

Occasional Notes.

The Retirement of Dr. Urquhart.

Dr. Urquhart, who for sixteen years worked assiduously as Editor of the *Journal of Mental Science*, and who for more than twice that period has taken so prominent and vigorous a part in the affairs of the Medico-Psychological Association, will receive the heartiest good wishes of its every member for a long enjoyment of freedom from office.

Few men have more thoroughly earned the right to retire than has Dr. Urquhart. In addition to his many activities for this Association, and his innumerable special services for it, he has taken a full-handed share in the medical and social work of Perth and Perthshire, all this voluntary service being in addition to the management and development of the Murray Asylum, together with a very considerable output of literary work and scientific matter throughout his career.

That he has earned the confidence and esteem of his professional brethren is evidenced by his having been President of our Association, President of the Perthshire Medical Association, and for many years a member of the Council of the British Medical Association. His honorary membership of many foreign alienist societies is an additional evidence of this general appreciation of his medical work and character.

Of Dr. Urquhart's incessant activity, it might well be said—

“Day after day filled up with blessed toil,
Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil”—

for he was ever making new acquisitions of knowledge, both medical and literary.

That the ill-health which has led to his retirement may soon pass away, and leave him many years of the leisure he can so worthily employ, is the wish of innumerable friends, and especially of those who are members of the specialty he has so long and truly served.

The Mental Deficiency Act.

The constitution of the committees for the local administration of the Mental Deficiency Act formed the subject of an earnest discussion at the last Quarterly Meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association.

A report of the meeting appears in this number of the Journal, and it will there be seen that a resolution was passed unanimously to the effect that the Asylum Visiting Committees (with such additions as the Act requires) should be the committees for carrying out the provisions of the Mental Deficiency Act, and that there should be no disturbance of the statutory powers now held by the existing visiting committees under the Lunacy Act.

In this connection the members of the Association will doubtless be interested in the proposals for fresh legislation which have been made by the London County Council, and there is, accordingly, published at page 174 an extract from the London County Council (General Powers) Bill.

Part II.—Epitome of Current Literature.

1. Physiological Psychology.

Why Psycho-analysis is Interesting [*Das Interesse an der Psychoanalyse*].
(*Scientia*, Nos. 5 and 6, 1913.) Freud, S.

In an admirably simple, luminous, and concise manner, Freud here presents in some twenty pages all the chief aspects of psycho-analysis. (For some unexplained reason the first part of the paper is in German, and the second in French.)

As examples of diseased conditions to which psycho-analytic therapy may be applied, he names hysterical attacks and manifestations of inhibition, as well as neurosis of obsession in action or idea. They are conditions which sometimes tend to spontaneous cure, and are liable to be obscurely affected by the personal influence of the physician. In the severer psychoses psycho-analysis can effect nothing. Yet even here it can furnish, for the first time in the history of medicine, an insight into origin and mechanism.

Putting aside the medical interest of psycho-analysis, there are many phenomena of mimicry and speech, found both in normal and diseased persons, which psychology has hitherto neglected. Such are lapses of speech, of writing, and of memory, and dreams. For these various unsatisfactory pathological or physiological explanations have been sought. Psycho-analysis has shown that they may be explained on purely psychological grounds, and has thus narrowed the sphere of physiology and appropriated a large section of pathology for psychology. Normal, and so-called pathological processes have been shown to follow the same laws. Freud proceeds to refer in more detail to lapses and to dreams. Lapses of speech or memory are to be regarded, not as the result of mere momentary distraction, but as having sense, tendency,