

cent. in the ten years 1891—1901, while the insanity in the same time has increased 20 *per cent.* The most remarkable increase is in the large borough of Highworth and Swindon, where, while population increased in the ten years about 25 *per cent.*, the number of the chargeable insane was more than doubled. One would think that a careful inquiry on the part of the local authorities might lead to some suggestion of a cause for this. At all events, some approach could be made to a decision as to whether the increase was due to administrative reasons, such as longer detention or greater inpouring of senile demented, or, on the other hand, to actual increase of occurring insanity. It is possible to think that as this is a town that has grown under the eyes of many still living, that as it is a town that has grown rapidly but evenly under satisfactory hygienic circumstances and that as in it exists a continuous industry which forbids anything like distress to the bulk of inhabitants, a thorough inquiry into the history of each case from year to year for some time back would amply repay the trouble taken.

We are quite with Dr. Bowes when he makes the following suggestion, and we hope that should it be accepted in his time he will do his best to keep the hospital sacred to mental disease, and not let it be muddled up with physical infirmities. In speaking of chronic demented he says :

“For these and other reasons one cannot but feel they are better off in large institutions containing special arrangements conducive to their future good ; but in place of building special institutions for their accommodation, the right and apparently preferable course to adopt would be to appropriate existing asylums to the housing of the incurable class, and the provision of small mental hospitals, equipped with every appliance and convenience, for the treatment of acute mental disease. Special hospitals now exist for nearly every special disease, and that it will come to the establishment of such hospitals for the treatment of insanity, one of the most to be deplored of all diseases, there can be no doubt.”

Some Registered Hospitals.

Bootham Park.—Dr. Hitchcock relates with gusto that on last Boxing Day he saw a man whom he thought to be a stranger sitting by the fire in one of the wards, smoking his pipe with the patients, and seeming to be very pleased with himself and his surroundings. He turned out to be a former patient, who lived some forty miles away. He had given his men a holiday, and finding it dull by himself, had come over to spend the evening with his old friends. He also finds that ten of his nurses and nine of the servants have left to be married in the last two years. His head attendant has been presented with the Asylums Workers Association's gold medal for forty-four years' good service. Other attendants have put in thirty-seven, thirty-three, twenty-nine years, etc. We should imagine that there are elements of comfort here for both patients and staff. The recovery rate is high on both sides—sixty-nine and fifty-seven.

Worsford House.—The Committee and Dr. Deas are to be much congratulated on the last payment in extinction of a heavy debt having

been made during the year. Some time back we adverted to the burden thus thrown on the management. The amount so released will be available for increasing the already large amount of assistance given to the needy insane. The Committee refer in generous terms to the fact that Dr. Deas has now given them twenty years' splendid service. Referring to the large proportion of melancholia cases which he took in last year, he adverts to the unsatisfactory nature of the cases that are both insane and hypochondriacal. He had eight of them with suicidal tendencies. This is the chief difficulty; with purely melancholic cases we know where we are; they must always be treated as such. But with the other class, especially when we suspect that a good deal more than necessary is being made of the illness, it is quite easy to be deceived as to the reality of the tendency to self-destruction, attempts at which are generally the result of a fit of temper.

The Retreat, York.—Scarlet fever is always a most unpleasant visitor in an asylum, but is more so when the Medical Superintendent is taken with it. This was Dr. Pierce's fate, he and four others falling to it on the same day. Thanks to strict measures, all did well, and no other case followed. As usual, rigid inquiry failed to discover the source of infection. We are glad to see that Dr. Pierce has worked out his statistics for 1905 on the new lines. He produces an almost complete set of the tables lately adopted. Dr. Pierce, like Dr. Robert Jones, finds that strict training tends to improve the standard of applications for employment, but chiefly because it discourages those who are not serious in their intentions.

Some Scottish District and Chartered Royal Asylums.

Aberdeen (Kingseat).—It is, indeed, most sad that after the writing of this the first Report of a new asylum, Dr. Angus should have been cut off in his prime; but the numerous entries made by his Committee and the Commissioners show that he has left behind him, as a memorial, an institution of a novel character that apparently leaves nothing to be desired in efficient and easy management. It is true that much the same ideas that are found at Kingseat are to be found elsewhere. *Alt Scherbitz* has impressed itself in other areas as well as in this; but it is something for the Committee to say that this new asylum on a new principle will cost but £250 per bed for land, buildings, equipment, etc. To this end Dr. Angus must have helped much. Then it is recorded that the cost of the staff is less than the average for Scotland in spite of the presumed relative expensiveness of the segregational system. The secret of this no doubt lies, as is pointed out, in the larger employment of women, who are content with less pay than that which their male colleagues accept. The general cost for other matters is not above the average. The future of this asylum will be watched with much interest, as it is the first of the kind that has been opened. The principal building is, of course, the hospital, which holds fifty of each sex. It is intended for the physically sick as well as for recent cases.