But what shall we say of the London parish in which the specially-appointed magistrates are all on their holidays? I say it is a scandal. As a lunacy doctor, I have recently been unable to obtain an order from a single magistrate. That there are excellent reasons why some should be away, I am well aware; to expect all to stay at home would be absurd; but surely there should be some arrangement among themselves to prevent the absence of all at the same time. I am assured by the relieving officer that it causes him the greatest trouble. After inquiring at a police station for a list of magistrates, which was with difficulty discovered, I was correctly informed that I should fail to find one. I, however, made some calls. All of the gentlemen were out of town, and I was told that they would be away an indefinite time. I inquired whether they had left any instructions or references. None whatever. In another case the magistrate had actually let his house for a long period. And here I would observe that at other periods of the year than the autumn holidays the difficulty of obtaining the services of a magistrate for lunacy orders is great in consequence of many of them being engaged in business in the City from morning to evening, just the time of day when they are required. Again I inquired at the police-station whether a magistrate would sign an order on presentation of the petition and the medical certificates by the petitioner at the Court. I was told that the patient (a lady) must always be brought to the magistrate, and on my informing him that she was in a condition in which this could not be done, the reply was, "Then she must wait till she is!"

I have said that there are discourteous magistrates. There are others who are lethargic. When time is all important, it is a little too much when a magistrate takes two hours and a half to fill up the order, including making a copy of the entire document. The same worthy on another occasion consumed seven hours. For the friends of insane persons to have their time thus frittered away cannot be characterized in too severe terms.

Whatever the remedy may be, something must be done to remedy this disgraceful delay and often impossibility in obtaining magisterial orders. To increase the number naturally suggests itself, but this can only answer if magistrates are willing to perform the duties as well as enjoy the honour of their office.

I am, etc.,
F.R.C.P.

London, Sept. 1st.

[We consider that the disregard of their lunacy duties on the part of many magistrates ought to be brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor.—Ed.]

PHOTOGRAPHIC GROUP OF THE DUBLIN MEETING.

Photographic groups of Members of the Association taken at the Richmond Asylum may be had from Messrs. Chancellor, Lower Sackville Street, Dublin, price in silver type, 3s. 6d., unmounted; 4s. 6d., mounted. Two groups were taken, of which that one which is distinguished as the "lawn" group is the best generally.

NOTE.

Article on the "Increase of Insanity in Ireland."—There are occasional slight discrepancies between the statistics in this Article and those in the Inspectors' Reports. There are various reasons for this, one being that the numbers under the heading "Workhouses" are exclusive of certain patients located in Workhouses, but who belong to and are included in the population of the "District Asylums." Such discrepancies mostly affect only decimal points, the general results remaining the same.

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