

The Committee acknowledge in most complimentary terms his just and honourable discharge of duty through more than twenty years. "*Twenty years,*" said one of the Committee, "*and there has never been a scandal.*" As a further acknowledgment of the services he had rendered, the Committee awarded him a pension, which was confirmed unanimously by the Quarter Sessions of both counties, and the boroughs in union.

When he was finally released from the labors under which his once strong health had given way, he spent some months in Devonshire, looking forward to a home among the scenes of his early life. He had lately returned to the neighbourhood of Oxford, and was upon a visit to former friends at Littlemore—purposing after a short stay to pass on again to Devonshire, to try whether the warmer climate would be more suitable to his increased difficulty of breathing. His strength failed too rapidly to allow of his removal from Littlemore, and there,—under the watchful care of those who had been trained under his own eye,—he quietly breathed his last.—*Medical Times and Gazette.*

#### ALLEGED INCREASE OF LUNACY.

WE often hear people assuming that lunacy is more common than it used to be, and speculating upon the causes of the supposed increase. Sometimes it is ascribed to education, sometimes to religion, and more frequently to the railways or the telegraph. The conception of proper treatment for lunatics is modern, and provision for giving practical effect to it belongs to the present century; and perhaps Providence has ordained that the number of subjects for treatment should increase in order to prevent so much good philanthropy from being wasted. It is probably correct to say that the middle and upper classes of Englishmen are more temperate than they were a century ago, and it would be disappointing to conclude that those who used only to get drunk now go mad. We are told that politics and statesmanship do not produce many lunatics, neither does law, literature, nor the fine arts. We know that clergymen sometimes make their hearers mad, but we do not know that they go mad themselves. The army and navy send few patients to asylums; and, on the whole, it is concluded that intense devotion to business is the chief cause of madness. The speed at which we live is said to be too high, and if a man comes up to business by express train in the morning, receives and answers telegrams all day, and returns home by express train in the evening, it is supposed that his brain must be in a process of deterioration. Another conjecture is that people have too much pleasure or too much variety in life, and that the best preservative of a sound mind was the dullness of a country town of the last century.

That statement that lunacy is increasing would be highly important if true, but we have some reason to think it is not true. It is matter of common knowledge that lunatics have been very much looked up during the last twenty or thirty years, and it may be that the supposed increase in their numbers is merely the result of greater accuracy in registration. A considerable degree of accuracy has now been attained, and inaccuracy, even if it exists, does not affect the present question, because the belief in the supposed increase of lunacy, unless it is mere vague conjecture, must be founded upon such statistics as can be procured; and these statistics, as we shall proceed to show, do not support this belief, but disprove it. In short, it is a popular delusion to suppose that the spread of intelligence and progress in the arts of life renders this generation more liable than its predecessors to brain disease. This subject was discussed at a recent meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association, and a paper read before that meeting by Dr. C. Lockhart Robertson exhibited the results of examination of the returns, upon which alone a trustworthy opinion can be formed. This paper admitted that a general belief in the increase of lunacy existed, and had some apparent justification. The grand total of the insane of all classes, detained in asylums, in workhouses, and in private dwellings was, in 1844, 20,611, and, in 1868, 50,118. Thus in twenty-five years the number of registered lunatics has

more than doubled. And if we compare the number of lunatics with the total population of the country, we shall find that in 1844 the ratio was 1 in 802, while in 1858 it was 1 in 432. The statistics of France exhibit a similar result. The total number of the insane in that country increased, from 1 in 796 in 1851, to 1 in 444 in 1861. It is remarkable that the proportion of registered lunatics to population in England and France should be almost exactly the same, being in the former country 1 in 432, and in the latter 1 in 444. In explanation of the apparent increase of lunacy in England, it is to be observed that, previously to 1844, no statistical record existed of the number of insane in England. The returns made in that year were considered by the Commissioners in Lunacy "plainly insufficient for general deductions." Again, the returns for 1847 were stated by the Commissioners to be "notoriously imperfect, falling far short of the actual amount." As regards pauper lunatics, there was until recently no official system of registration. County asylums have only been established since 1845, and the greater care bestowed on the insane poor since that time has produced a more accurate knowledge of their numbers, as well as of their condition. But as regards private patients in asylums belonging to the middle and upper classes an accurate registration has been enforced for a longer time, and the number of these patients in proportion to population has not increased. In 1858 the number was 4,612, and the proportion was 1 in 4,164; in 1868 the number was 5,244, and the proportion was 1 in 4,065. These figures ought to make an end of all theories which ascribe the supposed increase of mental disease to particular habits or tendencies of our age. It cannot be education, nor business, nor politics, nor awakening sermons, nor express trains, nor telegrams, because the classes of society which enjoy or suffer these things do not, in fact, go mad more frequently than they used to do. The increase of lunacy has taken place, if it has taken place at all, among the poorer classes, who live now nearly as they lived a hundred years ago. But the increase among these classes has been apparent and not real. If Mr. Gladstone's Irish Church Bill passes as he has brought it in, there is likely to be an apparent increase in the number of pauper lunatics in Ireland, but we do not suppose there will be a real increase. And the apparent increase of pauper lunatics in England is an increase in a decreasing ratio. Thus, in the period 1844-9 the increase in the number of inmates of asylums in England—which increase, as we have seen, belonged to the pauper element—was in the ratio of 5.64 per cent. But in the period of 1864-8 the ratio of increase was 3.82 per cent. In France also the increase in the number of inmates of asylums has been on a comparison of the same periods, in nearly the same decreasing ratio. Thus, as Dr. Robertson says, "if mental disease be on the increase, it is at least satisfactory to find that that the annual increase, both in England and in France, is in a decreasing ratio." A similar conclusion may be obtained by examining the numbers of admissions to asylums both in England and France. The result of the French returns is clearly stated by an official writer, quoted by Dr. Robertson:—

