PROVISION FOR THE INSANE IN NEW ZEALAND.

In 1876 we recorded the fact that the Colony of New Zealand had appointed Dr. Fred. W. A. Skae as Inspector of Asylums for the Colony. In our Jan. number for 1878 we noticed shortly Dr. Skae's first Report. It laid bare a very shocking state of matters in regard to the provisions made for the care and cure of the mentally afflicted. We have now received the Reports of the Parliamentary Debates in the Legislative Council and House of Representatives of the Colony (Nos. 11, 12, and 13), in which there are three debates on the subject reported. It is creditable to our English race that Dr. Skae's reports have stirred a strong feeling of indignation in the Colony in regard to the abuses that exist, and aroused a sense of duty in the legislators in regard to the provision for the insane required in a modern Christian community. The reports of these debates show that our antipodian legislators are earnest, enlightened, and philanthropic on this matter. Dr. Skae's work was by almost every speaker referred to in the highest terms, and indeed his reports are acknowledged by them all to be the cause of the public interest now taken in the matter. A right feeling in regard to the wants of the insane having been roused now in the early days of the Colony, it will be spared those blots on our modern civilization presented in the early reports of our own Parliamentary Committees on Lunacy. Some of the speakers talked cheerfully of spending £300,000 on provision for the insane. This may be needed, but we have no doubt that Dr. Skae will save the New Zealand ratepayers from the mistake of providing palatial buildings for harmless incurable imbeciles, and will profit by our experience in seeing from the beginning that different classes of the insane need different kinds of accommodation, and will keep the hospital idea a distinct one from the receptacle idea. He will be exposed to the same temptation as were the English Commissioners when they began their labours, from the very badness of the present state of things, to remedy it as soon as possible, and as thoroughly as possible, without discriminating too finely as to the best means of meeting the real wants of the curable and the incurable, the dangerous, and the harmless, the idiotic and the acutely insane. No doubt he will have the more recent English and Scotch experience to guide him. A man is to be envied who is in a position to originate and shape a policy that will benefit thousands of his fellowmen in a country with such a future before it as New Zealand has.

F. NORTON MANNING, M.D.

Among the Appointments given in our last Number, that of Dr. Manning to the post of Inspector-General of the Insane, New South Wales, was recorded. We have since received his Address, delivered on resigning the charge of the Hospitals for the Insane at Gladesville and Callam Park, Sydney, and admire the spirit with which it is animated. He says he had intended to trust to the inspiration of the moment, but on reflection, the fear lest the fulness of his feelings should not only impede his utterance, but disarrange his thoughts, induced him to commit his address to writing. He says:—

"I have not spent ten of the best years of my life—shall I say the best ten years of my life?—at Gladesville, without becoming deeply attached to the place and to the people. I have not seen the place grow and brighten under my hand without learning to love and feel a pride in it. I have not seen, and almost lived with the patients day after day, without regarding many of them as friends, whose faces I shall sorely miss. I have not worked with you all these years, attended you in sickness, visited your homes, and watched your children spring up without a large growth of kindly feeling, so that the severance of relation touches me deeply. This severance is not of my seeking. I shall be no gainer

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.26.113.152-a Published online by Cambridge University Press

pecuniarily, or otherwise, by the change of position. Had I my own choice, I would still remain the Medical Superintendent of Gladesville; but circumstances have forced me into a new position, and I accepted it as a matter of duty."

Dr. Manning traces the history of Gladesville since his appointment ten years ago, and describes the improvements that have been introduced. We believe that he has strenuously endeavoured in his management, as he says he has, to be "so merciful as not to be too remiss, and so to administer discipline as to forget not mercy." During the ten years—during which nearly 4,000 patients have passed through the wards—no accident attended with loss of life, or with serious impairment of usefulness has occurred, though Dr. Manning has on more than one occasion been in danger of personal injury. In enumerating the qualities necessary for those who have to nurse the mentally sick, Dr. Manning observes, "Speaking of patience, it is the one quality which is, it seems to me, absolutely necessary for success in every one dealing with the insane. Many other gifts are useful, and among them I should, if asked, particularize tact, a due sense of order and a keen appreciation of the ridiculous; but patience, which is the grandest of the Christian virtues, which embodies in itself faith and hope as well as the charity which suffereth long and is kind, is the one thing needful."

We congratulate Dr. Manning on the success which has attended his superintendency of the Gladesville Hospital, and also upon his well merited appointment to a higher sphere, where the large experience and the extensive acquaintance with similar institutions in other parts of the world, possessed by the author of the excellent "Report on Lunatic Asylums" (issued by the New South Wales Government in 1868), will be applied with the greatest advantage to those who come within the range of his official visitation. He may be assured that the good wishes of his English friends attend him in his new vocation.

M. BROCA.

As in M. Broca, cerebral physiology, no less than anthropology, recognises one of her most distinguished sons, it is gratifying to witness his elevation to the Senate. The *Figaro*, which, on political grounds is opposed to him, thus delivers itself:—"M. Broca triomphe et la gauche avec lui. Voilà le grand évenement du jour. M. Broca a eu 140 voix contre 132 à M. Bétolaud. La proclamation du vote a été saluée par les chaleureux applaudissements de la gauche. La droite semblait consternée. En politique, le nouveau sénateur est républicain avancé; en science il est positiviste; en religion, c'est un libre-penseur. Causeur aimable, du reste, et professeur éminent, il ne compte guère que des amis, même dans les camps les plus opposés. Le Docteur Paul Broca est fils d'un très modeste et très obscur médecin de campagne. Au physique c'est un homme de 56 ans, il est né à Sainte-Foy-la-Grande (Gerénde) en 1824—les cheveux grisonnants et longs, surtout par derrière, l'œil vif, la figure expressive, très alerte, très remuant, petit de taille, carré d'épaules, sa grande passion, son delassement favori, est la musique—la bonne—celle que le merveilleux orchestre du Conservatoire exécute dans ses concerts, et dont le Docteur Broca est l'un des plus fidèles et des plus enthousiastes habitués. Successivement professeur de pathologie chirurgicale à la Faculté de Médecine de Paris; puis chirurgien des hôpitaux de Saint-Antoine et de la Pitié, il fut élu membre de l'Académie de Médecine le 26 Juillet, 1866, et décoré à cette occasion de la Croix de la Légion d'honneur.

"Plutôt professeur que praticien le chirurgien s'est peu à peu effacé en lui pour faire place à l'anthropologiste. Il a même publié sur la matière toute une série d'ouvrages qui font autorité.

"Au demeurant, un caractere franc, un esprit droit, un estomac solide, ne

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.26.113.152-a Published online by Cambridge University Press