come that we should have an insane mind in a sane body. But to show how this touches on the impalpable, I will push it a step further. I cannot conceive of a passionate or wrathful mind in a perfectly normal body. I cannot conceive of a lustful mind in a perfectly sane body. I cannot conceive of a mind, which for any length of time, or even from any temporary cause, has become the slave of any bad passion, or vicious indulgence, or, indeed, that is subject to any kind of abnormal manifestation whatever, as being associated with a brain that is utterly and absolutely normal; because I think the very fact of an abnormal manifestation disturbs the normal physical constitution of the organ. Therefore there is no real dispute as to the fact of bodily implication in mental unsoundness, and the question is what is the most proper way of stating the fact—the way that will comprehend the greatest amount of truth, and exclude, to the uttermost, fallacy and error in stating an admitted general principle. I am of opinion that the now popular way of speaking of insanity as if it were a structural disease of the brain—just as pneumonia is a structural disease of the lung—has led to errors and fallacies of observation, and in some instances to great confusion of thought, and assertions not founded on observation at all, as I have endeavoured to show in my introductory remarks. Then there is another aspect of the subject that I think is not unimportant. Dr. Skae says quite correctly that this question leads up to the metaphysical question. I was willing to argue it on a less abstract ground; but if I am pressed to declare my opinion, I will say, "Yes, I must acknowledge mind as conceivably separated from body—at least from any particular body with which it is at present associated." That may seem to be unpractical from the medical point of view, but it is not unpractical when you consider that every bad habit arising in the mind, every abnormal mode of its activity, every passion indulged, every strong rebellious habit nourished up so as to become an overmastering power in the soul, is, or may be, actually creating disease—gradually and slowly developing insanity, and with it those changes in the physical structure, which, I believe, in many cases are secondary, and which when confirmed so as to become a permanent portion of the individual organisation, may, I believe, be transmitted by inheritance. I think it important that the public and the medical profession should appreciate fully the powerful influences that a man's moral control has over himself to prevent and modify the occurrence of insanity in many cases. A little book was written some years ago on "Man's power over himself to control insanity." It is a subject, I think, very interesting. As Dr. Ireland has very properly said, the whole discipline of our asylums in the past, and the change to everything that is good in the modern treatment of insanity—everything in which it differs from the old harsh methods of hellebore, stripes, and chains, is, in fact, an appeal from physical to moral agencies; a recognition of the fact that even the insane mind, can, within certain limits, be controlled by moral and spiritual forces; that although obstructed and impaired in its action, it is still essentially *mind*, and subject, therefore, to the laws of spirit as well as those of matter.

The CHAIRMAN—The very least we can do is to thank Dr. Gairdner for having initiated the discussion. A discussion like this is far better than reading papers. We are under a deep debt of gratitude to Professor Gairdner for having come forward thus prominently and assisted us in this matter, and I trust he will accept our thanks as cordially as they are given by us.

Some interesting microscopic sections, illustrating the pathology of the brain, were exhibited by the Chairman.

A vote of thanks was accorded to the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons for the use of the Hall; and on the motion of Dr. ROBERTSON, a vote of thanks was given to the Chairman, and the meeting separated.

Asylum Management.

It may be taken for granted that before very long there will be a change of some kind or other in the local administration of our counties. The English Justice of the Peace is confessedly an anomalous being. He is a Government official in so far as he has his commission from the Crown, but the fact of his being unpaid of itself makes him something wholly different from the paid servants of the Crown at home or abroad. On the other hand, the fact that he has his commission from the Crown makes him something wholly different from those officers, at home or abroad, whose authority springs from popular election. He cannot stand according to either the French principle or the Swiss principle.

Even in England he stands by himself. Other officers of the Crown are paid; other unpaid officers are elective. All that is to be said for him is that he is, and that it is by no means clear that anybody else would do his work better or so well. And that this can be said for him is, in our land of precedent, a good deal. An anomalous institution is in England not likely to be upset simply because it is anomalous. Still, if an institution which is confessedly anomalous is attacked on other grounds by any powerful class, the fact that it is anomalous greatly strengthens the hands of those who attack it. The county magistracy, anomalous as it is in theory, might go on safely discharging its duties both judicial and administrative; if nobody found anything to say against it except that it is anomalous. But in several counties the ratepayers profess to have found out that the magistrates are not only anomalous but something much worse, namely extravagant. The charge in most cases arises from sheer misconconception; but the practically important thing is that the charge has been brought. In the case of men who vote away the money of other men to whom they are in no way responsible, a suspicion, even an unjust suspicion, is almost as bad as a conviction. Men cannot in reason be asked to submit to taxation without representation any longer than they choose to submit to it. It is probable then that the present form of county administration will have, at some not very distant day, to give way to the elective board in some shape or other. It is hardly a question whether the change will be for the better or for the worse. When those who are affected by an anomalous institution say that it is not only an anomaly but a practical grievance, the anomaly cannot stand.

