

The Executive Committee have recently appointed a sub-committee whose particular work will be propaganda and the collection of funds.

Committee meetings.—Two meetings have been held during the year.

Executive Committee meetings.—Seven meetings have been held during the year.

Meetings and lectures.—Mr. Clifford Beers, the founder of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene in America, visited London in the summer of 1923, and two meetings were held at which he spoke. One was a drawing-room meeting at Sir Maurice Craig's house, when the Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard took the Chair, and at which nearly £100 was collected. The other was a public meeting at the Caxton Hall, when Sir Courtauld Thomson presided, and the meeting was addressed by Lord Burnham and Sir Maurice Craig as well as Mr. Clifford Beers.

Dr. Clarke, late Medical Director of the Canadian Committee for Mental Hygiene, whose recent death has come as a serious and unexpected blow to the movement in our country as well as to that in the great Dominion, very kindly and ably advocated our cause at a meeting of the British Medical Association at Brighton.

Dr. T. A. Ross gave a lecture on "The Mental Factor in Medicine" to the Medical and Physical Society at St. Thomas's Hospital in May of this year, and Dr. J. L. Birley addressed the nurses at that Institution on the same subject.

International Congress.—Dr. Helen Boyle represented the National Council at the European International Congress in Paris. This Congress was held in preparation for the world conference, which it is hoped will take place in America in 1926.

Finance.—The work of the National Council is much crippled by lack of sufficient financial assistance. The actual rent of the offices at Windsor House has been guaranteed for three years by Dr. A. Helen Boyle, who has been most active and generous in the help she has given to the Council.

The Council wish to express their gratitude to the Honorary Auditors, Messrs. Blackburns, Barton, Mayhew & Co., and to the Honorary Solicitors, Messrs. Charles Russell & Co., for their valuable help.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editors of the JOURNAL OF MENTAL SCIENCE.

DEAR SIRS,—There must be many of your readers who, on reading Dr. Carswell's Maudsley Lecture as published in your last issue, feel that his deduction that there is no room left for psychogenesis as a causative factor in the production of mental disorders is, to put it mildly, absolutely unwarranted. It seems that there are many alienists who take the view that because heredity is such a constant factor in the causation of such disorders, that therefore it is a powerful factor, yet nothing may be further from the truth. How many useful citizens there are whose family histories will not bear the light of day, and yet who have never seen the inside of an asylum! For every patient who is admitted to an asylum and whose mental disease is ascribed to heredity, it would not be difficult to produce two or three useful citizens whose family histories in this respect would prove to be just as black or blacker. Even if heredity could be proved to exist as a causative factor in all forms of mental disease, why is it that A, whose family history may be bad, becomes a patient in an asylum, while B, whose family history may be just as bad or worse, continues to lead the life of a useful member of society?

The obvious answer is that the one has not been subjected to the same strains or stresses as the other. Such strains or stresses may be purely physical, or a combination of strains physical and mental, but surely also they may be purely mental. Until someone will produce statistics showing the percentages of good, bad and indifferent family histories of people living outside the asylums as compared with those of people living inside asylum walls, heredity as an important factor in the causation of mental disease must take a back seat.

I am, Sirs,
Yours, etc.,

Khanka, Egypt;
August 29, 1924.

R. S. MILLER, M.D.,
Director, Mental Hospital.