One naturally asks oneself whether such a boarding-out system be feasible or desirable in this country. I would say, "Certainly, yes". It would have to be carefully and gradually developed, and I think it would be better to have a closer association with the mental hospitals. In Scotland a patient can be certified and sent direct to private care, and when a patient is sent from a mental hospital, the medical staff of the hospital never see him again except when he has to be taken back.

If such an experiment were to be tried out here, I think it would be well to mix a little of the Belgian (Gheel) methods with the Scottish.

I think all patients should go through the mental hospital in their own area, and that when boarded-out they should be boarded in their own area, and visited at least once yearly by a medical officer from their own mental hospital.

When patients are carefully selected before boarding-out, no great difficulty in handling them is experienced by their guardians. In Scotland they have had no serious accidents and no suicides or homicides.

The recovery-rate cannot, of course, compare favourably with the general recovery-rate because the type of patient selected for boarding out is generally of the chronic type, whose prospects of recovery are not good.

I have not touched on the question of the boarding-out of mental defectives, as it is more or less outside my province; but I gathered from the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners of the Scottish Board that their experience in these cases was just as favourable as in insane cases when a suitable and careful choice was made before boarding-out.

Dr. MORAN, in replying to points raised by various speakers, said that naturally he was not in a position to dogmatize on the matter as a result of such superficial observation; but he considered that the real criterion by which it should be judged was: Are patients of the type to which the system is applicable happier when they are "boarded-out" than if they were in an institution?

MIDLAND MENTAL PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

THE Seventh General Meeting of the Midland Mental Pathological Society was held at Birmingham University on Thursday, October 28, Sir Gilbert Barling, Bart., *C.B.*, *C.B.E.*, F.R.C.S. (President), in the Chair.

Dr. F. A. PICKWORTH and Dr. P. BACSICH (of the Department of Anatomy, Glasgow University) gave papers illustrated by lantern-slides. Dr. Pickworth's paper was entitled **"A New Outlook on the Physiology and Pathology of Mental and Emotional States"**, and described a theory, derived from the study of capillary irregularities in brains from mental hospital patients, correlating such states with patterns of cerebral capillary mosaic, each individual capillary controlling the function of groups of synapses and thus collectively behaviour. Details of macroscopic vascular pathology and of the histopathology revealed by the author's technique were described and illustrated.

Dr. Bacsich's paper was on **"Rapid and Simple Methods of Demonstrating Nissl Substance, Myelin Sheaths and Nerve-fibres on Consecutive Sections of the Same Material"**. The various steps of the processes were explained, and a history of the evolution of the methods was given, with illustrations of their practical application. Sir GILBERT BARLING, Prof. R. D. LOCKHART, and Drs. T. C. GRAVES, J. H. MALLOY, P. BACSICH and F. A. PICKWORTH contributed to the discussion.

RESEARCH BUREAU IN PSYCHIATRY.

Thanks to the generous assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation, a bureau for the assistance of research workers in psychiatry has been established under the auspices of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association.

The following facilities are offered by the Bureau:

1. Any psychiatrist who wishes for special information as to what is at present

https://doi.org/10.1192/S0368315X38244533 Published online by Cambridge University Press