

of 10 per cent. or thereabouts is misleading. The first calculation, on the admissions, approximates roughly with the facts ; in the second calculation the percentage rises or falls with the duration under treatment, and is relative to this rather than to the recovery rate.

It is a question, therefore, whether it would not be better to reverse the statement of this table, and state the proportion (per cent.) of unrecovered cases to the total number under treatment. This would draw attention to the proportion of uncured cases remaining under care, and would not be mistaken by the public or any one else as a "recovery rate," productive of popular panic.

Of course the nearest approximation to a true recovery rate is afforded by Table IIA as designed by the Medico-Psychological Association. Unfortunately it is not compiled by all the asylums of the kingdom ; but it would be interesting to work out such results as are trustworthy and obtainable from the statistics of such institutions as publish Table IIA. Here is an opportunity for discovering the real recovery rate in selected districts so far as asylum statistics can show it.

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*Certifying Insanity by Contract.*

Boards of Guardians (we learn from the *British Medical Journal* of 24th August) are beginning to insert in the rules of the resident medical officers of Poor Law infirmaries a clause to the effect that Lunacy Certificates shall be signed without fee. Lunacy certification, in fact, is reduced to the same level with tooth drawing.

Magistrates under such an arrangement will probably find themselves handicapped in fulfilling the instruction to call to their aid *a* medical man ; it is *the* medical contractor whose feeless assistance they will be expected to invoke.

The responsibility of the Guardians as employers of the contract certifier is an important point. If the contracting certifier commits a misdemeanour in certifying, will not the Guardians be responsible and punishable? The indictment of a whole board for misdemeanour would not be devoid of interest.