

the Lunacy Commissioners to show their sympathy with asylum officers in a practical way by bringing the question of pensions under the notice of the Government, either in connection with the proposed County Boards Bill or the Lunacy Bill now under discussion in the House of Lords. It is to be hoped that the large-hearted sympathy of the late Lord Shaftesbury with the staff of asylums still permeates the Lunacy Board. Perhaps the Commissioners would be disposed to receive a deputation on the subject.

As is well known, medical officers in the prison departments have seven years added to service. Further, the Treasury would allow "an injury allowance" in addition to this, should a medical officer be obliged to retire in consequence of receiving an injury whilst in the performance of his duty.

Lord Monkswell's amendment to the Lunacy Bill now before Parliament, and adopted by the Lord Chancellor, will, if the Bill become law, allow superintendents to reckon their service in more than one asylum in the same county, a principle adopted in the Police Superannuation Bill of the late Government. Dr. Murray Lindsay, who has done more than anyone in advocating the claims of superintendents, has for years maintained the justice of counting service in different asylums towards a pension, whether in the same county or not.

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*Dr. Rutherford and his Assistant Medical Officer.*

We have deferred commenting on the unhappy incident which has occurred at the Institution at Dumfries, of which Dr. Rutherford is the esteemed Superintendent, until in possession of the official Report upon the charges made against the management of one of the houses of the asylum by the Junior Medical Assistant, Dr. David Lennox. It may be briefly stated that on June 11th, 1886, this officer resigned after seven months' service. When Dr. Rutherford became aware, a week afterwards, of this fact, he at once suspended him, a proceeding which was confirmed by the Board of Direction. The result was an official inquiry into the above charges by the Scotch Lunacy Board. The following is the memorandum made by this Board for the Trustees and Directors of the Crichton Royal Institution as to the inquiry by the Board, under section 11 of 20 and 21 Vic., Cap. 71, into the charges brought against the management

of the second house of the institution by the late Junior Medical Assistant in a letter to Sir Alexander Jardine, Bart., dated 11th June, 1886, a copy of which letter was on the same day transmitted by the said Junior Medical Assistant to the Board :—

I. On the 21st day of July, 1886, the Board met in Edinburgh—all the members and the Secretary being present—and the following persons, who had been duly cited to appear, were examined on oath :—

1. The Junior Medical Assistant who had made the charges leading to the Inquiry.
2. The Secretary and Treasurer of the Institution.
3. The Medical Superintendent.

II. On the 22nd day of July, 1886, the Board again met in Edinburgh—all the members and the Secretary being present—and the following persons, who had been duly cited to appear, were examined on oath :—

4. The Senior Medical Assistant.
5. The Matron of the Second House.
6. The Matron of the First House.
7. The Head Male Attendant of the Second House.
8. The Head Male Attendant of the First House.
9. The Steward.
10. The Housekeeper.

III. On the 29th day of July, 1886, the Board met at Dumfries. Present—Sir John Don Wauchope, Bart. (chairman), Sheriff Guthrie Smith, Dr. Arthur Mitchell, and Mr. T. W. L. Spence for the Secretary. The following persons were examined, and, with the exception of the two patients, they had been duly cited to appear and were examined on oath :—

11. Nine Female Attendants or Servants.
12. Five Male Attendants.
13. Three men formerly in service as Attendants in the Second House.
14. Two patients.

IV. Altogether 29 persons were examined at the three special meetings of the Board. The persons examined included all whom it seemed to the Board necessary to examine, and also, with the exception of three patients, all whom the late Junior Medical Assistant, who made the charges under investigation, desired to have examined, as persons whose testimony would support the charges. Of the five patients he had named, the three who were not examined were considered by the Board unfit for examination, partly on evidence given orally by the Senior Medical Assistant, and partly on evidence given in the Case Books by the late Junior Medical Assistant. There was besides, in the opinion of the Board, a sufficiency of evidence from sane persons.

V. Though the inquiry was not made at the instance of any parties, the Board sanctioned the presence during it of agents and counsel, representing (1) the Trustees and Directors; (2) the Medical Superintendent; and (3) the late Junior Medical Assistant. At the two meetings in Edinburgh all the three were represented; and at the meeting in Dumfries the Trustees and Directors were represented. The gentlemen who attended as representatives were informed that, while the Board could not allow them a general right of cross-examination as in a contested case, they would be permitted to suggest or put questions as through the Board, and they freely availed themselves of this privilege by questioning the persons under examination.

VI. At the meeting in Dumfries the Board closed the inquiry, and gave instructions that the two Medical Commissioners should visit the Second House, and report as to its management at the time of their visit, with special reference to the discipline of the House, and the feeding of the patients and attendants.

