

*Retirement of Dr. Beach.*

“There are mile-stones on the Dover road.” We have passed one of our mile-stones when we mark where Dr. Fletcher Beach drops out of our official ranks. Fortunately, we do not say good-bye, for we are assured of his good company and kindly aid in the ranks, while he continues to occupy a position of greater freedom and lesser responsibility. Dr. Beach has given ungrudgingly of his time and talents to the Association that placed him in the responsible and honourable post of General Secretary. Generous and well-deserved acknowledgment of his services was made at the Annual Meeting, where he occupied his place for the last time. The Association is fortunate in having secured Dr. Percy Smith as his successor, and we trust that it will be long before we have to chronicle another change in this important office.

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*Criminal Responsibility.*

The Report of the Criminal Responsibility Committee has now been finally adjusted, and the compromise effected between extreme views may be accepted as the best possible at the present time. While the legal mind is unbending from rigid formalities of doubtful authority, the medical attitude should be one of expectant attention. We are not in a position to dogmatise; our information is not exact, full, and precise in leading to inevitable conclusions. Having plainly indicated that the McNaghten case does not now meet the necessities of justice, we leave it to legislators to amend the practice of the courts when that can be done. The advance of medical science has discredited the answers of the judges as they were formerly interpreted; but a constructive policy does not at present appear to be possible. Time will infiltrate the courts with modern ideas, and the stability of jurisprudence, as administered by able men of whom the nation is justly proud, is wisely resistive of immature proposals.

The Association has been well served in this matter by the Committee appointed two years ago. The exhaustive memorandum prepared by Dr. Orange, and the vast amount of labour bestowed upon the investigation necessary by Dr. Mercier must be gratefully acknowledged. At the same time, there is in the Report no expression of finality; it does