressing