

1. "Records of medicines prescribed need *no longer* be inserted" (Journal).— "Entries . . . recording the *medical* and other *treatment* with the results *shall* be made in the case-book" (Rule 13).

2. "Continuation orders of patients whose reception orders are dated on *or after* February 1st, 1890, are to be included in one list. *All others* are to be made *separately*" (Journal).— "With respect to patients whose reception orders were dated on *or prior* to the first day of February, 1890, the special reports and certificates . . . shall be included in one list . . . and with respect to patients whose reception orders are dated *subsequently* to the first day of February, 1890, a special report and certificate . . . shall be made and signed for *each* such patient . . ." (Rule 26).

[1. "*The medical and other treatment*" is to be recorded, but it is *no longer necessary to keep* "an accurate record of the medicines administered," i.e., to copy the prescriptions. 2. "*On or after*" has been inadvertently used for "*on or prior.*"—*Ed.*]

A MONSTROUS SUGGESTION.

Under this heading we commented in our last issue on the Report of a Committee of the Medico-Legal Society of New York on certain proposed amendments in the Law of "Commitment of the Insane." We are now informed by the Chairman of the Committee that the suggestions which we stigmatised, and justly stigmatised, as monstrous, formed no part of the recommendation of the Committee, but were parts of an amendment which the Committee refused to approve or recommend.

The Committee have, however, only themselves to thank for the error into which we were led, for their report was drawn up in such a form that no person who was not present at their proceedings could come to any other conclusion than that at which we arrived. The following is the form in which it is made:—

"Resolved . . . The existing law is as follows. [Here the terms of the existing law are set forth.]

"The proposed amendment is as follows. [Here the proposal which we characterised as monstrous is set forth.]

"All of which is respectfully submitted.

"[Here follow the signatures of the members of the Committee.]"

We regret that we should have been led into error, and should have ascribed to the entire Committee a proposal which emanated from one of its members, and was not adopted by the Committee as a whole; but in view of the form of the report, and the plain statement that "the foregoing paper was read and considered, and after debate was unanimously approved by that Committee," we do not see how the error could have been avoided. We willingly publish this explanation of what appeared to be a grievously wrong finding, and refer our readers to page 42 *et seq.* of the "Medico-Legal Journal" for June, 1895, where the following resolutions are set forth:—

"1. That the present law is faulty in permitting any citizen to be committed and confined in an asylum, public or private, or in any institution, home, or retreat for the care and treatment of the insane, upon the mere certificate of two physicians under oath. 2. That such a commitment made in this manner, before it has been approved by a court or judge of competent jurisdiction, is in direct violation of the organic law of the State, and of the United States. 3. That the qualifications specified in the law, as it now exists, as to the competency of the certifying physicians, requiring only three years' actual practice of his profession, and without requiring evidence of his experience in or practical knowledge of insanity, are entirely inadequate to protect the liberty of the citizen. 4. That the statutory qualifications of the certifying physicians, as now stand in the law, would not be sufficient to enable said physician to testify as an expert in a court of justice where the question of insanity was at issue. 5. That in our opinion confinement of the insane in an asylum is not necessary, beneficial, or even prudent in all cases, and that before a judge signs a warrant of commitment, the

law should require him to be satisfied, by competent evidence, that the insane person, if at large, would be dangerous to himself or others, or that treatment in an asylum would be beneficial to him. 6. That in all cases of doubtful insanity judges, before signing warrants of commitment for insane persons, should assign counsel for the alleged lunatic when he is not otherwise represented. 7. That in our opinion, in the matter of commitment of the insane, the duty of medical men should be limited to giving medical evidence, and the responsibility for the commitment should rest upon the judge, and not upon the physician; that the medical profession has greatly suffered in public estimation by the practical working of the existing law, which throws upon the certifying physician the opprobrium of unfortunate or ill-advised commitments."

HACK TUKE MEMORIAL.

The subscriptions announced to September 10th amounted to £220 16s. 7d. Further subscriptions have been received from:—

	£	s.	d.
Dr. Spence Watson	1	1	0
Dr. Miles (N.S.W.)	1	1	0
Dr. Mercier	5	5	0
Dr. Rayner	5	5	0
Dr. E. M. Courteney	5	5	0
Dr. Oscar Woods	1	1	0
Dr. Rogers	2	2	0
Dr. Bevan Lewis	2	2	0
Dr. J. Borie	2	2	0
Dr. Blandford	5	5	0
Rev. H. Hawkins	1	0	0
Dr. Chisholm Ross	1	1	0
Dr. Von Speyr... ..	2	0	0
Senateur T. Roussel	20	francs	
Dr. Jules Dagonet	10		"
Dr. Vallon	5		"

H. RAYNER, Hon. Treasurer.

OBITUARY.

Death of Mr. Palmer Phillips.

We regret to report the death of Mr. Charles Palmer Phillips, Commissioner in Lunacy, at Elstree, on September 27th, in his 74th year. He was a son of the late Mr. William Edward Phillips, Governor of Prince of Wales's Island. Born in 1822, he was educated at Eton and Oxford, and was called to the Bar in 1846. He was principal secretary to Lord Chancellor Chelmsford in 1859, was a Revising Barrister for the City of London in 1864, and secretary to the Commissioners in Lunacy from 1865 to 1872. In the latter year he was appointed a Commissioner, and held the office until his death. He was the author of works on "Copyright Law" and "The Law Concerning Lunatics." His death removes a personality familiar to every Asylum Superintendent, many of whom can bear testimony to the kindly, courteous, and efficient discharge of his official duties, in which he took a keen, intelligent, and philanthropic interest.

Robert Jamieson, M.A., M.D. Aberdeen.

By the death of Dr. Jamieson on the 17th November, Scotland has lost her oldest Asylum Superintendent. A man of handsome presence, marked intellectual power, independent character, and genuine kindness of heart, Dr. Jamieson was an ideal physician. He was much and widely esteemed, and throughout the course of a long life proved a strong influence for good.