

31st December, 1898. Hence the excess of relapses is probably greater than that which is shown by the figures 20·53 per cent., as compared with a mean of about 15 per cent. for the whole country.

Accurate records and other circumstances may account for some of this apparent excessive relapse rate, but not for all; and it would be of interest to arrive at any facts that might throw light on the question. Is there, for instance, any relation between the period under treatment and relapse? Do early discharges produce early relapses? What proportion of relapses is due to intemperance? Many other questions of importance might be asked.

The prevention of relapse is one of the most important subjects with which we have to deal in arresting the accumulation of lunatics, and it involves the recognition of the fact that legal mental recovery is not the same as medical recovery; that a person who is no longer certifiable may still be in such a physical state that discharge from the asylum is certain to be followed by relapse.

Convalescent care, in or out of the asylum, is needed for such cases—in asylums as voluntary patients, or out in suitable homes. Recovered inebriates should be sent to inebriate homes when the Habitual Drunkards Act comes into full action.

The report is replete with evidence of the vigorous activity of the London County Council, as, for example, in the publication of the *Pathological Archives*, edited by Dr. Mott, which are the most brilliant evidence of the dawn of a new era in the treatment of London lunacy.

The Treatment of the Poor.

There can be no doubt that legislature is tending towards methods of treatment of the poor which are indicative of the total downfall of Bumbledom. In that large class with which we are more immediately concerned, there are unfortunately all sorts and conditions of men. As Mr. T. W. L. Spence showed so clearly in a recent pamphlet, the great majority of "pauper" lunatics are gathered from strata of society which would never have touched the depths of pauperism except by reason of

mental disorder. We gladly note that the Cottage Homes Bill, reported without amendment by the Select Committee to the House of Commons last August, has reference to the aged and deserving poor, and their separation from those whose character or habits are bad or disagreeable.

With regard to imbeciles and epileptics the Committee report that "they are of opinion that all pauper imbeciles and epileptics should be provided for outside the workhouse. Not only would the removal of this class of pauper leave further room for a better system of classification, but it would obviate what would appear to be a great source of discomfort to the aged poor in many of the smaller workhouses.

"In London, pauper imbeciles are removed from the workhouses, special institutions having been provided for their accommodation by the Metropolitan Asylums Board. Your Committee think that the principle should be extended to the rest of England and Wales, and that throughout the country pauper imbeciles should be provided for in institutions separate from the workhouses. They think that pauper epileptics should also be maintained in separate institutions, and not in workhouses. If this were done, the suffering would be diminished which is now endured by many who resist entering a workhouse at the time when in their own interest indoor relief should be sought, owing to the feeling of repulsion entertained at the idea of living with such associates.

"Your Committee consider that these separate institutions should be provided by the councils of counties and county boroughs. These councils now are charged with the provision of asylums at which pauper lunatics are maintained, the guardians paying the cost of maintenance. Your Committee do not suggest that pauper imbeciles and epileptics should be admitted to the lunatic asylums, but that separate institutions should be provided expressly for their accommodation. Such institutions need not be so costly as lunatic asylums, as the inmates would not require the elaborate accommodation and attention which is essential for lunatics."

The physicians of our asylums have long been urgent in their efforts to classify the cases under their care, and much has been done in this direction. We feel that the recommendations of the Select Committee will command general support, and that they are of special importance to those whose proper work is

psychological. Appended is the summary, which will be read with interest.

“ I. That it is desirable so to classify the inmates of workhouses, that the aged and respectable poor shall not be forced to mix with those whose character or habits are bad or disagreeable.

“ II. That, in order to make room for proper classification, all children, other than infants, be provided for outside, and apart from the workhouse premises.

“ III. That it should be the duty of the county councils to provide suitable accommodation in separate institutions for the proper treatment of all pauper imbeciles and epileptics.

“ IV. That the aged and deserving poor, so far as it is possible, should receive adequate outdoor relief, and that where they are in the workhouse they should constitute a special class and receive special treatment and privileges.

“ V. That guardians should provide special cottage homes within the unions, or other suitable accommodation for married couples and respectable old persons whose poverty is not their own fault, but the result of misfortune.”

Masturbation in Schools.

A well-known and very successful Irish schoolmaster, now retired from business, Maurice C. Hime, LL.D., is one of the last contributors to this difficult subject. Dr. Hime's little pamphlet (*Schoolboys' Special Immorality*) seems to assume that there is generally too much reticence on this topic, and that a little more plain speaking might do good. If good is to come of it, we will not object to any plainness of speech.

It is perhaps natural that a schoolmaster should get into the habit of thinking that argument and precept are the chief guides of human life, and therefore we are not surprised to find that Dr. Hime holds that boys should be particularly warned against self-abuse. He also advocates a much closer surveillance over schoolboys than is at all usual in English schools. Some of his proposals strike us as being flatly absurd, such as that schoolboys' trousers should be made without pockets; and his parenthetic denunciation of tobacco seems almost comic; but the