case of the males, and 5 out of the 7 first admissions broke down just at the same age periods as given for the males. In the females domestic service seems to be more dangerous, *qua* insanity, in London than elsewhere, the ratio being in the former 1 in 5 admissions and in the latter 1 in 6. The ratio per 10,000 of the total population of England is stated by the Commissioner to be 14·7. The principal age-period of incidence is 25–34, furnishing one-sixth of the cases, though the periods on each side are well represented. Forty, or about one-ninth, broke down between the ages 15–19. In both sexes fashioners of apparel are heavily represented in comparison with England generally.

The ætiology of the admissions presents no great departure from the ordinary, the main causes being those generally met with. Nor is there any outstanding feature among the deaths. Comparative examination of age-periods, civil state, etc. is much too serious an undertaking to tackle in a review of this sort, but no doubt the vast accumulation of definite facts will aid, when properly analysed, in the elucidation of the natural history of the disease. One can but commend warmly the industry that has got it together and set it out in usable form.

Metropolitan Asylums Board's Asylums.

Referring to the Commissions on the Feeble-minded and on the Poor-law, the committee state that they feel themselves to be passing through a prolonged period not favourable to initiative or progress. They, with justice, complain that the latter Commission, reflecting the attitude of the former Commission, after bearing testimony such as "the Metropolitan Asylums Board have efficiently discharged as a central body the task entrusted to them," are inconsistent enough to seek the setting up of a new and experimental authority. It convicts the Commission of a silly inaccuracy in stating that the cost of three hospitals, with from 3,000 to 6,000 inmates, amounted to a million pounds, whereas that sum represents the total expenditure of the Board for all purposes.

The following extract contains views of importance in the question of the Board's work and of interest to those who scent Socialism everywhere. Dealing with the minority reports, the Board says:

> Whether any scheme for the break-up of the Poor Law, however attractive in its delineation, can in the end denude the country of its pauperism, whether any real co-ordination of relief work is attainable when the different branches of it are controlled by different committees, each so strong and important as to be semi-independent of one another, may well be doubted. To take only one instance, the suggested enlargement of the powers of education committees to include the maintenance of large numbers of children divided by the finest line, in point of poverty, from multitudes of those still the subject of parental effort and care, may well be viewed with the misgiving that such a provision would prove all too attractive, and, in removing whatever remains of the "stigma of pauperism," set up in its place a readiness to regard "public assistance" of an eleemosynary character as the normal rather than the abnormal condition of life, and so tend to sap that personal independence and undermine those foundations of self-help and self-reliance upon which the strength of a nation is built.
>
> Opposed to this view is that expressed in the main report, that we consider that the many and subtle problems associated with public assistance, especially when it is a family rather than one individual that requires rehabilitation, cannot be

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solved by the simpler process of sending off each unit to a separate authority for maintenance and treatment. What is needed is a disinterested authority practised in looking at all sides of a question and able to call in skilled assistance. If this be granted it is difficult to see what useful purpose is to be served by making the proposed body a statutory committee of another authority, rather than a separate Board, dealing direct with the Government department concerned, and comprising members able and willing to devote themselves to their own sufficiently onerous duties without being of necessity required to take a share in the administration of manifold and vast municipal services.

The Committee claim the benefit of Dr. Downe's opinion—

The device of a statutory committee is at best but a makeshift of representative government; the great county or county borough councils are already overburthened with duties, and the minor municipal bodies can claim no such status as would entitle them to a dominant control of public relief.

And speaking of its own independence in looking after the interests of the rate-paid it says:

It is not easy to see how, under any other plan in London, can that invaluable personal interest of the members of the authority in the work and the care of the inmates be maintained, or the no less valuable strong and systematic financial control of the central government department, which are features of the existing system.

The Board have done the following kindly action to the medical profession:

Representations having been made to the managers that hardship was inflicted on candidates for the Diploma of Public Health by the regulations which required them to reside in the Board's hospitals as clinical assistants, further facilities have been afforded to candidates by instituting, experimentally, at two of the hospitals, classes for instruction in hospital administration without requiring candidates to be resident thereat.

We are glad to note that the Local Government Board has issued an order directing that in future the stewards of the various institutions shall not rank as principal officers. The effect of this is that there will be one only recognised head of all the Board's establishments, with general authority and control of the entire staff. This is quite as it should be, at all events in asylums.

Leavesden Asylum.—Dr. Elkins reports that the character of his admissions has changed markedly, many being under twenty years of age, and only 20 out of a total of 155 were over fifty years. The visiting Commissioner records that the permission for attendants to live in the village is still attended with benefit, and has tended, in Dr. Elkins' opinion, to improve the class of candidates for the service.

