

amusements, diminishes noise and violence. He comes to no conclusion on the points at issue as regards nursing administration, except a word of praise consequent upon his personal observations, and it is interesting to note that he bears testimony to the efficiency of the pathological work being done in our asylum laboratories. Professor Meyer describes his visits to boarded-out patients in Scotland, and his verdict is favourable, viz. that the insane are well cared for under this system. He concludes that the administration of this great State department affords many suggestions, and deserves the earnest attention of his colleagues in Germany.

Dr. W. W. Ireland.

We heartily join in the congratulations with which Dr. Ireland's many friends greeted him on the attainment of his professional jubilee. This JOURNAL for many years has had the advantage of his kind and careful aid. No contributor has worked more steadily to produce what is of sterling interest to our readers. The volume and the importance of his work have been widely recognised, and it is most fitting that in the evening of his laborious life his colleagues should place on record their appreciation of his worth and abilities. The expression of their esteem has taken the form of an illuminated address of the highest artistic merit, and the sum of money which accompanied that gift has been reported as satisfactory to the committee charged with the arrangements. We understand that it will probably be used in the production of certain of his literary works which still await publication, and venture to hope that a frontispiece portrait of Dr. Ireland will be found in one of the volumes as a souvenir of this interesting occasion.

A Serious Situation.

In our "Notes and News" column we have given at considerable length an account extracted from a local newspaper of recent proceedings of the Monaghan Asylum Committee. The doings of Irish Asylum Committees are often unintelligible and incoherent, but are sometimes tinged with a wild comicality which renders it impossible to take them quite seriously. Here,

however, we have to deal with an affair in which there is no element of fun.

One of the male officers of the asylum was stated by a nurse to have committed a criminal assault upon a female patient. The Inspectors of Lunatics held a sworn inquiry into the charge. Several members of the Committee were present, and the man charged and the woman making the charge were legally represented. The Report of the Inspectors and the minutes of evidence taken were submitted to the Committee. The Inspectors stated that there was absolutely no evidence on which reliance could be placed brought forward in support of the charge. They asked the Committee to consider whether the nurse who made the charge, who on her own admission is capable of such faithlessness in the discharge of her duties and untrustworthiness in her statements, is a proper person to be left in charge of the insane. They proceeded to say that they themselves were of opinion that she is entirely unfitted for the post she occupies.

A member of the Committee moved a resolution expressing satisfaction that the male officer had been pronounced clear of the infamous charge brought against him. This was not negatived, and does not appear to have been seconded or to have gone to a vote. A motion was then moved and seconded and defeated proposing to adopt the Inspectors' recommendation with regard to the nurse making the charge.

A motion was moved, seconded, and adopted, that the inspectors' Report be marked "read" (which is equivalent to saying that no action would be taken upon it). The newspaper from which we have taken our account concludes, "the matter then ended."

But has it ended, or ought it to end?

The Monaghan Asylum either contains a male officer capable of the worst offence that can be committed against a patient, or a female officer capable of the worst offence that can be committed against a fellow-official. In the first case the primary object of asylums is defeated; in the second, the perils of the asylum service are so increased that no sane man would adopt such a life. The Committee are indifferent or they are powerless to protect either their patients or their staff.

Can such an asylum be said to be efficient, or would it not be rather in the interest of all that it should be closed?

The Local Government Act for Ireland provides that the rate

in aid of local taxation of 4s. per caput weekly shall be paid in regard of each patient in a district asylum provisionally on the County Council being able to satisfy the Lord Lieutenant that their lunatic asylum is well managed and in good order and condition, and that the lunatics therein are properly maintained and cared for.

It would seem to us that the necessary conditions for the receipt of this grant are not fulfilled in the case of Monaghan, and that His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, if the facts be laid before him, is personally responsible for seeing that this money is not expended contrary to the intention of the law. (1)

(1) As this article passes through the press our attention is called to the following item in the parliamentary intelligence of a Dublin contemporary (*Freeman's Journal*, March 24th, 1905):

"THE CASE OF A MONAGHAN ASYLUM NURSE.

"Mr. SLOAN asked the Attorney-General for Ireland whether he could now state the result of the Government inquiry into the case of Nurse Holland, who was reported by the Inspectors of Lunacy as entirely unfitted for her position, having regard to her faithlessness in the discharge of her duties and the untrustworthiness of her statements.

"The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND: I have carefully considered this case. The appointment and dismissal of asylum nurses is vested solely in the Committee of Management of the Asylum. The only way in which the Government could intervene would be by withdrawing the Capitation Grant paid to the Monaghan Asylum under section 28, sub-section 2 (c) of the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898 on the ground that the Asylum is improperly managed. In the present instance the charge preferred by Nurse Holland was found to be false. The action of the committee in deciding to retain her services under the circumstances is much to be regretted, but I do not consider that their action can be held to bring the case within the provisions of the Act to which I have referred."

We regret the decision of the Irish Government, which does not alter our opinion in any way, and we can only hope that this very serious matter will not be allowed to rest where it is.

Part II.—Reviews.

Clinical Lectures on Mental Diseases. By T. S. CLOUSTON, M.D.,
Lecturer on Mental Diseases in the University of Edinburgh.
Sixth Edition, 1904. London: J. & A. Churchill. Crown 8vo, with
19 plates, pp. xiii, 738. 14s.

Readers of this Journal will need no commendation from us of a new edition of this great classic. It is familiar to every English-speaking student of our subject, and not alone through the dearth of good psychiatric literature in English, but from its own high intrinsic merit.