

(quoted from the *Vineland Magazine*) of the theory of happiness as an essential element in the education and treatment of the mental defective (and perhaps others), namely, "a pat on the back above the waist gets better results than several pats below," which has surely ever been the keynote of all the work of this great and valuable institution, which is fortunate in having a staff in whom enthusiasm and sympathy are happily blended with skill and understanding.

Dr. Turner's report is full of points of interest, and many of us must feel with him the misgivings and anxieties he expresses as to the future of the high-grade mental defective.

His analysis of the difficulties and stumbling-blocks of the Mental Deficiency Act, 1926, is worth reading.

Diphtheritic cases have continued to appear in the institution, and it was decided to try the Schick test as a means of checking this continual recurrence, with valuable and interesting results, one of them being the very high percentage of positive reactions amongst the staff. All the positive cases were treated with an immunizing dose of diphtheria toxin-antitoxin.

The tubercular death-rate of the institution was the remarkably low one of 0·81 on the average number resident.

SCOTLAND.

James Murray's Royal Asylum, Perth.—The Annual Report for the year 1926 has the distinction of being the hundredth of this historic mental hospital, and Dr. Chambers takes this opportunity of giving a very interesting and valuable *résumé* of its history from the foundation under the provision of the will of the far-seeing and sympathetic James Murray.

"About 1857 there was a considerable rearrangement of the duties of resident officials following what must have been the first strike of mental nurses. There is no history of their actual grievances, but judging from the traditions of the time, the prolonged hours of duty accompanied by minute remuneration may well have been among them. For several years about this time there were repeated complaints about the scarcity of suitable nurses, male and female, experienced by all similar hospitals. To a professional reader of the earlier Reports the most fascinating point is undoubtedly the constant recurrence there of themes which appear in similar documents with every air of freshness and originality to-day. As I have hinted above, the reiteration of these warnings, opinions and morals is not so much due to poverty of ideation on the part of asylum physicians as to the heedlessness and aloofness generally of the public. Among the more interesting of these echoes of the past is the assertion that insanity is usually associated with bodily disease, in 1838; a warning against the emotional dangers of religious revivals, in 1840; frequently repeated petitions for the earlier admission of patients, and entreaties for a warmer sympathy with asylums and their patients, from 1829 onwards; the advantages of comparative liberty and freedom from irksome observation and restrictions, in 1832; the dangers of alcoholic excess, *passim*; hereditary predisposition as a cause of mental disease, in 1841; the definitely curative effects of occupation therapy, in 1841 *et seq.* (this was insisted upon at length in the Reports of Dr. Lindsay, 1858–1862); the abolition of mechanical restraint, in 1854; the admission of voluntary boarders, in 1856 (the first authentic admission to The Murray of a voluntary patient took place in 1840, although a malingerer got himself admitted under a false certificate in 1830); a judicial investigation of the claims of phrenology, in 1860; the open-door system, and a note that only two wards in the hospital were kept locked, in 1885; the evil

effects of the association of recent and chronic asylum patients, in 1886; the appointment of a matron with general hospital training, in the same year; and so on indefinitely. But I am unwilling to conclude this section without quoting two very illuminating extracts from early Reports of the Board.

"The first, printed in 1838, appears to cast a light not only on the scientific interest and insight of the Directors of the day in the subject which was for the time being their concern, but also on what may be considered to be a hereditary national point of view.

"It is a curious fact that in those countries which have reached the highest state of civilization and enjoy most freedom, insanity is most prevalent. The causes of this are perhaps sufficiently accounted for in the following abstract from a small work recently published (1838), viz., *Remarks on the Influence of Mental Cultivation and Mental Excitement upon Health*, by Amariah Brigham, M.D.:

"In Scotland the proportion of insane is one to five hundred and seventy-four, and in the agricultural districts of England one to eight hundred and twenty. There is, however, more insanity in England than in any other country of Europe. We find that insanity prevails most in those countries where people enjoy civil and religious freedom—where every person has liberty to engage in the strife for the highest honours and stations in society—and where the road to wealth and distinction is equally open to all. There is but little insanity in those countries where the government is despotic."