We have before now had to speak our mind about the local government of counties, and we shall, no doubt, have to do so again more than once before the matter is finally settled. Some settlement must be made some time, but the chances of a really good settlement will be seriously endangered if the subject of local government be taken up as an electioneering question for political parties to outbid one another about. The vote of the farmers is already so powerful, the Ballot is likely to make it so much more powerful, that there is the greatest possible temptation for all parties to bid for their support. It is certainly not an agreeable aspect of human nature to hear magistrates, especially Conservative magistrates, disparaging their own order and flattering the prejudices of the farmers, with a view to an expected election. The advanced Liberal is sometimes less zealous for change on this head than his Conservative neighbour. He has been known to argue that democracy is the right thing where it is to be had, but that, where democracy is not to be had, there is nothing gained by pulling down a better oligarchy to set up a worse. It is quite certain that, as regards the efficiency of public administration, above all as regards the welfare of the classes below both, it would be no improvement to exchange a government of squires for a government of farmers. Some malicious tongues have gone so far as to say that the farmer is produced by keeping the bad side of the squire and leaving out the good. However this may be, it is certain that the tendency of the farmer is to take a breeches-pocket view of everything, to grudge every penny that is spent, to delight in the false economy which makes some petty saving at the cost of really efficient and liberal administration. It is said that some Poor-law Guardians believe that their title means that their duties is, not to be Guardians of the poor, but to be Guardians of the parish purse against the poor. It is certain that it is the hardest thing in the world to make a body of farmers understand that an incompetent officer is far dearer at a low salary than a competent officer is at a high salary.

There is one branch of local administration above all which it will never do to hand over to bodies at all like the present Boards of Guardians. These are the Pauper Lunatic Asylums. Of the two it would be far better to centralize them, to place them, at the risk of any number of outcries, under purely Government management of some kind. We are far from wishing for any such change. All that we can say is that, of two possible changes, this would be the lesser evil. The management of the Asylums at present is somewhat peculiar. A Committee

of Visiting Magistrates is appointed yearly by Quarter Sessions; but, when once appointed, they are, for most purposes, independent of the Court. They have on great occasions to come to the Court for money; but in ordinary life they have more to do with the Commissioners in Lunacy. That is, when they have to lay out money beyond the income of the Asylum itself, they have to come to Quarter Sessions for it, while they have not to come, like other Committees, for the confirmation of their ordinary acts. The local public at large therefore hears of them only as spenders of money, and has very little notion of what the real work of the Asylum is. In more counties than one an outcry is raised against the extravagance of the Asylum Visitors, which for the most part simply proves the ignorance of those who raise it. We allow that the ignorance itself is often not their fault, but to raise a disturbance about matters of which they are even innocently ignorant is certainly a grave fault. That the general public should know little of the details of Asylum management is a necessary consequence of the form of management which the law has decreed for Asylums. Therefore Boards of Guardians and the like would be better employed in attending to their own duties than in censuring men who are doing their own duties also, though in a sphere which is necessarily less open to the public eye. But it is much worse when a future candidate or his zealous supporters join in the outcry with a view to the next election, or when a nobleman, bent on a popular harangue, thinks that his nobility exempts him from any need to get up the subject on which he is speaking. The cry of extravagance is of all cries the easiest to raise, unless, possibly, the cry of Popery. And people raise it as if magistrates and especially Visitors of Asylums had some interest in extravagance. From the way in which malcontent Guardians and the like are apt to talk, one would think that the rates went into the magistrates' pockets, instead of the magistrates having to pay them like other people. In matters of expense the interest of the magistrates is exactly the same as the interest of the ratepayers, for the simple reason that the magistrates are themselves ratepayers. Any one who knows anything of the working of the Quarter Sessions must know that hardly a penny can be spent without some zealous economist rising to object to spending it. Extravagance is certainly not the fault of a body of men who, if they vote away other people's money, vote away their own also. But it is possible that expenses which seem necessary to those who understand the matter in hand may sometimes seem extravagant to those who know nothing about it.

