

*Superannuation Allowances for Scottish Asylum Workers.* A Discussion opened by J. CARLYLE JOHNSTONE, M.D., at the Spring Meeting of the Scottish Division of the Medico-Psychological Association, Glasgow, March 27th, 1903.

Dr. CARLYLE JOHNSTONE, introducing the discussion, said: It is several years since any active steps have been taken by the Scottish Division, or by the Association itself, to obtain retiring allowances for the officers and servants of Scottish district and parochial asylums. Nothing has been done in the interval by the State or the local authorities to satisfy our reasonable claims or to remove the special injustice under which Scotland suffers. A memorial on this subject was presented to the Lord Advocate by the Scottish Division in 1877, and a similar memorial was presented to the Secretary for Scotland, Lord Lothian, in 1887. The representations of the Division were politely received, but no practical results have followed. It may be considered that it would be futile to send in a third petition; but the present Secretary for Scotland has never been approached by our body, and he may fairly consider that if we do not ask for pensions we do not want them. There is reason to believe that at any moment a Bill for the amendment of the Scottish Lunacy Acts may be introduced into the House of Commons. We should leave no stone unturned in order to secure that in this Bill provision shall be made for the granting of superannuation allowances in all Scottish public asylums. I have brought this question before the Asylum Workers' Association and the Parliamentary Committee of the Medico-Psychological Association, and both of these bodies have now memorialised Lord Balfour on behalf of the Scottish asylum workers. In my opinion our Scottish Division should do the same. The conditions of service in Scotland are so anomalous, so grossly unfair as compared with those in England and Ireland, that, if only we keep on protesting and agitating the matter, we may reasonably expect by our continual importunity to obtain justice sooner or later. At each General Election we ought to approach every candidate for Parliamentary honours, lay our case before them, and obtain from them individually, if possible, an expression of their sym-

pathy with our claim and a promise to vote for a Bill which shall satisfy this claim. This is what we ought to have done at the last General Election. I hope that this meeting will resolve that this shall be done at the next one. It does not appear to me to be opportune to approach Members of Parliament at this moment. In a decaying House, with a dwindling majority on the side of the Government and many Members proposing to go into retirement at the dissolution, we can scarcely expect Members to pledge themselves to vote for what cannot be regarded as a "popular" or "economical" measure. But we ought, I think, to get into touch with Lord Balfour at once, and make plans for bringing pressure to bear on all Scottish candidates at the General Election, which may possibly occur at an early date.

With regard to the case for pensions in Scottish public asylums, I need not say much. The arguments in favour of such pensions must be familiar to you all. Their soundness has been recognised by the Legislature in its enactments for the sister countries. They apply to Scotland with exactly the same force as to England and Ireland. What we have to protest against is the utterly unreasonable and unjust anomaly under which we labour in Scotland. Whatever we resolve to do, let us carry out one common policy; let us continue to insist that retiring allowances shall be provided for *by statute*, and that the conditions under which these allowances are to be granted shall be at least as full and fair as those which have been provided for public asylums in England and Ireland.

Dr. URQUHART understood that the Parliamentary Committee had made no suggestion for the drafting of a clause relating to pensions, but that could be considered in the future. Meanwhile they must keep pace with the times. There was no doubt that a Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill was ready to be brought before Parliament on the first opportunity, and they could not afford to let the opportunity pass. If they were really earnest about this question they must act now, and act in concert. The Association was under obligation to Dr. Carlyle Johnstone in attacking the question once more. Seven years ago a committee of the Scottish Division had obtained a report upon the position of affairs and the possibilities of action. That committee inclined to compromise, by instituting a system of self-help, especially by the annual subscriptions of individuals and