Ainsi la proportion d'accroissement, après s'être élevée à 7,94 p. 100 vers 1838, date de la loi relative au traitement des aliénés indigents, est successivement descendue à 3,83 et à 2 p. 100. On trouve dans cette diminution graduelle la preuve bien manifeste que l'accroissement si considérable des admissions est un fait tout à fait temporaire, et qui tient, en grande partie, à l'action bienfaisante de la loi précitée. Pour satisfaire aux prescriptions de cette loi, qui a obligé chaque département à faire traiter ses aliénés indigents, les asiles ont été agrandis, multipliés, améliorés, et le nombre des admis s'y est naturellement accru.

The number of admissions to English asylums was largely affected by the passing of the Act of Parliament of 1861, rendering pauper lunatics chargeable upon the common fund of the union, instead of upon their parishes. The fear of burdening the parish rates now ceased to influence the action of parochial authorities, and accordingly we find that in the years 1863-5 there was an increase of nearly 10 per cent. in the admissions to asylums. But in late years the rate of increase has been considerably reduced. It must be remembered, too, that this increase of admission is a mere transfer from workhouses and private dwellings

to asylums. The management of pauper lunatic asylums is most creditable to the humanity and scientific skill of their medical superintendents, and the experience gained in them has contributed to the amelioration of the treatment of the insane of the upper and middle classes. These satisfactory results cannot of course be obtained without paying for them, and the cry which is going up for a diminution of the burden of county rates may possibly produce some interference with the views enlightened philanthropy entertains as to the proper mode of treating pauper lunatics. It seems probable that financial boards will be constituted in counties, and that ratepayers will have a choice in deciding questions which have hitherto been settled by a committee of magistrates. We doubt whether the representative vestryman is likely to act in harmony with the medical superintendent of a pauper lunatic asylum. It is a mistake to assume that expenditure upon these asylums is not true economy; but it is a mistake which uninstructed mind are very likely to fall into. But whatever conflicts may be in store for medical officers of lunatic asylums in England, we foresee that in Ireland, under Mr. Gladstone's Bill, they will find a paradise. They are to be invited to help to spend the surplus property of the disendowed Church, and we venture to believe that they will be found equal to the occasion. The pauper lunatic asylums of Ireland are likely to become models of complete arrangement and scientific management, and although we do not suppose that people will pretend madness to gain admission to them, we do suppose that pauperism will be assumed in order to obtain gratuitous maintenance and medical treatment for persons who ought to pay for it. In any asylum in England now the condition of a pauper lunatic is incomparably preferable to that of the most wealthy lunatics in any asylum of the last century. Indeed, the most wealthy lunatics were frequently the worst treated. Perhaps lunatics and idiots who remained in their own homes were treated better than those who were placed in asylums. The feelings of humanity would assert themselves in uninstructed bosoms, and it was only a pretended science that applied systematic cruelty to that portion of mankind which most deserved the pity of its fellows. There has been no more remarkable change of ideas than that which has almost banished from lunatic asylums the whole apparatus of restraint. It would be melancholy to think that, along with so great improvement in the treatment of mental disease, there is a tendency in advancing civilisation to multiply the subjects of it. But Dr. Robertson has shown that this opinion, although not destitute of apparent foundation, is erroneous.—*The Saturday Review.*

#### OPENING OF A NEW CHAPEL AT THE LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY ASYLUM.

A MOST interesting ceremony took place at the County Lunatic Asylum, at Bracebridge, on Tuesday last. In consequence of the additions which have been made to the Asylum, the original chapel became too small for the requirements of the inmates, and the Committee of Visitors were accordingly authorised to erect a detached chapel, capable of accommodating a congregation of 450, and to convert the old building into a recreation-hall, the cost altogether not to exceed £2,000. The new chapel is 70ft. 9in. by 45ft. There are separate entrances for the sexes, through porches 7ft. 6in. by 7ft., between which are two retiring-rooms for epileptics, 10ft. by 7ft 4in. The roof is high pitched, all the timbers being exposed to view, and plastered between the rafters. At the east end is a raised dais for Communion purposes, enclosed by a suitable railing, and floored with encaustic tiles. A robing-closet is formed behind the pulpit, and a similar enclosure in the opposite corner forms an inside porch to the chaplain's entrance. The sittings, robing room, and retiring rooms are floored with wood, the remainder with blue and red Staffordshire tiles. All the fittings from the old chapel were again used. The windows are glazed with cathedral glass, in lead lights. The woodwork exposed to view is stained and varnished. The stone for the walls and for lime were obtained upon the estate. The west gable is sur-