

limits set on the medical treatment of insane patients are, however, by far too narrow already. We are bound in honour and of necessity to welcome every new departure, and to give our best endeavours to make it a success. Massage is undoubtedly of great value in dealing with constipation, with peripheral neuritis, and other conditions encountered in our special work; and it now remains for those who have already failed, or those who have not yet attempted the Weir Mitchell treatment, to apply it to the cases indicated by Dr. Batty Tuke as promising good results.

We must, as in all controversies, be careful not to push theory to extremes and not to confuse the issues by mere words. What is wanted at this stage is a careful summarising of proved results—a statement of cases in brief detail. We have been favoured with a temperate statement of beliefs, and a discussion on the principles of treatment. Will Asylum Medical Officers now add to these a summary of precise facts?

Holloway Sanatorium.

In drawing attention to the report of the recent inquiry by the Commissioners in Lunacy on this asylum, we must reiterate the fundamental principle of the Association of which this Journal is the mouthpiece, “the improvement of the treatment of the insane.” The general good reputation of our asylums is essential to the promotion of this principle, and if any one of them becomes an object of public suspicion or distrust the others are certain to suffer.

The more thoroughly and completely, therefore, that any public imputation against an asylum is inquired into, and the more promptly this is done, the better is it for the welfare of the insane.

While it is our clear duty to endorse any criticism or censure that we consider to be just, it is also our function to protect our members from the popular prejudice against asylums, inherited from a period of general ignorance and much inhumanity.

The soundly-thinking majority of the public is educated into a knowledge of the high standard of beneficence with which our asylums are now conducted, but the lower strata of the public mind, made up of cranks and faddists, to whom everything that is wrong, and an upper stratum,

which calls itself society, ever craving for excitement or novelty, are at all times ready to have their prejudice excited by sensational allegations against asylums, published in the papers which supply news adapted to the palate of these classes.

These publications, however, must have some foundation for their attacks, and when they proceed to deliberate charges it is desirable that a responsible investigation should distinguish the basis of regrettable fact from the superstructure of exaggeration.

The Lunacy Commission, therefore, we consider has acted in the best interests of the insane in holding the inquiry to which we now draw attention, and which we print in full in *Notes and News*.

The inquiry, it will be seen, was directed generally to the "medical and other administration of the Sanatorium, and specifically to various allegations of neglect or maladministration which appeared in the pages of *Truth*."

Truth, in an article (December 19, 1895), commenting on the report, complains that it (or he) was not allowed to attend, "either personally or by deputy, to cross-examine witnesses and to state its case before the court."

The demand thus made to assume the functions of a Public Prosecutor is scarcely in keeping with the usual astuteness of this writer, and its absurdity is demonstrated if we consider that in some cases not one only, but a round dozen of newspapers might have made allegations.

Truth also expresses the belief that it could have brought before the Commissioners the persons who had given it the information on which its charges were based.

The report, however, distinctly states that the inquiry was adjourned for nearly a month in order "to communicate with the friends of the patients whose cases were the subjects of these allegations, and to invite them, if they desired it, to attend the inquiry."

The comment is obvious that to make statements in a newspaper office is one thing, to give evidence on oath in a legal inquiry is another, and that these persons by their non-attendance proved their recognition of this distinction.

The Commissioners, in their report on the inquiry, conclude that while some of the allegations, complaints, etc., "had reasonable foundation," yet "the majority" were "unfounded or resting on very slight and unimportant incidents."

They further remark that while not overlooking the very arduous task undertaken by the Superintendent in the organisation from the beginning and subsequent rapid development of the Sanatorium, they must express the opinion that the "failures and shortcomings" which have come under their notice have been due in great measure to the want of that close and unremitting personal attention on the part of the Medical Superintendent which is necessary to successful asylum management.

In the face of this censure, however modified, there can be no doubt that irregularities have occurred in the past, and it is essential that the public should be thoroughly assured that arrangements have been made to obviate their recurrence in the future. The regulations for the government of the Sanatorium, formulated by the Commissioners and the governing body, if made public would doubtless effect this object.

We refrain from detailed comment on the various allegations, etc., dealt with in the Commissioners' Report, since these matters may, to some extent, be considered still *sub judice*, it being quite possible that an attempt will be made to bring the whole matter before Parliament. The report itself will enable anyone experienced in asylum management to form a clear estimate of the value of the charges, and bears evidence to the careful inquiry and temperate judgment of its compilers.

Hack Tuke Memorial.

The Executive Committee of this fund, at a recent meeting under the presidency of Dr. Blandford, decided that the memorial should take the form of a triennial prize, to be awarded to the writer of the best essay on a given subject related to medico-psychology. The prize to be open to all competitors, without restriction in regard to nationality or profession.

The Committee further decided that the Medico-Psychological Association should be requested to undertake the carrying out of the decision of the Committee.

Several other proposals were also considered by the Committee, such as the formation of a library, etc., but there can be little question that the prize, open practically to the whole world, is thoroughly in consonance with the wide and catholic spirit of Dr. Tuke, and is, in that aspect, the most fitting form of his memorial.