committees to the Royal National Pensions Fund for Nurses. They had the benefit of the advice of Mr. J. A. Robertson, C.A., than whom there was none more competent, relative to that Fund, which had been started with very large endowments; and they were well received by Sir Henry C. Burdett, the Founder; but there was a considerable opposition to any such scheme being advocated by this Association. That opposition was never tested in Scotland; but it had been tested in England, and the objections were so wide-spread and so great that the Scottish Committee were asked to suspend their report until the English Lunacy Bill was passed, when it was hoped that thereby pensions would be assured to the workers in the English asylums. Consequently nothing had been done to remedy the grievance under which Scotland laboured. Indeed, at the present moment they were in a worse position than formerly, because the latest Irish Act had apparently rendered pensions permissive, whereas they were formerly compulsory in Ireland. He need not detain them with the recital of how their colleagues were striving to remedy this latest injustice. In Scotland they had difficulty in bracketing Royal asylums with District asylums, because no Bill could be framed to make pensions compulsory for the first-named, depending, as they must, upon their yearly income. But the District asylums were in a different position. The officials in these institutions ought to have similar provision for superannuation to that granted to other classes of civil servants. The state of affairs in England at the present moment resembled the position in Ireland. When the latest Lunacy Bill for England came before the House of Lords the Marquis of Ripon said that Yorkshire had provided for its asylum workers in an effective manner which did not require the establishment of pensions in the future, and that he therefore must move for the deletion from the Bill of any clauses regarding pensions. It was rather startling thus to be told that Yorkshire had solved the problem in a manner satisfactory to the County Council, to the Marquis of Ripon, and to the employés of the Yorkshire asylums. But on examination it was a fraud, a palpable and gross fraud; it was a contracting-out of moral obligations on the payment of a compensation equal to about one third of the sum required. As a matter of fact nothing of the kind had been done which justified the Houses of Parliament in their dealings with this question, and the Lords

were entirely misled by the Marquis of Ripon if they attached any importance to his speech.

Had the Association learned anything in regard to this question of pensions? Did they stand where they had stood? Were they going to accept the compromise which their Committee had worked out with Mr. Robertson, the compromise that each person would have a deduction made on his salary, and that the Committee would add so much, and that in the event of a person leaving before the insurance, as it were, matured, he would get back his own contributions, the remainder going to augment the pensions of those who had not yet retired? He did not think so. He thought that they must rather depart from that position, and take their stand upon the rights of the question. He urged them to immediate action. Of course, they had no great political influence; they were not considered by Whig or Tory; but they could make themselves heard, and at any rate they had the satisfaction of knowing that what they were asking for was a real necessity in the best interests of the insane. They were charged with the interests of the insane, and in their interests they could approach Members of Parliament and the Secretary of State for Scotland. At the last election in Perth they sent a deputation from Murray's Asylum to confer with the candidates for Parliamentary honours. That business-like man, Mr. Whitelaw, at once said that, if returned to Parliament, he would vote for the establishment of asylum pensions. Mr. Wallace, the present member, said that they were preaching to the converted, and he would hold himself pledged to assist them in every way. They had the strongest possible case.

He therefore urged that the asylum workers should interview all the Members of Parliament for Scotland. He doubted if they would get anything without "lobbying" the Members, and showing them individually the justice of their claim. Unless it were shown that, besides talking and writing at large, they were determined to impress upon them individually that this was a proper concession to the Scottish asylum workers, what would they get? They might go to Lord Balfour, and receive the same polite response as they had previously got from the Marquis of Lothian:—"Yes, this is a thing that ought to be done, but I cannot imperil my Bill by the word '*pension*' within the four corners of it." While what they represented was true and

just and right, their claims were practically ignored. The Commissioners might prepare a Bill in which pensions would be authorised, knowing and sympathising as they did with the asylum workers; but when it arrived at Dover House the blue pencil might again work havoc with their claim. The Government sends through the most urgent amendments of the law; but the question of pensions was not urgent for the Government.

How long were they to go on talking? If they got every Scottish Member of Parliament pledged to support the principle that they had so long advocated, they could go to Lord Balfour and say, "Here are all your supporters and all your opponents ready and willing to confer on Scotland what England and Ireland already possess." Otherwise he (Dr. Urquhart) was afraid that they would just remain where they had stood since 1858. Members were no doubt familiar with Dr. Hayes Newington's circulars in regard to this question, and his comparison of the police service with the asylum service of the country. These ought to be carefully studied. It would not do for them to put forward any scheme in detail without very carefully considering it, but rather in the first instance occupy the broad ground that asylum workers have a right to superannuation allowances for which they have worked during the best years of their lives on salaries and allowances inadequate to make other provision for old age.

Dr. ALEXANDER ROBERTSON would only say that he approved of Dr. Urquhart's suggestion to bring as much influence as possible to bear upon the Members of Parliament. In bringing the matter before the House of Commons it would be advisable, he thought, not to bring it as a Government measure, but as an ordinary measure, backed by the support of as many Members as possible.