One point at which the class represented by the elected Guardians are apt to grumble is the salary paid to the Medical Superintendents of the Asylums. A retiring Superintendent gets a pension, or the actual Superintendent gets an increase of salary, and the voices of the discontented are loud against the waste of the public money. It is in vain to tell them what a post that of the Superintendent of an Asylum really is, to tell them of the rare union of intellectual and moral qualities which it calls for, the scientific skill, the tact, the temper, the thorough zeal for his work, without which the work cannot be done—qualities which are cheaply purchased indeed at £500 or £600 a year. It is in vain to tell them of the wearing and distressing nature of his duties, of the special need that his work should have occasional breaks, and that it should not—for fear of his own mind giving way—be kept on for any very great number of years together. It is in vain to point out that for this very purpose an Act of Parliament was passed allowing pensions to be granted to officers of Asylums after a shorter term of service than formerly; to show perhaps that the pension complained of might, by the terms of the Act, have been much higher in amount and might have been granted several years sooner. It is in vain to tell them how cheaply the services of a really good Superintendent are bought at the highest salary which any Superintendent receives—to explain the constant, discriminating, and delicate treatment which is needed by patients under the various forms of disease; how many little refinements which, to the vulgar eye, might seem luxuries are really parts of the medical treatment; how the pictures, the band, the theatre, the chapel with its fabric and services at least up to the standard of a well ordered village church, all have their direct share in doing

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the work which the Asylum has to do; how great a power of organization as well of scientific skill is needed in the man who has to look to all these things and to manage a large staff of inferior officers. All this goes for nothing with men whose one cry is that the thing might be done cheaper. So it doubtless might, if all that is needed were, after the good old fashion, to chain and beat our lunatics, to shut them up in cold and darkness and nakedness. The Guardians could doubtless get that done for a much smaller sum. Or they might doubtless even get the parish doctor, for a much smaller increase of his pay, to look in at the Asylum every day as he looks in at the workhouse. Or something might be saved by cutting down Asylum diet to the standard of workhouse diet, the difference between which two standards is shown by the simplest of tests; patients removed from the Asylum to the workhouse always lose in weight, while patients removed from the workhouse to the Asylum always gain. And there is one way perhaps better than any of these for lessening Asylum charges, and for taking away the need for enlarged Asylum buildings—a way which many a grumbling Guardian has in his own hands. No one cause sends so many patients to the Asylum as drunkenness; every Guardian who pays any part of his labourers' wages in drink instead of in money is directly helping to increase the number of Asylum patients, and thereby to increase the amount of Asylum charges and the size of Asylum buildings.

The upshot of all this is that, whatever changes may be coming in the form of the local government of our counties, the Lunatic Asylums, at all events, must not be handed over to bodies whose spirit and temper are at all like that of our present Boards of Guardians. They cannot be managed under the influence of that hard grudging spirit which forces every penny, either for the proper welfare of the inmates of the workhouse, or for the fair pay of its officers, to be absolutely wrung out of it. The way in which the Guardians manage the workhouses, the way in which their complaints show that they wish to manage the Asylums, is proof enough that they must never be allowed to have them in their hands. Under their care the proper medical treatment could never be carried out. No medical man of the class which alone is fit for the delicate work of Superintendent of an Asylum would either take such pay as they would offer him, or would submit to such interference as theirs. Whatever happens, our Lunatic Asylums must not be placed in the hands of men less liberal of money, less able to understand the position and feelings of an able scientific man, than they are now. Local management is no doubt best when fit local management can be had, but if the only form of local management that is to be had is such local management as is likely to be given us by Boards of Guardians or bodies at all like them, the care of our Asylums had better become a direct branch of the business of the central Government.—*Saturday Review*, May 10th.

THE LIMERICK DISTRICT HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE.

In our last issue it was mentioned that an investigation was then in progress conducted on oath by Dr. Nugent, the Senior Government Inspector in Ireland, respecting certain charges made at the instance of the Board of Government of the above institution in regard to its management, and more particularly in reference to the death of a male patient named Danford, in consequence, it was stated, of a cold plunge bath improperly administered to him. The result of that investigation was that by order of the Lord Lieutenant, under the advice of the Crown Counsel, an indictment for manslaughter was laid against the attendant who gave the bath in question. He was tried accordingly at the late Spring Assizes at Limerick, the trial ending in an acquittal. Subsequently the Lord Lieutenant addressed a communication to the Resident Medical Superintendent, Surgeon Robert Fitzgerald, in which, after recapitulating several matters of an unsatisfactory kind in the general conduct of the Home, he called upon him to resign. This he has since done, and, after a service of twenty-two years, has been awarded a superannuation pension of £220 per annum. On a review of the whole of these unfortunate proceedings it must be admitted that the course which has been pursued by the Lord Lieutenant was the only one possible that could have been