

symptoms in each were compatible with those of cerebral compression, and I believe the immediate cause of death was hæmorrhage into the sac in both cases. Surely the amount of hæmorrhage sufficient to form false membranes was sufficient not only to cause immediate symptoms, but, in all probability, immediate death.

I would suggest that the appearance presented in these two cases are as much the appearances of old inflammation as of hæmorrhage; and, further, it is exceedingly difficult to account for the conditions found in the second case by any theory of hæmorrhage.

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#### OCCASIONAL NOTES OF THE QUARTER.

##### *The Annual Meeting.*

The characteristic feature of this year's annual meeting was the large amount of business arising out of the reports of Committees appointed the year before. The most important of these had reference to the proposed new rules of the Association. Much labour and time had been expended upon their revision, and it was hoped by many that they would be adopted. As, however, some members had not received their proofs of the rules till within a short period of the meeting, it was decided to postpone the consideration of their adoption until the date of the quarterly meeting in November. A resolution was passed on an important subject—the extension of the sittings of the annual meetings from one to two or three days. We are glad to be able to record this, for although the meeting was not prepared to make this course compulsory, but permissive, there can be no doubt that this permission will be acted upon, and that when once the proposed plan is adopted it will become a permanent institution. Papers on medical psychology will be read and discussed, and we may hope that the result will be the advancement of knowledge in our special department. It is very doubtful that the Journal will be able to find room for the articles, in addition to those which are prepared or are read at the quarterly meetings of the Association in Great Britain and Ireland. It may be that a separate volume of annual transactions may be rendered necessary. Among other subjects discussed, the question of the admission of lady doctors as members led to an animated debate, and

although the general wish was in favour of this innovation, it was found that the existing rules did not permit it. The decision had, therefore, to be postponed until the existing rule is modified.

The President's Address was the eminently practical one which was to be expected from so experienced and successful a medical superintendent. Dr. Murray Lindsay passed in review the most important subjects now or recently uppermost in the minds of the members of the Association. Giving full credit to the work it has already done, he contended that it had yet much to do, and must be more self-assertive in the eyes of the public if it wished to fulfil its mission effectively. In fact, the whole tone of the address had a distinctly Radical ring about it, which always sounds better, and comes with more weight from a man growing grey in asylum service than from the youthful critic.

We cannot say in this instance with Lord Bacon that "men of age adventure too little," however true it may be that "young men in the conduct and management of actions embrace more than they can hold, stir more than they quiet, and fly to the end without consideration of the means and degrees." Speaking of the new Lunacy Act the President observes (and we are sure that no member of the Association acquainted with its working will consider this criticism too harsh), "I am not enabled to look back upon it with more favour than at first. Each year's experience of it only leads me to join in the general condemnation of it by asylum medical officers as in many respects a piece of hasty, vexatious, and ill-judged legislation, not only attended with little or no benefit to the insane poor, but depriving them, to a considerable extent, of the attention of the medical officers whose time is now largely taken up with increased clerical and reporting work in order to satisfy the requirements of an unnecessarily exacting, complicated, and confusing Act, the chief redeeming feature of which is the consolidation of various previous enactments." Dr. Lindsay might have added that some of the clauses are so ill-expressed as to appear to mean precisely the opposite of what the lawyers, who are consulted by the Commissioners in Lunacy, decide to have been the meaning of those who framed them. Most truly does the President say in his scathing condemnation of this unhappy attempt of the lawyers to legislate on a subject of which they have no practical knowledge, that it converts the asylum staff into "recording and certifying machines, a considerable portion of their time

being now frittered away in writing useless reports, signing certificates, and other clerical work." At a quarterly meeting of the Association, held at Bethlem Hospital soon after the Act came into operation, Dr. Percy Smith vigorously attacked it, and showed by actual examples the annoyance and injury it occasioned. It is greatly to be regretted that no practical action has been taken by the Association since the passing of the Act to redouble its opposition to the objectionable clauses it contains. That the medical superintendents of asylums should tamely submit to the yoke which has been put upon them may be creditable to their forbearance and law-abiding qualities, but manifests a want of spirit which can hardly secure the respect of our legislators. Rather may they interpret it as pusillanimity. The Address at Buxton may be taken as an indication and a promise that, under the presidency of its author, the Association will show its hand and succeed in mitigating, if not in altogether removing, an intolerable burden upon all who are engaged, whether in or out of asylums, in lunacy practice.

Dr. Lindsay regrets that the Lord Chancellor has not amalgamated the two Lunacy Departments as provided in Section 327, which empowers him to effect it, and he enforces the necessity of an increase in the number of Medical Commissioners. "One legal member on the Lunacy Commission would probably be found quite sufficient for all necessary purposes for advising the Board . . . . Indeed, I see no need of and no advantage whatever in the visitation of asylums by barristers, who are not supposed to be competent to express opinions on medical matters, and who would be the first to resent intervention by medical men in their legal affairs."

The great importance of the establishment of County Councils has naturally led to the consideration of their success or otherwise by the President, not only of our Association, but of the Psychology Section of the British Medical Association this year. It is highly gratifying to know that their united verdict is distinctly in their favour. After all the gloomy forebodings as to the terrible injury they would inflict upon the administration of the county asylums of England and Wales, it is a relief to find that Dr. Murray Lindsay and Dr. McDowall, after ascertaining the experience of other superintendents, are able to unite with them in regarding the change as salutary, there being, "on the whole, every reason to be satisfied with the progress

made, and with their administration of county asylums, which will eventually derive greater benefit under their régime, for, fortunately, there can be little doubt that more money has of late years been spent upon asylums than for years previously." Dr. Lindsay points to the London County Council as in the front rank in these respects. The whole Address is in the hands of our readers, and we refer them to it rather than dwell further upon its references to the topics of the day in the realm of psychological medicine. We cannot conclude this brief notice of its salient points without remarking that its delivery was followed by some excellent observations by the President-Elect, Dr. Conolly Norman.

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*Classes for "Special Instruction" in connection with the London School Board.*

We are glad to find that the classes instituted by the London School Board for the special instruction of children incapable, by reason of physical or mental infirmity, of being taught in the ordinary elementary day school, are making good progress under the superintendence of Mrs. Burgwin. From her report for the year ending March, 1893, we learn that 265 such children had been under special instruction at six centres, these having been opened in July, 1892, in poor and populous districts of the metropolis. The pupils have as a rule been selected from those attending the ordinary schools, upon the recommendation of head teachers, with the approval of the Medical Officer to the Board and the Superintendent of Special Instruction. More centres are in contemplation; indeed, it is hoped ultimately to provide "special classes" at convenient distances throughout the metropolitan area. From a personal visit to two of these centres, in Clerkenwell and St. Luke's respectively, we are able to speak very favourably of the methods of instruction, and of the results so far as they could be gathered from the first nine months' experience. To deal successfully with groups of children more or less abnormal demands, of course, a comparatively large teaching staff, and we are glad to find that the ratio of teachers to pupils is about 1 to 30. Considering that individual study of each pupil's peculiarity is called for, even a larger ratio of teachers would be justified. The system of teaching adopted follows somewhat on the lines of that found serviceable in institutions for imbeciles; sense culture, manual training, and