

supervision was exercised, and that the mechanical restraint was excessive and too long continued."

We do not propose to enter into the question whether the treatment adopted was continued for too long a time or not; whether the amount of nourishment administered was sufficient; whether stimulants ought to have been freely supplied; or, lastly, whether the medical supervision was as great as so serious a case required. Doubtless the Lunacy Commissioners will report on the unhappy event, with all the evidence at their command to assist them in arriving at a correct conclusion. Any criticism on our part at the present time would be premature. Our sole object is to record the treatment adopted, earnestly hoping that the judicious use of the dry or wet pack will not be thereby jeopardized.

Pensions.

We regret to note that the Derby County Council, at their meeting of 3rd October, have thrown out the scheme for pensions submitted by the Asylum Committee. It had been carefully prepared on similar lines to that which has been lately accepted by the Norfolk County Council. Unfortunately the Finance Committee had arrived at the conclusion that they could not recommend the scheme, holding that every case must be determined at the time when the official applying for a pension became eligible. After hearing opinion of counsel, and debating the question from the point of view of the Finance Committee and of the Asylum Committee, it was moved that the scheme be received as containing reasonable suggestions for the guidance of the Asylum Committee. An amendment to the effect that no scheme could be legally formulated by the Asylum Committee with regard to pensions, but that each case should be dealt with on its own merits, was the finding of the Council by 24 to 14 votes. The arguments advanced were, briefly, that the Committee could not bind their successors with reference to pensions; that the Lunacy Act was permissive and not compulsory in this respect; that the different classes of officials would be dealt with on different grounds, and each on his own merits. It was also thought that every recommendation for payments must come through the Finance Committee, who act for the Council as advisers on financial questions.

It is to be regretted that there is such diversity of pro-

cedure in different parts of the country. We cannot doubt that security of tenure and assured provision for incapacitated officials are necessary for the proper management of these important institutions, and it is to be hoped that the consensus of opinion will tend to uniformity in dealing with this question, in the liberal spirit of the Norfolk County Council.*

In this connection it should be noted that a pension of £37 a year was voted to attendant John Harrison, of the Derby County Asylum, on the completion of 22 years' service—being equivalent to 22-40ths of his salary and emoluments per annum. This was confirmed by the County Council on the date above mentioned. Yet the month did not pass without a further illustration of the inequalities and defects of asylum service, and of the risks to which these officials are exposed. Head attendant Harry Bird died from blood-poisoning contracted in the post-mortem room, leaving a widow and eight children unprovided for. He had served $8\frac{1}{2}$ years at the above asylum. Had he been a police-constable, his widow would have received a pension. The Chairman of the Committee interviewed the Local Government Board and the Lunacy Commissioners, but was informed that they had no power in the matter. The officers of the Derby County Asylum have organized a fund on behalf of the bereaved family; but it is unjust and discouraging that such a claim on the public funds should be transferred to private charity.

* The scheme adopted by the Norfolk County Council in July last:—1. That the committee shall, subject to confirmation by the County Council, grant to every official named in the schedule who has been an officer or a servant in the asylum for not less than fifteen years and is not less than fifty years old, a superannuation allowance amounting to not less than one-fiftieth or more than one fortieth of his or her pay and allowances at the time of retirement for every year of service. 2. No pension in any case to exceed two-thirds of such pay and allowances. 3. The resignation of officials mentioned in the schedule to be compulsory at sixty years of age. 4. That in all cases where any official named in the schedule shall be incapacitated by confirmed illness, age, or infirmity the committee may grant to him or to any official not named in the schedule such superannuation allowance as they may think fit, as provided by Sec. 280, 53 Vict., cap. 5. 5. All applications for pension shall be laid before the committee by the Medical Superintendent, accompanied by his report. 6. Any official named in the schedule who shall be dismissed from his or her office by the Committee of Visitors shall not be entitled to a pension. 7. No person mentioned in the schedule shall be engaged as an officer, attendant, or servant after the age of 35 years. Schedule: Medical superintendent, assistant medical officer, matron, assistant matron, day or night nurse or female attendant, laundrymaid, cook, kitchenmaid, head male attendant, assistant male head attendant, day or night male attendant.—*Derby Express*, 30th Oct., 1894.

Guild of Friends of the Infirm in Mind.

A meeting of the above excellent Guild was held at the Chaplain's House, Colney Hatch, on October 31st, 1894. At this meeting a paper was read by the Rev. Henry Hawkins, which gave a brief but interesting sketch of the amelioration of the condition of the insane. Special reference was made to the Association for the After-care of poor patients who have left asylums recovered, the inception of which was due to a proposal of Mr. Hawkins himself.

It may be stated in passing that the number of applicants for relief or help in obtaining situations is greater than at any former period.

We wish every success to the "Guild," which was established in 1871 (some eight years before the "After-care Association"), having among other objects that of promoting visits to friendless patients in asylums in conformity with the regulations of the establishment; of maintaining friendly intercourse with discharged patients; of recommending efficient attendants; and, lastly, of furthering in any other way the interests of the infirm in mind. It is to be regretted that other asylums have not followed in the footsteps of Colney Hatch. We would fain hope that chaplains generally will display a little more enthusiasm than is their wont in this direction, and venture to recall the portraiture of an ideal Asylum Chaplain sketched in this Journal in the number for July, 1893.

PART II.—REVIEWS.

The Forty-eighth Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy, 19th June, 1894.

The Forty-eighth Annual Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy supplies us with the usual statistical review of the certified or reported insane in England and Wales, and a critical retrospect of the different institutions devoted to their care. Directly with the publication of this Report there has arisen the usual outcry in lay and even some medical papers as to the alarming increase of insanity in our midst, and our reiteration of the same series of arguments year by year, disposing of this erroneous idea, becomes somewhat wearisome. The observations we have frequently made bearing on this point