chance of Poor Law aid in promoting boarding out; the rate-payers must be content to pay for the maintenance of the harmless insane in costly public institutions, and the benevolent must continue to regret that these unfortunates cannot obtain the advantages that have been shown to result from this system as carried out for so long a time, and to so great an extent in Scotland and elsewhere.

Superannuation and Old Age Pensions.

The superannuation of asylum officials is such an ancient subject and has been so frequently discussed in all its bearings that there would appear to be little scope for fresh aspects.

The Old Age Pensions Act, that comes into operation next year, has a very definite bearing on this matter as related to the superannuation of asylum attendants, etc., whose pensions do not largely exceed that of the Old Age Pensions Act, and who, by these pensions, would be debarred either altogether, or for the larger part, from coming under the provisions of that Act.

Those asylums which do not grant pensions, paying enhanced rates of wages, without prospect of superannuation, will become popular, since the attendant will not only have the increased pay, but will also in any case get a pension from the State. Probably most asylums will, in the interest of the community, consider it desirable to keep to the lower rate of pay, which the prospect of pension enables the employees to take, since the pension thus granted out of the county funds will in the end be a saving to the Old Age Pension Fund.

Certain asylums in recent years have made their attendants sign a declaration that they forego all claim to pensions, a procedure that is possibly illegal, but it may happen in the future that the employees, being assured of an old age pension, will everywhere demand an increased wage, the proffer of pension being no longer any great inducement.

The Commissioners in Lunacy in their forty-sixth and again in their sixty-first report dwell on fair wages, and the prospect of pension as being "the most influential inducements to really suitable persons, to enter asylum service and to remain in it as a permanent occupation." The main inducement, however,

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appears to be destroyed by the Old Age Pensions, which will probably be found to militate, not only against economy in wages, but also against the permanence of service, which is of so great value in asylum administration.

The Lunacy Commission.

The hope of an increase in the *personnel* of the Commissioners in Lunacy is still deferred. With a Chancellor of the Exchequer wanting twenty to twenty-five millions of additional revenue such petty affairs as the addition of two or three thousand to expenditure will not receive much attention.

The writer of our review on the Commissioners' Blue Book suggests that the over-full treasuries of some of the registered hospitals might serve the purpose of a suitable hen-roost for this end, but even this is not probable, since it would require special legislation.

In the meantime the overwork of the existing Commission continues; the serious needs of the insane remain unsatisfied and are continually increasing.

The Lunacy Commission has suffered serious losses by death in the past few years; although this may not be directly ascribable to overwork it is certain that the large amount of sickness amongst its members has caused great stress to the survivors, and is calculated to reduce their ability to cope with their annually increasing work.

Prospects of Lunacy Legislation.

The possibility of lunacy legislation in the coming year is probably very much greater than for many years past. The great Bills which absorbed all the time of the House of Commons are defunct, and there is little encouragement in the present state of parties to introduce controversial measures; as a consequence the road is open for bills of a non-political character.

A Lunacy Bill is reported to be in preparation, and if introduced early in the Session will have a good hope of

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