

Alfred Thomas Oliver White, Assistant Medical Officer (Acting Superintendent), Metropolitan Asylum, Darenth, proposed by Dr. E. W. White, Dr. F. Beach, and Dr. A. E. Patterson; and Mr. Gilbert Harry Lansdown, Acting Assistant Medical Officer, Metropolitan Asylum, Darenth, proposed by Dr. W. L. Andriezen, Dr. A. E. Patterson, and Dr. E. W. White, were elected ordinary members of the Association.

The CHAIRMAN stated that the Divisional Committee had accepted the invitation to hold the next meeting at the Middlesex County Asylum, Wandsworth, in April, 1898.

Dr. FLETCHER BEACH then read a paper on "Insanity in Children." At the express desire of Dr. Beach, this paper and the discussion thereon will not appear until the April number of the Journal. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to Dr. Beach for his interesting paper.

At 6.30 p.m. the members (about twenty) dined together at the Grand Hotel, Northampton.

#### NORTHERN AND MIDLAND DIVISION.

A meeting of this Division was held at the North Riding Asylum, Clifton, York, on 20 October, 1897, Dr. T. W. McDowall (President of the Association) in the chair. Members present: Drs. McDowall, Kershaw, Hitchcock, Legge, Macleod, Cassidy, Gramshaw, Header, Macphail, Mackenzie, Pierce, Holmes, Baker, Hingston, Percival, David Nicolson, Ray, Johnston, and Crochley Clapham (Hon. Secretary); and a visitor, Dr. Crawford Watson, of Harrogate.

Dr. Hingston kindly entertained the members with luncheon at the asylum.

Committee.—It was proposed by Dr. Holmes and seconded by Dr. Hingston, "That the following members be appointed a Divisional Committee of Management, viz., Dr. McDowall (Morpeth), Dr. Ley (Prestwich), Dr. Campbell (Carlisle), Dr. Mould (Cheadle), Dr. Hitchcock (Bootham), Dr. Percival (Whittingham), Dr. Macphail (Derby), and Dr. Crochley Clapham (Hon. Secretary)"—Carried unanimously.

Proposed by Dr. HOLMES and seconded by Dr. PERCIVAL, "That the next meeting of the Division be held in May, 1898, and, if agreeable to Dr. Mould, at Cheadle."—Carried unanimously.

Proposed by Dr. CLAPHAM and seconded by Dr. McDOWALL, "That May and October be the months chosen for holding the two Divisional Meetings in each year."—Carried unanimously.

Dr. M. B. RAY (Wadsley) read a paper on "Two Cases of Acute Insanity occurring before Puberty," and showed photographs of the patients. This, with the relative discussion, will appear in the April number of the Journal.

Dr. F. P. HEADER read a paper on "Criminal Lunatics in the Wakefield Asylum." (See page 64.)

#### SOUTH-WESTERN DIVISION.

The Autumn Meeting of the South-Western Division of the Medico-Psychological Association was held, by kind invitation of Dr. Fox, at Brislington House, near Bristol, on Tuesday afternoon, October 26. The members present were Drs. Aldridge, Deas, Morton, Soutar, Bower, Wilson, McCutchan, Bullen, Blatchford, Fox, Hanbury, Green, MacBryan, Lindsay, Stewart, Manning, Benham, and Macdonald (Hon. Secretary). On the motion of Dr. STEWART, seconded by Dr. DEAS, Dr. Aldridge was unanimously voted to the chair.

#### ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS.

On a ballot Drs. Blackwood and Elliot, Assistant Medical Officers at the Borough Asylum, Portsmouth, were elected as members of the Association.

## THE PROPOSED SPECIAL PATHOLOGIST FOR THE DISTRICT.

With reference to the proposal to appoint a special pathologist for the district, Dr. MACDONALD reported that the question had been before the Committee of Management prior to that meeting, and he had been instructed to report that, "while the committee were of opinion that the appointment of a special pathologist for the district would be desirable, they were not at present in a position to make any recommendation." Dr. Macdonald supplemented the report by explaining the feelings of the committee with reference to the proposal.

