ledge of the facts cannot be contested, and whose experience is beyond all question.

The marvel consists in the absence until the present moment of any serious effort to obtain reform.

The effort to obtain a ministry of health has commended itself to our Council, which has authorised the Parliamentary Committee to act for the Association in this matter. It is not probable that this Committee will give any support to the suggestion that national health should be placed under the care of the Local Government Board. Such a result would constitute a serious disaster in regard to the public health, but more especially as affecting the welfare of the insane. It would indeed be a substitution of King Stork for King Log, and should be opposed to the utmost extent of the power of the Medico-Psychological Association.

Clinical Work in Asylums.

The desirability of increasing the output of clinical work in British asylums has been frequently dwelt on in the pages of this Journal, but no apology is needed for again recurring to the subject, since there still remains very considerable need of further progress in this direction.

Clinical work is at once the foundation and the evidence of interest in medical work, and is so obviously the true foundation of legitimate professional success that self-interest alone would seem to supply a sufficient motive. That it does not do so in a large number of instances proves that other influences must exist to inhibit this.

A thorough inquiry by the senior members of the specialty in regard to these inhibiting causes and the means of removing them is most desirable.

The first inquiry should be in regard to the encouragement and assistance given by the seniors to the juniors. Asylum superintendents, with scarcely an exception, encourage their juniors to undertake clinical work, but do they sufficiently earnestly impress on these latter the importance of it, or demand it of them as a duty, or aid them sufficiently in their earlier attempts? Do the superintendents take sufficient trouble to ascertain and overcome, if possible, the indolence, indiffer-

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ence, bashfulness, or other causes that keep the younger men from producing such work?

The professional qualifications of the juniors are usually of a very high order, and would forbid the idea that they were not trained to record clinical observations, and hence some of the reasons suggested, or others not alluded to, must come into play in preventing the present output of work, large as it is, from becoming larger and more valuable.

Whatever the causes, it is most important that they should be investigated; that measures should be taken to remove them and to substitute inducements and encouragements of every possible kind with the end of raising to a still higher level the reputation of the specialty for scientific interest in morbid psychology.

Part II.—Reviews.

The Sixty-First Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy for England.

The report deals with the year ending December 31st, 1906. It begins with the good news that the increase in the number of certified insane is below the average. The total number of insane under certificate in England and Wales on January 1st, 1907, was 123·988, an increase for the year of 2009, and thus below the average increase for the last quinquennium (2655) and the last decennium (2462). Pauper patients constitute 91·2 *per cent.* of the total number certified. Attention is again drawn to the increase of patients classified as "private" in county and borough asylums; this, it is explained, is largely due to the fact that a patient, whose friends pay the full maintenance rate, is not technically a "pauper," but since county authorities are not bound to provide accommodation for private patients it is customary to make a higher charge for such patients for the capital expended on, and upkeep of, the building. The position is an anomalous one, as many counties have not room for their pauper patients, but have to find room for patients whose friends can pay the full maintenance, and, perhaps, something more. In a word, this increase of "private" patients in county asylums emphasises the necessity of the establishment of asylums where patients can be maintained at a figure slightly higher than the ordinary pauper rate.

The Commissioners have not yet been able to answer the much asked question of "whether insanity is on the increase." The number of the insane to the general population is 1 to 282, ten years ago it was 1 to 314. An instructive table (on page 8) shows the number (per 10,000 population) of the admissions and first attacks since 1876. The conclusion drawn from this table is that the number of "first attacks"

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