

toxic origin, it should be possible to extract the toxins from the urines of epileptic persons and to use the toxins as a specific vaccine in the treatment of the disease.

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### Occasional Notes.

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#### *The Annual Meeting.*

After the lapse of seventeen years our Association has again held its Annual Meeting in Dublin.

There was much to remind members of the former meeting—an able and zealous President, scientific contributions of great importance and interest, and charming hospitality.

Dr. Dawson's Presidential Address, on a subject so judiciously selected and dealt with, his dignified and courteous conduct in the chair, and the enthusiastic support which he received from his fellow-workers in the cause of the insane, justified the confidence with which his friends had predicted for him a distinguished and fruitful occupancy of the office of Inspector of Lunatic Asylums in Ireland. We cordially renew our congratulations to him, and to those to whose welfare he will devote his life work.

Great advances have been made by our Association since 1894, and mainly on the lines which had the approval of our then President, the late Dr. Conolly Norman, to whose memory appreciative and affectionate references were made and whose loss is still so keenly felt.

The meeting extended over three days, and there was renewed evidence of the great amount of time which is devoted by the various committees to the work of the Association.

Much has been accomplished during the past year, as indicated by the several reports. The Sub-Committee on Post-Graduate Teaching and Diplomas in Psychiatry is to be congratulated on the result of its efforts—a result which must be very gratifying to those who have done so much to ensure it.

The Association is under a special obligation to the Chairman of the Housing Committee, who is also Chairman of the National Committee for Great Britain and Ireland *re* the

Causation of Insanity. The reports presented by these two committees show how well-placed is the Association's confidence in him.

The report of the Committee on the Medical Inspection of School Children is a document of great interest at the present time, when we are deeply concerned not only with the treatment of the mentally defective, but also with devising measures for the prevention of insanity.

A warm tribute is paid to the work which is being accomplished at Darenth, and the report states that if this beneficial work were more generally known, "much scepticism and hopelessness now shown as to any possible good being done by special institutions would be swept away." Knowing the composition of this Committee and the zeal and ability with which its Chairman devotes himself to any work he undertakes we expect very helpful results from its deliberations.

Last January we extended a welcome to communications on the subject with which this committee deals, and we are glad now to publish a paper "On Mental Inspection in Schools."

A record of the transactions of the Annual Meeting appears in the present number of the Journal, and our readers will, we are confident, agree with us as to the value of the scientific contributions.

Professor Shaw Bolton's "Observations on the Morbid Histology of General Paralysis" are based on an investigation which he has carried out with characteristic thoroughness, and we hope that Dr. Colin MacDowall's and Dr. Sewell's painstaking research will eventually have an ample reward.

The papers read by Dr. Collins and Dr. Mapother show what good use they have made of the wealth of clinical material they are so fortunate as to have under their observation.

Dr. Drapes, in a paper which is a reflex of his cultured mind, makes a notable contribution to the elucidation of a subject of perennial interest. Very sincere expressions of pleasure were evoked by the satisfactory evidence he gave of his convalescence.

Psycho-therapy has an able advocate in Dr. William Graham, and his paper indicates not only its great value in his practice, but also the commendable discrimination he has shown in his application of its various methods. Unhappily, elsewhere some

of those who have adopted psycho-analysis as a therapeutic measure have provoked their critics to apply to it the term "subterranean psychology."

Dr. Leeper's paper on "Hereditary Insanity" is the result of special experience, and he brings a weighty indictment against the administration of the Poor Law in Ireland.

Several papers have appeared in recent numbers of this Journal on the prevention of insanity, and we are glad that this subject was discussed at the Annual Meeting. We agree with Dr. Leeper as to the necessity for special legislation, and at the same time we appreciate the difficulties which must attend the drafting of a bill on such an intricate subject. There are those who argue that the medical profession cannot yet give sufficiently definite answers to the questions which our legislators would feel bound to ask, and that therefore this subject is not ripe for legislation.

We must admit that our knowledge is far from complete, but much valuable work has been accomplished both in the investigation of the causation of insanity and in the treatment of those who are mentally defective; and we maintain that helpful measures could be enacted on the basis of our present information and experience. In this connection we welcome the optimistic view which our President expressed in the discussion on Dr. Leeper's paper.

The members of our Association, by disseminating the knowledge they have acquired, should be able to hasten legislation, and we earnestly hope that the urgent demand which this subject makes on our attention will stimulate us to more determined and vigorous action in the year upon which we have now entered.

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*Sir Thomas S. Clouston.*

Sir Thomas S. Clouston has received an honour, which will give unalloyed satisfaction to every member of the Medico-Psychological Association, a satisfaction arising not only from their individual liking and admiration for a fellow-member, who has thoroughly deserved the honour, but from the knowledge that he is a typical representative of the highest and best development of alienist work.