Dr. WATSON thought it would be most important in attempting to introduce anything of this sort into Parliament, not only to obtain the support of influential Members of Parliament, but also to obtain support from the members of the Lunacy Boards and the Parish Councils. Nobody knew better than the Chairman what might be gained by taking them into their confidence. No doubt some would oppose a scheme for pensions in Scotland unless very substantial contributions were made by those who expected pensions, and if such contributions were made he

thought the Parish Councils and Lunacy Boards might be induced to supplement them in some way.

Dr. IRELAND, in reference to the proposal that the superintendents and others in the asylums should make a compulsory deduction from their pay, said that had been done to his cost in the Bengal Army, and these compulsory deductions had stood very much in the way of their getting increased pensions from the Government. The Government looked upon it in this light,—that after so many years' service they would get £191 of retired allowance, but, at the same time, if they waited a few years they could get £300 from their own funds, making some £500. The Government did not consider where it came from; and, after all, it was taken out of the compulsory savings of the members. It would have turned out a very much better policy if the officers of the medical service had saved the money themselves, because, for example, if they retired before their time they lost all their money. He would warn them that the experiment of compulsory deductions was a dangerous one. He had not the slightest doubt that before their younger friends were prepared to retire or were gazetted out, pensions would be provided for them. As to political influence, he was extremely doubtful; for, all told, they could not elect a single Member of Parliament.

Dr. KEAY did not quite agree with what Dr. Ireland said about their political influence. He had discussed this matter with his own staff in Inverness, and had found that there were twenty-five ready to vote for the man who would support asylum pensions in the House of Commons; and if every medical superintendent took the trouble to explain matters they would find that a good many votes could be cast.

Dr. MARR said that the Glasgow District Lunacy Board, which was also the Parish Council, was at first against the principle of superannuation, but is now in favour of it. The scheme which had been brought under the notice of his board required many alterations, and was essentially a scheme of contributions on the part of the officials, on the one hand, and the District Lunacy Board, on the other hand, to the extent of 5 *per cent.* on the salaries and emoluments. It was proposed that 2½ *per cent.* should be contributed by the officials and 2½ by the Lunacy Board. The sum thus acquired would act as a superannuation fund. Despite Dr. Keay's remarks,

he knew that it was very hopeless to put forward a Bill of the nature suggested. Twenty-five votes against any Member of Parliament in or about Glasgow would not materially affect the results of any election. The advances made to get local Members of Parliament to favour the scheme had not produced any appreciable effect. While he was in favour of bringing forward a Bill to put them on the same level as English and Irish asylums, he thought the scheme to which he had referred would be the one that it would be necessary ultimately to adopt.

Dr. PARKER said that if they agreed to the principle of partial contribution by the workers they could probably work hand in hand with the Poor Law officials. Such a Bill was at present being prepared in connection with the Poor Law, and it would be unfortunate if their influence on this matter should be split, when they might possibly work together. He did not see how pensions were to be got without their agreeing to give something themselves, and his own feeling in the matter was that the most practical way, and the way most likely to be successful, was that they should agree to contribute something.

Dr. YELLOWLEES said that with the income which they had at present the asylum workers had no means of saving, and could not afford to make a contribution from their pay, because with them it would really be deferred pay. He quite agreed with what Dr. Ireland thought about that. He understood that at the meeting of the Parliamentary Committee they had in this particular matter the help of the British Medical Association.

Dr. CARLYLE JOHNSTONE.—Not in this instance; they had nothing whatever to do with the representation.

Dr. YELLOWLEES thought they could get much more from the Parliamentary Committee of the Association, especially with the aid of the British Medical Association, which was very powerful, and which was, of course, represented very largely in Scotland.

The CHAIRMAN said that there was one thing that must be gratifying to the Association, *viz.*, that one prominent Parish Council, referred to by Dr. Marr, was in process of rapid conversion to the necessity of superannuation. Everybody connected with the Poor Law service knew that the Parochial

Boards and Parish Councils had set their faces dead against any scheme of superannuation for their officials, because in his opinion superannuation carried with it a fixity of office, and did not suit some of them who wished to have the privilege of capriciously dismissing an official, which would be lost if such a scheme were put in operation. He did not think there was a board that had not broken the law by appointing old officials to sinecures and paying them a certain salary, for which they did no duty.

