

whilst receiving ward-instruction, would also be trained in nerve-pathology, and from amongst such men pathologists would be obtainable, adequately equipped for the special work desired of them. The economy in time would be great; instead of spending the first eighteen months or so of his appointment in learning his duties, the pathologist would, shortly after undertaking the latter, be able to apply himself to some special investigation.

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*A Scottish Proposal.*

Since the preceding paragraphs were penned certain proposals have been made in Scotland which augur well for the future. There is, in fact, at present a movement on foot for the appointment of a joint Research Pathologist, who will be resident in Edinburgh, at the service of the Scottish asylums associated for this purpose. As these are under different governing bodies, and have different constitutions, there may be some difficulty in bringing the scheme to a successful issue; but, with the lead given by the London County Council, it is to be hoped that the difficulty will not prove insuperable. The problem cannot be solved without the provision of a work-room, and negotiations are now in progress with the Laboratory Committee of the Royal College of Physicians to secure, if possible, accommodation in their splendid new laboratory, which has been recently opened at a cost of some £10,000.

It is thought that mental pathology would thus be brought into closer touch with general pathological, physiological and neurological work than hitherto. As the draft scheme stands at present it is proposed that the duties of the pathologist should be:—(1). To examine material sent from the associated asylums and to furnish reports, with microscopic specimens. (2). To carry on original researches upon the pathology of insanity. (3). To give, when required, instruction (free of charge) to the members of the medical staffs of the associated asylums, in the pathology of mental diseases and in laboratory methods. (4). To assist, if required, the medical staffs of these asylums in pathological researches as follows:—*a.* By arranging for collection of special material for a particular investigation from the various asylums. *b.* By advising as to the best histological methods to employ in particular instances. *c.* By

affording information as to work already done upon subjects in regard to which investigation is contemplated, and by assisting in the matter of literature references. *d.* By suggesting subjects of research. *e.* By providing sets of microscopic specimens illustrating normal histology and typical lesions, for the associated asylums. *f.* By visiting the associated asylums for the purpose of advising as to pathological work. It is recognised that the histological methods required for the study of the nervous system are now so complicated and special that no young graduate can do effective pathological work without special experience and special training. Assistant Medical Officers cannot, as a rule, devote the long time and undivided attention required for modern pathological investigations. A skilled referee is also needed to explain the true meaning of facts observed. It is not intended that pathological research shall be discouraged in the various asylums. On the contrary, it is thought that this scheme will stimulate such research, and guide it into right lines. The present time is exceptionally favourable for such a movement, as Dr. Ford Robertson is willing to take up this important work, and his recent researches commend him as a competent and trustworthy authority. It seems but just, as well as expedient, that the man who exclusively devotes himself to the pathology of mental diseases should look for promotion as well as the assistant medical officer who devotes himself to treatment. No doubt the movement thus initiated will rapidly gather in strength and momentum, and we wish it every success.

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*Independent Criticism upon Histological Appearances in the Brains of the Insane.*

It is a trite observation that in these days nothing is sacred. The remorseless spirit of scepticism hovers over an expiring century, a merciless "Zeitgeist." It was not to be supposed that the all-pervading scepticism, having brooded over the more momentous questions of the hour, would leave untouched those which, while undeniably of great consequence, still are of less general interest. Amongst these is the question of the pathology of insanity. It must be allowed that criticism has neither tarried long nor chosen its moment inopportunately. For it is still but re-