At Tooting Bec the attendants, the nurses, and the domestic staff have each been provided with a recreation court. The three grades have combined to form a recreation club, which organises recreation, both indoors and outdoors, for the patients and themselves. This appears to us to be an excellent idea.

Darenth.—The population is just under 2,000; of these no less than 1,079 are being usefully trained in various trades. Dr. Rotherham reports that not only is there more work done, but the character of it improves fast; very little of it can be found fault with. He calls, with justice, for an immediate and large increase of the shops to meet the

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circumstances. One hundred and twenty-nine female patients are taught the Swedish physical drill. One hundred and twenty males are likewise taught the Army physical drill. He reports that two of the boys in the carpenters' shop are able to construct tables, wardrobes, and other large goods with a finish comparable with trade goods. A very fair amount of orders for other institutions are executed. With regard to wood-chopping the boys in this shop are the most "happy-go-lucky" boys in the Colony, who have to work hard to keep pace with the demands for bundles of firewood. He finds that the more work put before them the greater energy is displayed. The tinsmith's shop is a very trying one on account of the din, but the goods turned out are far more lasting than those that are bought machine made. In the female needle-room the sewing machines now number thirty-five, 125 hands being employed. Not a single complaint has been made about the quality of work in any of the 37,294 articles sent away. The value of the work done in this department came to £5,326 last year. The wood-choppers turned out just under £1,000 of bundles, and the upholsterers £2,427; the brush department worked to the value of just under £2,000. We give these figures to show that serious business and not counterfeit employment is aimed at and carried out. As regards each of the twelve departments the account is duly debited with the instructors' wages and rations, but no charge is made for the rent or upkeep of the shops themselves. And it has to be remembered that work is not the only consideration here; there is much need for medical skill as well. The remarks of the Visiting Commissioner (Dr. Needham) fully appreciate what is done in both directions.

The patients were suitably and neatly dressed, were generally in good health, and looked in all respects well cared for. Expressions of discontent with their detention and treatment were extremely rare, and there was the air of general contentment which is so conspicuous in imbeciles who, in well-managed institutions, are able to be usefully employed under conditions of kind and modified discipline. This was, of course, especially manifest in the workshops, which are now so prominent and successful a feature in the training of the patients here. Their concentration has much simplified their administration, but it is unfortunate that their capacity is so limited as to lead already to such a considerable degree of overcrowding as could not fail to be obvious. In these shops, which include those for brush-making, painting, tailoring, shoemaking, bookbinding, basket and mat making, joinering and upholstering, a large amount of really efficient work is being done, and with great pleasure to those engaged in it. It was valued last year at upwards of £7,000, and left a profit of £2,000, a careful profit and loss account being kept in the case of each trade. These results are of striking interest as an object-lesson with reference to the future care and training of imbeciles on a wider scale than has hitherto been attempted in this country. This industrial training is not, however, practised to the exclusion of ordinary simple scholastic education, or of the physical development and discipline which result from regular systematised drill.

Although this asylum is now devoted principally to improvable cases, there are still here many helpless patients needing constant care and attention, and I noticed with pleasure many indications of the kindly manner in which these are given them. It is highly creditable to the nursing of the sick that although I saw many quite helpless children of faulty habits, who either lay in bed or in canvas chairs continuously, not one was suffering from a bedsore, and I was assured that no bedsore existed on the body of any patient who died since the last visit.

Children's homes.—The splendid work done by the Board for children has been the subject of remark frequently in these pages, and it is

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depressing to read that the shadow of the coming change, which does not come, is seriously hampering the endeavours that are made to cope in practical and, we may say, scientific method with the intricate problems of child-sin and defect. In the case of remand homes and other institutions for youthful offenders, there is a prospect, under the provisions of the Children's Act, of the London County Council at once taking on itself the duties laid on them by the Act, thus relieving the Board of a responsibility which it acknowledges but cannot fully discharge as matters stand. The arrangements that were made by the Board for these purposes have met with just appreciation from competent judges. With regard to the homes for the mentally defective children, the report of the Commission on the Feeble-minded has to some extent paralysed the good intentions of the Board. Still, as they are now, they form a very valuable object-lesson to those who, whether in London or the provinces, must sooner or later assume responsibility. It is hoped that our own Committee on Medical Inspection of School Children may find material in these homes for making suitable recommendations.

With the exception of the largest home at Witham, which is attended by Dr. Rotherham, all the smaller homes continue to be under the capable supervision of Miss Turner. She is able to report that, on the whole, she discerns improvement from the patient training that is given. Some of the elder girls make hats so well that the staff buy them for themselves. Some girls show a real aptitude for making mats from designs of their own, the less capable children sorting the wool, under direction, and shading the "thrums" for them.