Dr. CARLYLE JOHNSTONE (in reply) said that the Secretary for Scotland had been approached by the Parliamentary Bills Committee of their Association, and also by the Asylum Workers' Association of Great Britain and Ireland; and he thought that they themselves should approach him also, because Lord Balfour might say he had never heard anything about pensions in Scotland. He begged to propose that a Committee be appointed to draft a memorial to be presented to the Secretary for Scotland in favour of pensions for the workers in the Scottish district and parochial asylums. Personally, he thought it would be a mistake for them to draft a measure at the present time; but if they were to draft a measure, what they should specify should be terms as good as were enjoyed by the workers in England and Ireland. As to the altering of the word "may" to the word "shall," he did not think the alteration would ever be made. His own view was that they were asking too much in proposing to insist that every person after so many years' work in an asylum should have a pension. He would leave the question perfectly open in regard to the exact drafting of the clauses.

Dr. IRELAND seconded the motion.

Dr. YELLOWLEES said that he agreed with Dr. Carlyle Johnstone as to the use of the word "may." From personal experience he thought that the word "may" might be got, but that the word "shall" would not work out so well.

Dr. CARLYLE JOHNSTONE said he would like to add, as a rider to his motion, that, when Parliament dissolved, instructions be given to the Secretary of the Division to arrange for a meeting, or otherwise, so that they might make a combined movement upon the candidates for Parliament.

Dr. GEORGE ROBERTSON said he understood that a number of the Members of Parliament had already agreed to the



proposal. He might say that both the candidates in his district were asked, and they were both agreeable to the giving of pensions to asylum workers. If they made inquiries they would find that there was a considerable number of Members of Parliament who had agreed to pensions being given to asylum workers.

Dr. URQUHART moved, as an amendment, "That before the memorial is presented, the medical superintendents of Scotland be asked to ascertain the views of the Members of Parliament in their respective districts." He thought it would strengthen the memorial if such an action were taken, and he was quite sure, as Dr. Robertson had indicated, that they would be surprised at the amount of support that they would receive from the Scottish Members of Parliament if they only took the trouble to approach them.

Dr. ALEXANDER ROBERTSON seconded the amendment.

Dr. CARLYLE JOHNSTONE thought it was a very inopportune moment to make such a movement.

Dr. Carlyle Johnstone's motion was then put to the meeting, and was agreed to.

Dr. URQUHART further proposed that, in order that the medical superintendents might have every information before them in approaching Members of Parliament, the small Committee which he hoped would be appointed to carry out the memorial should communicate to them all the available information.

Doctors Bruce, Carlyle Johnstone, and Urquhart were appointed as a Committee to draw up the memorial.

Dr. CARLYLE JOHNSTONE proposed that the memorial should simply be transmitted to the Secretary for Scotland by the Secretary of the Division as from the Division, and they might add, of course, that they should be glad to wait upon Lord Balfour at his convenience.

Dr. URQUHART thought, in that case, that any member of the Scottish Division who would take the trouble to form part of the deputation ought to be asked to Edinburgh.

The CHAIRMAN said the Committee should have power to add to their number if any personal representation was made.

Dr. GEORGE ROBERTSON asked if the opinion of the Members of Parliament was to be obtained by the members of the Association.

The CHAIRMAN.—Yes, before the presentation of the memorial.

Dr. YELLOWLEES said that the result of such an action would be that they would be able to say they had a considerable number of Scottish Members of Parliament who were in favour of the proposal.

*Frequency of Occurrence of Granular Ependyma in General Paralysis.* By J. V. BLACHFORD, M.D., Senior Assistant Medical Officer, Fishponds Asylum, Bristol.

A GRANULAR condition of the ventricular ependyma has long been recognised as a pathological condition in various cases of insanity, and is so common in cases of general paralysis that we are surprised when it is not present. It is, however, by no means confined to that specific class of case, but exists in others, and, although not so frequent, is sufficiently common to make one inquire into its cause and as to its bearing, if any, on insanity.

The subject has been mentioned and discussed from time to time, but so far as I can ascertain, though hints have been thrown out and suggestions made, no positive proof has ever been afforded as to its origin.

I have examined the *post-mortem* records of this asylum for several years with a view to ascertain—(1) in what number of cases of insanity granular ependyma is found, (2) in what class of cases it most frequently occurs, (3) whether age or the disease immediately causing death appears to have any influence on its production.

Of 246 males, 64, or 26 *per cent.*, were considered to be cases of general paralysis; and of these, 44, or 68·8 *per cent.*, were found to have the ventricular ependyma granular; while in 20 it was not so.

Of 226 females, 19, or 8·4 *per cent.*, were general paralytics; and of these, 14, or 73·7 *per cent.*, had the ependyma granular; while in 5 it was not so. Besides the cases of general paralysis presenting these *post-mortem* appearances, there were 27 males