

and tried to stifle him, but by God's intervention he stopped up the inlet. He is agitated, restless, gesticulates wildly, and has a frightened expression in his eyes. He became violent last night and was removed to a padded room. He refused his breakfast as he said it was poisoned.

For the following three days he continued in this excited mental state, and as he persistently refused to take any nourishment he was forcibly fed during this period, being confined to bed in a single room day and night, but was not secluded.

Temperature 99.2° F., pulse 84, respirations 16.

September 4th, 1907.—To-day he is quieter and rests contentedly in bed after a somewhat restless night. Later in the day he was severely purged and towards night his temperature rose to 102° F., respirations 20, pulse 96. He was put on milk diet and given astringent mixtures. Slept moderately at night.

The diarrhoea ceased during the next three days, in which time the patient became rational. He had no recollection of anything that had happened since his visit to the dentist on August 24th, 1907.

His ultimate recovery was uninterrupted and uneventful.

The interest in this case lies in the fact that a young man, æt. 21, previously exhibiting no signs of mental instability, but with hereditary taint, undergoes a somewhat trivial operation, under ether, which results in an attack of acute mania. His recovery was preceded by a febrile attack, associated with severe diarrhoea.

Occasional Notes.

The Treatment of Incipient Insanity.

Dr. Clouston is indefatigable. He once more appeals to the charitable public in the columns of the *Scotsman*, for the establishment of wards in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary for the treatment of incipient insanity. The editor of the *Scotsman* lends his powerful aid to the proposal, and various letters have followed on this inception. Six years ago the scheme was carefully considered and definite proposals were made, but financial difficulties compelled postponement. The unanimity of the medical profession and the apparent assent of the philanthropic public augured favourably for success; and it is hoped that the public interest is again awakened by the representations which

have been made more recently. It would appear that the success of the special department of the Albany Hospital in the State of New York and the special wards established in Glasgow has been undoubted. The former is in contact with a general hospital and has all the advantages of such a connection, but the latter is specialised and separated from the general hospitals of the west. A suggestion has been made that Saughton Hall might be used for the purpose indicated, but we would strongly deprecate any arrangement of that kind. The whole intention is to avoid segregation and the very appearance of an asylum, to bring the early treatment of mental disorders into living contact with the medical work of a great hospital. It is not proposed to create an asylum within the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, but to provide open wards for the early treatment of the insane, under the care of a skilled physician who will enjoy the active co-operation of the medical and surgical staff as may be found necessary in the circumstances of each particular case.

We trust that this appeal will meet with a generous support and that Edinburgh will lead the way. We believe that success will follow upon a concerted and active enterprise carried out on the lines which Dr. Clouston and his colleagues have indicated.

The Ministry of National Health.

Health is the most important asset of a nation or an individual, without which all other possessions are comparatively valueless, and it is astonishing that this fundamental truism has not been recognised by a people priding itself on its common sense and practicality.

The absence of any important department of government, dealing with this vital national asset, is sufficient refutation of any claim to the possession of such qualities by the British.

The need for a Health Department has been demonstrated in the fullest possible manner by the Reports of Royal Commissions in the last few years. These, however, have only emphasised the urgency of the want that had long been recognised by the medical profession and a considerable proportion of that very small section—the thinking public.