

The Association dinner of the present year was unusually well attended and was remarkable for the number of distinguished visitors, prominent amongst whom was the Speaker of the House of Commons. The success of the evening was largely due to the exertions of the President, who spared no effort to make the occasion one that should help to extend the position and influence of the Association.

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*British Medical Association.*

The Psychological Section of the British Medical Association gave the strongest evidence that the preceding meeting of our Association had not exhausted the literary powers or interest of our specialty. The attendance at the sittings was large, and bore a favourable contrast in this respect to many other sections. This is not surprising when the subjects of the papers and the reputation of their authors are considered.

The Presidential Address, Dr. Maudsley on Responsibility, and Dr. Gowers on Epilepsy could not fail to be attractive; the less prominent papers were also of great interest and value. There was, too, an unusual number of communications of the kind which tend to bring the specialty into more close relation with the profession in general; this, indeed, should always constitute the main object of the sectional meetings of our specialty.

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*Gratuities.*

The question of obtaining gratuities to the families of employes who have lost their lives in the service of an asylum for the insane, was raised at the Annual Meeting. This subject needs prompt consideration and action on the part of the Association, since such cases are evidently by no means rare.

The principle of the liability of the employer in similar circumstances is now recognized in law, and there should be very little difficulty in obtaining legal recognition of the claims of asylum officers under such conditions.

The recognition of the justice of such claims by asylum authorities, by the granting of liberal gratuities to the widows of attendants whose husbands had died from injuries

received in the execution of their duty, is proved by the examples quoted in the discussion.\*

The Parliamentary Committee will probably consider this subject at an early date.

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*The Inquiry at the Holloway Sanatorium.*

The report on the inquiry held at St. Ann's Heath, Virginia Water, by W. C. Gully, Esq., M.P., with Dr. Savage as medical assessor, has at length been received. Great delay has taken place between the date of this report and its publication, and it is not surprising that anxiety has been shown in medical and other papers in consequence. As the mouthpiece of that branch of the profession which is chiefly interested in the treatment of the insane we take the first opportunity of expressing our opinion on the report and on the circumstances which gave rise to the inquiry.

The report now officially published bears a marked contrast to the violent articles in "Truth," is temperate in its tone, and, as might have been expected, judicial in its judgment. It does not in any way ignore the fact, which was patent, that owing to several circumstances the management of the hospital as regards this case was not efficient. In brief, it points out that a patient was kept unduly long in restraint, that such use of restraint was excessive, and that it was not properly supervised.

The whole of this was admitted by the medical superintendent, and was explained as being due to the serious undermanning which had resulted from the influenzal epidemic; the second medical officer, who was practically the only one in charge at the time of the mishap, being in very bad health and quite unfit to perform his duties, much less the duties of himself and of others.

The inquiry concludes that the body of governors were anxious to conduct the establishment on humane and liberal principles, and that Dr. Philipps, as medical superintendent, wishes to carry out their views. It is reported that the duties of the superintendent are too many, and that either he ought to have more help or should do less of the administrative work.

\* Since the above was written the sad occurrence at Cane Hill Asylum, by which an attendant, in bravely fulfilling his duty, lost his life at the hands of a patient, has emphasized the importance and urgency of this question.