## COMPULSORY PENSIONS.

Dr. MACDONALD explained that he had put this subject on the agenda paper for two reasons—first, to extract, if possible, from the meeting an expression of opinion as to whether or not there was any desire in that district to further the objects of compulsory pensions as lately forecasted in a Bill introduced into the House of Lords, but afterwards withdrawn; and secondly, to ask whether or not it was proposed to do anything in the matter, or merely to leave things to drift. Dr. Macdonald said in the first place they had to thank the present Government for having recognised and adopted the principle of compulsory pensions for public asylum officers and servants. They introduced a Bill which was practically a Government Bill, and said they were to have pensions on the scale of the Poor Law Officers Superannuation Act. Immediately a wild shout went forth about the injustice of the thing. Now, he happened to know personally that the Lord Chancellor never meant or wished that asylum officers or servants should have pensions according to the Poor Law Officers Superannuation Act. He put it in so as to give them the opportunity of moving or having moved for them the necessary amendments, and he had no doubt when it came up again this would be done. It would be within the recollection of those in public asylums that what was known as the Worcester Amendment was sent round, but since then a more liberal one was actually accepted by the Lord Chancellor, by Lord Kimberley, and Earl Spencer, and on the advice of Lord Kimberley was handed to the Earl of Northbrook, who was put up to oppose it from the County Councils Association; it was also handed to Earl Russell, who was put up by the London Asylums Committee to oppose it for that body. The result was that in the speeches recorded in *The Times* they absolutely and completely contradicted themselves. They began their speeches by saying that the Bill or amendment was unfair to asylum officers and servants, and finished up, as members would see from the pages of their Journal, by stating that it was far too liberal. (Laughter.) He had reason to believe that Earl Northbrook did not now hold the same views; while as regards Earl Russell, there was one fact they should all remember. When, some eighteen months ago, the asylum superintendents of England and Wales signed a petition in favour of compulsory pensions, the only superintendents who would not do so were the four of the London asylums. He could only say that if these four gentlemen wished to alienate themselves from their brother superintendents in their efforts to get what was nothing but justice and fairness, he thought they should do all they could to try and make it known that at any rate as a general body they were agreed. (Hear, hear.) He had it on the best authority that if they were practically unanimous, or generally agreed, on the question there was no shadow of doubt but that the principle would be acceded to, and fairness generally given to them in this matter of pensions.

The CHAIRMAN invited discussion on the subject, and suggested that their views might take the form of a resolution.

Dr. DEAS moved for the appointment of a small committee to thrash out the details and formulate a scheme which might be submitted to the next meeting of their branch, and then, when adopted, put formally before members of Parliament or some members of the Government as might be decided upon.

Dr. BENHAM said he had great pleasure in seconding. What Dr. Macdonald referred to as the Worcester Amendment was placed before his committee, and, he was glad to say, obtained its unanimous assent.

Dr. BOWER said that when this question was brought up at the Three Counties' Asylum Committee, of which he was a member, the difference of opinion which appeared among the medical superintendents was enlarged upon to such an extent that they simply allowed the Worcester communication to lie on the table, and did nothing at all one way or the other. He thought it was most important that this sub-committee should be appointed to consider the question; but he was not quite sure whether they ought not to report and do something before the next meeting of the Division, which was not till April, in order that the views of that Division, as of the Association generally, should be put into the hands of the Lord Chancellor before he revised the Bill, which he was certain to put down for the next session.

Dr. STEWART asked whether Dr. Deas would agree to tack on to his resolution something to the effect that the Division recognised the great importance, for the benefit of the public who were treated in asylums, that a clause should be introduced into the Lunacy Bill for the purpose of granting pensions compulsorily to the medical officers and others.

Dr. DEAS said he was quite willing to adopt the suggestion made by Dr. Stewart.

Dr. MACDONALD said he did not wish to throw cold water on the suggestion of Dr. Stewart, but the rules of the Association would not allow them to do what he advocated. They had no power to pass a definite resolution of any kind like the one he had outlined. They might pass a resolution to work up anything in their own district and report to themselves, but not to hand over anything to the public as coming from their Association. That must come from the general body.

The resolution of Dr. Deas as originally moved—"That a small committee be appointed to consider the question of compulsory pensions and report at the next meeting"—was then put and carried unanimously, a committee being straightway formed, on the motion of Dr. DEAS, seconded by Dr. SOUTER, consisting of Drs. Benham, Macdonald, Wade, and Deas.

#### THE NEXT MEETING.

The suggestion of the committee that the next meeting be held either in Oxford or Cardiff was adopted, after some discussion, the date being fixed for 19 April, 1898.

#### THE NURSING REGULATIONS.

The consideration of these was postponed until the next meeting.

#### LETTERS OF APOLOGY.

Dr. MACDONALD said he had received a letter from the President of the Association, Dr. McDowall, regretting his inability to be present. He had also one from Dr. Weatherly, who had been suddenly prevented from attending; and one from Dr. Goodall, who was to have read a paper to them, but who had to stay at home in consequence of illness among his patients.

#### THANKS TO DR. FOX.

This being the close of the business of the meeting, the CHAIRMAN conveyed the warm thanks of the members of the Division to Dr. Fox for the kind and hospitable way in which he had received them.

On the motion of Dr. DEAS a vote of thanks was passed to the chairman for presiding, and the proceedings terminated.

The members afterwards dined together at the Royal Hotel, and a most pleasant evening was spent.

#### SCOTTISH DIVISION.

A meeting of the Scottish Division was held in the Laboratory of the Scottish Asylums, 12, Bristo Place, Edinburgh, on Thursday, November 11.