

NOTICES BY THE REGISTRAR.

Nursing Examinations.

Preliminary	Monday, May 6th, 1918.
Final	Monday, May 13th, 1918.

Papers for Bronze Medal to reach Registrar before June 14th, 1918.

Examination for Certificate in Psychological Medicine will be held early in July, 1918.

OBITUARY.

WILLIAM JOSEPH SEWARD.

THE death of Dr. Seward on February 11th, 1918, came as an unexpected shock to his friends and colleagues in the work of caring for the insane, and although he had been in retirement owing to ill-health since 1911, the announcement of his death came to the writer of these lines as a special reminder of the strain and stress involved in the medical and administrative control of a great mental hospital, for such in the fullest sense was the Colney Hatch Asylum in the North of London.

Seward may be said to have devoted his life to the service of this Institution for he had worked in no other. He joined its staff in 1878 as a graduate of the London University, and he was proud to be one of its Bachelors of Medicine. Educated at University College Hospital, he was appointed to Colney Hatch immediately after completing house appointments at the Bristol Royal Infirmary, which gave him a valuable experience and a full practical knowledge of general medicine and surgery. His hospital appointments always stood him in good stead, for he was an able clinician and he never relinquished his medical interests, although of necessity these tended to be submerged in his official work by an almost overwhelming amount of compelling administrative details.

At Colney Hatch Seward was firstly the assistant to Mr. W. G. Marshall, whose reputation for personal devotion to his patients was a matter of notoriety to the older generation of asylum physicians; then later he became the assistant to Dr. Edgar Sheppard—of fame as the father of the Sub-Dean of the Chapels Royal—and one of the first Lecturers on Psychological Medicine at a London Medical School, *vis.*, King's College. In 1882, when barely 30 years of age, he succeeded Dr. Sheppard as the Medical Superintendent, and with his old chiefs he remained upon terms of intimate friendship to the end of their lives.

When the London County Council, with a new sense of public responsibility assumed the Government of the London (then the Middlesex) Asylums under the Local Government Act of 1890, Seward was appointed by them, upon the retirement of Mr. Marshall, to be the administrative medical head of the whole institution, taking over the care of both the male and female sections and thus abolishing what until then had been a dual control. The Chairman of that Committee was the present Member of Parliament for Hampstead, Mr. J. S. Fletcher, who takes much interest in public affairs. The reconstruction of so great an undertaking under one head was no easy task, and probably Seward was the only person who could have assumed this supreme direction for the Asylums Committee of the Council not only without friction but also with the full help and confidence of the governed—a task much more delicate and much more difficult than the responsibility of opening a new asylum, but Seward accomplished his work with efficiency and credit.

During his period of service in this Institution was inaugurated the After-Care Association for the rehabilitation into social life of those patients who had been discharged recovered; and the inspiring leadership of its founder, the Rev. Henry Hawkins, the Chaplain, was always a source of personal gratification to Seward. He continued throughout his life to take the deepest interest in the Society's welfare, as he also did in the Asylum Workers' Association of the Executive Committee, of which he was a member.

One great event cast a deep shadow upon Seward's life, and he never recovered from the shock. On January 23rd, 1903, a destructive fire occurred in the new wooden annexe, adjacent to the main buildings of Colney Hatch, which was

demolished in about an hour. In this fire fifty-one female patients lost their lives, and the rest were saved with difficulty. Under ordinary circumstances no calamity can possibly be more tragic nor more disastrous than a fire, even when every safeguard and every precaution are ready against its occurrence, but when such a catastrophe occurs in an institution in which there is a sense of helplessness among its peoples and a feeling of dependence on the part of those committed into one's charge, then the anguish inseparable from mental disease is added to the special claims of humanity, and these tend to intensify acutely the overwhelming sense of responsibility. This disaster weighed upon Seward like a black cloud and the tragedy was always before his mental vision, and it is not surprising that it permanently unnerved him, and some years later he was succeeded in the appointment of Medical Superintendent by his friend and assistant, Dr. S. J. Gilfillan.

The treatment of the insane under Seward's *régime* was always one of enlightened and disinterested progress, and the writer of this article is under the greatest obligation to the memory of his old chiefs, Marshall and Seward, for their high example, devotion, and attachment to their patients, whilst the welfare of the staff never escaped either of them. Alcohol, in the shape of beer, was abolished as an article of diet under Seward; the Turkish bath for restoring mental patients was first used there; organo-therapy was encouraged by him; and the aid of clinical pathology with the application of the microscope were all adjuncts in treatment which were of intense interest to Seward, and they continued to be aspects in the practice of medicine which engaged his leisure and retirement, for he was a frequent visitor at the meetings of the Royal Society of Medicine, of which he was a Fellow. Seward was an "intermediary" between the old school and the new research one first started in the London Asylums by Sir William J. Collins, K.C.V.O. Nothing was irksome to Seward, and his mind may be described as healthy in the best sense. He was a Mason, and a member of the London County Council Lodge. He was a keen angler, and was devoted to Norway where he used to fish, and to Switzerland where he made many walking tours. He liked a game of whist, and he was a real cricketer—preferring rather to play in a small match than to watch the great ones—although he was often seen at Lords.

He was fond of pictures and rarely missed an exhibition in Bond Street; he was devoted to his garden and he delighted in the cultivation of roses, whilst he derived great pleasure from the meetings of the Royal Horticultural Society.

He was not a great reader of literature, but he was exceedingly well versed in contemporary history, and he was a great lover of *The Field* and *The Times*—the latter he may be said to have read daily from cover to cover. He was fond of hearing some of the great preachers, and the writer and his family often met him at the Sunday afternoon services in Westminster Abbey.

Seward's mind was not that of the controversialist, indeed, he rather disliked debated questions, but he always expressed his opinions—which were well considered—both critically and fearlessly. His great charm was his complete detachment from bias—he had cultivated the bias of anti-bias more than any other man of the writer's acquaintance, and he was a most genial, well-informed and cheerful personality.

He always maintained the complete confidence and friendship of his Committee, as well as of their officials, and for Mr. H. F. Keene, their Clerk, he entertained a great regard. Seward, like Marshall, was never married.

It may be repeated that Seward has left an impression of unique charm upon those who were privileged to know him.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG-JONES.

WILLIAM RIDDELL WATSON.

To an Englishman, at any rate, the late Dr. Watson suggested the typical practitioner of Scottish fiction. Not that he wore his profession on his sleeve; for a stranger might have been in his company for a considerable time without discovering that he was a medical man; but that he showed that combination of humanity and scholarly tastes—if not scholarship—which is more common in his profession north than south of the Tweed. He must have been an ideal asylum