"In 1845 this same author is again quoted by the Directors in support of their arguments, and without any bias in a controversy which continues volubly to this day, one may agree that the conservative view has often been less effectively presented than in the following words:

"If the mind could be deranged independently of any bodily disease, such a possibility would tend to destroy the hope of its immortality which we gain from reason; for that which is capable of disease and decay, may die. Besides, it would be natural to expect that mere mental derangement might be cured by reasoning and by appeals to the understanding. But attempts to restore the mind in this manner generally prove useless, and are often injurious. . . . It is fortunate for insane people that the true nature of mental derangement has of late been acknowledged in practice, and that, in all attempts to benefit and cure this unfortunate class of beings, they have been assigned to the physician and treated for corporal diseases. It is true that moral and mental causes may produce insanity, but they produce it by first occasioning either functional or organic disease of the brain."

The total number of patients on the register for the year ending March 31, 1927, was 163, of whom 36 were voluntary borders; there were admitted during the year 68 cases (M. 28, F. 40), and of these 64% were admitted on a voluntary basis.

"The figures relating to the movements of voluntary and certified patients in the last seven years are set out below and are not without interest:

1920-1927.	Voluntary.	Certified.
Admitted	219	165
Discharged recovered	90	49
Percentage ,,	41.0	29.7
Discharged relieved	65	46
Percentage ,,	29.6	27.8

"It is apparent that the figures (recovery-rate) referring to the voluntary class are much more favourable, and as I have stated previously, this is in my opinion due, not only to such patients coming under treatment when their illness is at an earlier and more amenable stage, but also to the absence of any irksome feeling of constraint and compulsion with consequent antagonism to the hospital. During the year no voluntary patient was certified, and no patient was admitted under certificates who had previously been voluntary; during the seven years under review the total number of such cases is only 5, or 2.3% of all voluntary admissions."

Referring to treatment by ultra-violet rays Dr. Chambers makes the following observations:

"While every recent patient undergoes this treatment almost as a routine measure on verandahs or in shelters in the gardens, a more intensive form of it is required for some, as well as for some of the more chronic patients whose bodily health is not good. This is provided by a course of insolation, in which increasing areas of the body are exposed at intervals to the direct rays of the sun, or by means of a special electric lamp which produces the curative ultra-violet rays, the installation of which in this hospital was referred to in my report for last year. The ultra-violet radiation is more readily absorbed, and is therefore most beneficial when the skin is warm and the cutaneous capillaries full of blood, and consequently the artificial source in a warm room indoors is of more use in winter and spring than the sun when the latter is at a low altitude and unreliable in its appearances. Both methods have been in frequent use here, and each has given good results in a number of cases, and has led to increased vigour, gain in weight, longer and sounder sleep, better appetite and improvement in spirits, in numerous cases."

Part IV.—Notes and News.

THE ROYAL MEDICO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

THE EIGHTY-SIXTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Association was held on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, July 19–22, 1927, in the Hall of the Royal College of Physicians and at the University, Edinburgh, under the Presidency, in the earlier proceedings, of Lt.-Col. J. R. Lord, *C.B.E.*, *M.D.*, *F.R.C.P.E.*, and later that of Hamilton Marr, *M.D.*, *F.R.F.P.S.Glasg.*

The Council and various Standing and Special Committees assembled on the previous day.

MORNING SESSION.—TUESDAY, JULY 19.

In the Hall of the Royal College of Physicians.

Lt.-Col. J. R. Lord, the retiring President, in the Chair.

MINUTES.

The minutes of the Eighty-fifth Annual Meeting, having appeared in the *Journal of Mental Science*, were taken as read, and were confirmed and signed by the President.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR 1927–28.

The PRESIDENT proposed that the Officers of the Association for 1927–28 be:

President.—Hamilton Marr, *M.D.*, *F.R.F.P.S.Glasg.*

President-Elect.—J. Shaw Bolton, *D.Sc.*, *M.D.*, *F.R.C.P.*

Ex-President.—J. R. Lord, *C.B.E.*, *M.D.*, *F.R.C.P.E.*

Treasurer.—James Chambers, *M.A.*, *M.D.*

Editors of the Journal.—J. R. Lord, *C.B.E.*, *M.D.*, *F.R.C.P.E.*, Douglas McRae, *M.D.*, *F.R.C.P.E.*, Thomas Beaton, *O.B.E.*, *M.D.*

General Secretary.—R. Worth, *O.B.E.*, *M.B.*

Registrar.—Daniel F. Rambaut, *M.A.*, *M.D.*

It would be noticed with great regret that Dr. Devine's name no longer appeared in the list of Editors. [Agreed.]

NOMINATED MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The PRESIDENT next proposed that the nominated members of Council be: Drs. G. W. Shore, R. Percy Smith, C. H. Bond, F. H. Edwards, J. Brander and D. K. Henderson. [Agreed.]