

treatment of lunatics by transferring them to such institutions from asylums. Even the Poor Law Guardians themselves, not generally very humane or very advanced in their views about such matters, are beginning to feel that workhouses are hardly suitable places for the insane on the lines of management which have hitherto characterised those unhappy establishments. In discussing this subject more than a year ago our contemporary, the *British Medical Journal*, pointed out that "to feed an Irish convict for one week costs 3s. 11d.; to feed a healthy Irish lunatic costs 3s. 5d.; to feed a healthy Irish pauper for the same period costs 1s. 5d.; and an aged and infirm pauper 1s. 4d." To which of the two last enviable classes the workhouse lunatic is supposed officially to belong we are not informed.

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*The Temporary Treatment of Incipient Insanity.*

The sudden collapse of the Lunacy Bill last year brought to a standstill the work of the conjoint Committee of the British Medical Association and our own on this subject.

This Committee, it is to be hoped, will still continue its labours, and be prepared, before the next Session of Parliament, with a workable adaptation to the English law of the Scottish clause dealing with the same stage of mental disease.

The Lord Chancellor will almost certainly introduce a "Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill" in the coming Session, and it would be a reflection on the business capacity of the profession if this found us unprepared with a practical proposition, on a point regarding which there had been such an emphatic expression of professional opinion.

The profession at large is too apt to undervalue the power it possesses of influencing legislation, but in the passing of the recent Lunacy Acts we had many opportunities of proving how great this power really is, a fact which should be remembered as an encouragement to future efforts in the same direction.

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*Provision for the Poor Private Insane.*

The last Report of the General Board of Lunacy for Scotland contains a most important and urgent appeal for legislative measures in relief of the poorer classes of the insane

in Scotland. It is a closely reasoned declaration of the opinion of the Commissioners in view of the fact that the Royal Asylums are no longer adequate to meet the requirements of those who are but little removed from the "pauper" class. This has been apparent for some time, and the conviction, which has grown in strength, has found utterance in the suggestion now made, viz., that the powers conferred upon the County Lunacy Authorities of England should be extended to the District Lunacy Boards of Scotland. The existence of tracts of country where no provision has been made for those in narrow circumstances, the want of sufficient accommodation in existing institutions, the unfortunate results of the present condition of affairs have weighed with the Commissioners in urging that a measure of relief should be granted by Parliament.

We note, however, that an important restriction is to be laid upon the District Boards of Lunacy in respect of the rates to be charged. It is evident that the position of the Royal Asylums and their beneficent work should not be endangered. There is no intention to provide accommodation at the cost of the ratepayers for those otherwise able to command it. On the contrary, the Commissioners attach great importance to the limit of the rates of board to the sum charged for pauper lunatics, with the addition of a sum in name of rent to be levied as the District Boards may see fit. And, further, this sum in name of rent is to be calculated on the net cost of what may be required to provide the buildings. The Commissioners point out that higher rates than those indicated would defeat the very object for which this measure has been proposed. There is no intention to lessen the burden of the ratepayers by profits from keeping private patients, but rather to prevent burdens falling on the rates by offering no excuse for the acceptance of parochial aid.

We trust that the temperate, judicious, and benevolent scheme thus propounded may be carried into effect in the near future.

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*Straits Settlements Asylum.*

Those of our members who listened to Dr. Ellis' interesting paper on Latah will be interested to read his report on the lunatic asylum over which he presides.

Dr. Ellis has a nearly complete pathological and bacteriological laboratory, and his remarks on the special causes of