The system of giving weekly pocket-money works in this home most satisfactorily. Fear of losing half the weekly penny is said to act as a strong deterrent. The selection of a small article for purchase with the penny or so at their disposal gives the girls a quite disproportionate interest in the world of realities about them. This interest is proving a most valuable educational means. The same may be said of their occasional visits to places of entertainment, which have had the effect of making the girls mentally much brighter. The smallness of the number in this home enables the life of the girls to be much more nearly that of normal children. This is one great reason why these small homes must, in the nature of things, be more effective in producing the desired results than larger institutions can be.

Witham.—Dr. Rotherham pushes work and training as strenuously here as he does at Darenth. He hoped for 3,000 yards of sash-cord being made—he has got over 5,000. It is work that can be well done by the least mentally capable and physically strong among his inmates. Drill, Army and Swedish, are much employed. He finds that efficient drill is one of the most important factors in obtaining a good moral tone in the institution. There can be no doubt that this is found to be the case outside, where lads' brigades have been formed. The band of twenty-four performers has much improved in tone and reading. It has played at a flower show and was accorded much praise.

Statistics.—These continue to be drawn up strictly in the form adopted by the Association. Much trouble must be caused by the large inter-asylum circulation, especially from Tooting Bec. But the latter cases

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are carefully separated, so that the directs can be easily considered by themselves.

We note that in B5, among the 776 direct admissions, primary dementia was recorded fifty-eight times. We find also seventy-seven of the same class among the residue, and that four out of the sixteen recoveries had suffered from this variety. This last fact, together with the recovery of eight suffering from senile dementia, would point to the conclusion that the term "dementia" does not always, and to all observers, imply incurability. For ourselves we cannot entirely accept the incurability of dementia, since it would leave unclassified some cases, not common, where there is an amount of want of judgment, and possibly of intellect, who recover both after a period of protection from the consequences of their mental want, without the manifestation of any definite mental or physical special symptoms, such as one needs must see in either acute mania or acute melancholia or other form of active insanity.

The questions of age, civil state, etc., as stated under our review of the county statistics, are matter for deliberate weighing by an expert. Though they are smaller in comparison with those contained in the forementioned statistics, they are undoubtedly of great value, and necessary as a scientific complement to the latter when a study is made of the insanity of the whole area of London.

Part IV.—Notes and News.

THE MEDICO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

THE QUARTERLY MEETING of the Association was held in the rooms of the Medical Society of London, Chandos Street, W., on Tuesday, November 15th, 1910, Dr. John Macpherson, President, in the Chair.

There were present the President and the following fifty-two members: Drs. H. T. S. Aveline, W. H. Bailey, G. F. Barham, Fletcher Beach, C. Hubert Bond, David Bower, John F. Briscoe, W. Brooks-Keith, J. Carswell, James Chambers, M. A. Collins, M. Davis, J. Francis Dixon, R. Langdon-Down, Thos. Drapes, D. Edridge-Green, F. Ashby Elkins, C. T. Ewart, T. D. Greenlees, H. E. Haynes, C. K. Hitchcock, David Hunter, T. B. Hyslop, G. H. Johnston, John R. Lord, H. G. Macartney, H. G. MacBryan, W. Macdonald, H. J. Mackenzie, John Macpherson, W. F. Menzies, James Middlemass, R. Mornington, Hayes Newington, L. R. Oswald, M. Eden-Paul, O. P. Napier Pearn, S. R. Phillips, Wm. Rawes, G. H. Savage, G. E. Shuttleworth, J. G. Smith, R. Percy Smith, J. G. Soutar, J. B. Spense, T. Stansfield, R. H. Steen, R. J. Stillwell, W. H. B. Stoddart, J. A. Topham, William Vincent, and Fred Watson.

Visitors: Mr. M. Crackenthorpe, K.C., Sir Horatio Donkin, Miss Dendy, Dr. W. G. Boys Johnston, and Dr. J. Samuel, F.R.S.E.

Attendance at previous Council meeting: Drs. Adair, Aveline, Bond, Bower, Chambers, Dixon, Drapes, Hunter, P. W. MacDonald, J. Macpherson, H. J. Mackenzie, Middlemass, Miller, Hayes Newington, Oswald, Shuttleworth, Percy Smith, Soutar, Stoddart, Taylor, and Vincent.

The minutes of the last meeting, having already been printed and circulated in the Journal, were taken as read and were duly confirmed.

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