VII. The conclusions which the Board have come to as the result of the inquiry into the charges brought against the management of the Second House of the Crichton Royal Institution by the Junior Medical Assistant, in his letter to Sir Alexander Jardine, Bart., of 11th June, 1886, are as follows:—

- (a) That the charge of want of discipline in the Second House of the Crichton Royal Institution has been proved to their satisfaction to be unfounded. The conduct, however, of the late Junior Medical Assistant during the time he held that position was shown to have been subversive of discipline.
- (b) That as regards the quantity of food supplied to the patients in the Second House, many of the figures in the letter referred to are shown to be erroneous; and that the statements in it generally in reference to the quantity of food and the condition of the patients are undeserving of confidence.
- (c) That both as regards patients, attendants, and house servants, the food supplies of the Second House have been of good quality, but that the cooking of the food appears to have been on a considerable number of occasions unsatisfactory.
- (d) That the estimate of the cost of the food of the patients in the Second House, given in the letter referred to, is unsupported by facts, and shows an ignorance of the cost of the food of patients in other asylums.
- (e) That the charges in the letter referred to against the management of the Second House have been prepared, and have been brought forward, in a way which deserves strong censure.

VIII. The following is a copy of the Report by Commissioners

Mitchell and Sibbald after the visit which they were instructed to make :—

“ 16th September, 1886.—According to instructions from the Board, we visited the Second House of the Crichton Royal Institution to-day for the purpose of inquiring into, and reporting on, its management at the time of our visit with special reference to the charges lately brought against the management by the Junior Medical Assistant. We have now to report as follows :—

“(1) We looked carefully into the question of discipline, and nothing came under our observation to show that it was in any respect defective. On the contrary, the management and discipline appeared to us to show ability, in view of the difficulties arising out of the extensive structural changes at present in progress, which have made it necessary to remove all patients from more than the half of the female side, and to use the kitchen as an ordinary passage, and which have necessitated for the time being many make-shift arrangements. There seems at present to be no failure on the part of the staff to co-operate loyally with the Superintendent in overcoming these unavoidable difficulties.

“(2) We also made careful inquiries as to the quality, quantity, cooking, and serving of the food of the patients and attendants, and we came to the conclusion that they are all satisfactory. No complaints were made to us regarding the food, either by patients or attendants. The dinner served during our visit was, in our opinion, excellent in quality, abundant in quantity, and well cooked, and it was served in an orderly manner.

“(Signed) W. FORBES, *Secretary.*”

General Board of Lunacy,  
Edinburgh, 3rd November, 1886.

We sincerely congratulate the able Superintendent of the Dumfries Asylum on the result of the investigation into the charges preferred against his administration, and sympathize with him in the unjustifiable annoyance which he has been made to suffer. It need hardly be said that if the management of an asylum were justly open to grave censure, it might become the duty of even a Junior Medical Officer to bring under the notice of the Board the abuse which he considered existed, and, if he thought proper, to resign his post. But nothing can justify the course which Dr. Lennox pursued in the present instance, wanting as it was in openness with the Superintendent, and loyalty to him as his Chief, who, moreover, had treated him with singular kindness and

consideration. The publication of private letters without permission also deserves the severest censure.

The one point in the official report which at all favours Dr. Lennox's charges has reference to the cooking of the food, which "appears to have been on a considerable number of occasions unsatisfactory." Doubtless, had this defect been brought under Dr. Rutherford's notice by the assistant, he would have been thankful for the information and acted upon it. Unfortunately, however, the Lunacy Commissioners report that the conduct of Dr. Lennox during the time that he held office "was shown to have been subversive of discipline," and his statements in reference to the quantity of the food and the condition of the patients "undeserving of confidence," while his estimate of the cost of food in the institution "shows an ignorance of such cost in other asylums."

We hope that it will be long, indeed, before Dr. Rutherford is subjected to similar annoyances, which must for the time being seriously interfere with the proper work of a medical superintendent, and add very unnecessarily to the already sufficiently heavy strain under which he has to perform his daily duties.

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*Idiots Act, 1886.*

The above is the name of an important Act which passed through Parliament last year, simplifying the certificates and removing restrictions affecting the admission of idiots and imbeciles into Training Institutions, and which we have not found room to notice before. Previously, Training Institutions for Idiots and Imbeciles were regarded, in the eye of the law, either as licensed houses or registered hospitals for lunatics. Before a patient could be received into them it was necessary for the parent or guardian to fill up an order, stating that the child was a lunatic, an idiot, or a person of unsound mind, and to reply to a series of questions totally unsuited to the case. In addition to the order and statement, two medical certificates, the same as were necessary for the admission of insane persons into lunatic asylums, and quite inappropriate for idiots and imbeciles, were required from independent practitioners.

Now, since all training institutions for idiots and imbeciles are really *schools*, in which the patients are educated