

action. The opposition offered to what he had done was, he was satisfied, quite fictitious. Nobody's interests were really injured by his sending out a few male patients to work on neighbouring farms. At all events he looked on the matter solely from a medical point of view, and regarded only the undoubted benefit to his patients. In the discharge of his duties he considered no one else.

Dr. WOODS having inquired carefully into the practical working of the subject, expressed himself satisfied that no exception ought to be taken to the employment on the score of injury to the interests of sane workers. He therefore seconded the resolution, which was then unanimously adopted.

A paper by Dr. VINCENT J. BUTTLEDGE was read on "A Case of Bilateral Atrophy of Certain Groups of Muscles in the Neck," and discussed by Drs. Patton, Nash, Middleton, and Norman. (We hope to have this paper for an early number of the Journal.)

Dr. NASH read a paper on "Alcoholic Neuritis with Mental Disease," continuing his observations communicated at the last Irish meeting with further cases.

Dr. NORMAN spoke.

A paper by Dr. W. C. SULLIVAN was read on "A Case of Sexual Perversion recurring in Acute Mania." (See Clinical Notes and Cases.)

Dr. NASH described a case occurring in a female patient at the Richmond Asylum, in which double pyosalpinx existed.

Drs. PATTON, GORDON, and MIDDLETON spoke.

Time running short, a paper by Dr. NOLAN "On Syphilis and General Paralysis" was unavoidably taken as read.

Dr. Patton having been moved to the second chair, a vote of thanks was passed to Dr. Garner for his conduct as Chairman, and a most agreeable and successful meeting terminated in a warm vote of thanks to Dr. Finnegan for having invited the members to meet at the Mullingar Asylum, and for having provided most hospitably for their needs, mental and physical.

MYXŒDEMA AND SPORADIC CRETINISM.

Arrangements were made to deliver a series of lectures and demonstrations on myxœdema before the Edinburgh Medico-Chirurgical Society on the 15th and 16th February. Never, probably, had so many cases of this rare disease been collected together, and the information given might be said to be complete up to date. Though the proceedings occupied two sittings, there was no spare time for discussion. Lecturing and not debating is the forte of the Medico-Chirurgical Society, as most of the speakers are attached to the Edinburgh Medical School. Towards the end the audience began to be somewhat weary of notes of cases which only repeated the same general history. The subject was introduced by Dr. Byrom Bramwell, who described with great clearness and precision the symptoms of myxœdema, which he contrasted with those of exophthalmic goitre and acromegaly. Dr. Bramwell also described cretinoid idiocy or sporadic cretinism, which he regarded as a congenital or infantile form of myxœdema. After explaining the nature of the affection of the thyroid gland in myxœdema, cretinism, and exophthalmic goitre, and the supposed deficiency of the pituitary body in acromegaly (megalakria would be a better word), Dr. Bramwell gave illustrations of the success of the treatment of feeding with portions of the raw thyroid of the sheep or pig. The interest of Dr. Bramwell's observations was enhanced by the introduction of several clinical cases of these diseases, and the exhibition of some very realistic coloured drawings.

Professor Greenfield explained the pathological character of the myxœdema, dwelling principally upon the atrophy of the glandular tissue of the thyroid, and the general increase of connective tissue in the body. Of 17 patients with

myxœdema whom he had seen two were insane. In one case he had carefully examined the brain, but could detect no change, though he found traces of neuritis in the peripheral nerves, which perhaps might be accounted for by the changes in the integument. Dr. Greenfield's paper was illustrated by a large number of preparations under the microscope, and some views of patients thrown from the magic lantern. Dr. R. A. Lundie then dealt with the treatment by injection of thyroid juice. He found that the raw thyroid, or thyroid extract, was a safer and equally efficacious method of treatment, and exhibited some cases in which improvement amounting to an absolute cure had followed his treatment. Dr. John Thomson showed two cases of sporadic cretinism—one a child aged four, the other a dwarf said to be eighteen—in which there was great improvement from thyroid feeding, both in the physical symptoms and in the intelligence. Other cases were exhibited by Drs. Affleck, W. Russell, A. Bruce, Dunlop, Church, Dr. A. T. Davies, of London, and Dr. Stalker, of Dundee. On the second day Dr. Murray, of Newcastle, appeared. He explained the process of reasoning and observation by which he had been induced to commence this new method of treatment, and cautioned his audience against the danger of large doses, whether in the form of injection of the juice or thyroid extract. Dr. Foulis gave a warning of the same kind. He had a patient who died within twenty-four hours after taking a quarter of a sheep's thyroid—that is, of the whole thyroid, for in the sheep it appears as two glands loosely held together by connective tissue. A safe dose seems to be to commence with one-eighth of a whole gland taken in rice paper. The fact that undoubted improvement has taken place from transplantation of the gland, and the use of thyroid juice in one form or another, cannot fail to excite reflection amongst those who have to treat insanity. The conclusion seems to be that the thyroid gland secretes and sends into the circulating fluid something useful to the function of the brain, and that the blood is not only a repairing, but a vivifying fluid, without whose stimulus the functions of the nervous system would cease.

THE FREEMANTLE ASYLUM FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

The reports of the Superintendent and of a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly on this Asylum afford an interesting view of the needs of the insane in this colony.

The Asylum contains 125 patients, of whom 26 are of the old Imperial convict class, Chinese and Malays forming a large proportion of the residue, many other nationalities being represented. These are under the care of six male and five female attendants, and appear to be crowded together without any possibility of separating the violent, obscene, and filthy from the decent, orderly, and convalescent. The mixture of nationalities must render this state of things doubly injurious and obnoxious.

The great predominance of the Malay and Chinese insane, it is suggested, is due to their being imported, there being no supervision of immigrants in this respect.

The Asylum has 13½ acres of ground, and already appears to be nearly surrounded by the rapidly growing city of Fremantle. Regret must, therefore, be expressed that the necessity which exists for the enlargement of the Asylum is not taken advantage of by transferring the institution to a more rural district, where a much larger area of ground could be obtained and segregation carried out on the plan of Alt Scherbitz and other insane farm colonies.

A reception house could be retained on the present site on the plan advocated by Dr. Norton Manning.

The Superintendent, Dr. Burnett, is to be congratulated on the manly and temperate expression of the great difficulties against which he has had to contend, in spite of an altogether inadequate pecuniary recognition of his services.