Asquith, is most conclusive on this point, and shows that the safeguarding of medical men in the performance of this duty is most complete. No more convincing proof could be given than by the fact that such a committee, formed for the express purpose of legal prosecution, should have been thus completely restrained from taking action.

The duty of signing certificates of insanity imposed by law on the medical profession is probably the most repugnant and objectionable function which a medical man has to discharge. The written disclosure of professional secrets concerning a patient, which in other circumstances would constitute a libel, is utterly opposed to the ethical feeling of the profession, many members of which already decline on this and other grounds to certify insanity. The extension of such a feeling would lead to great difficulty in placing those suffering from this form of disease under appropriate treatment, indeed many instances might be quoted in which it has already been productive of disastrous results.

We must hail with satisfaction, therefore, this proof of the protection afforded by the law to the medical men who undertake this obnoxious function.

A humorous side to the affair is shown in the combination of the "individualists" and "socialists" supporting Miss Lanchester's "protest against marriage." The "reasons" for this community of feeling amongst divergent atoms would be interesting reading. We learn that Lord Queensberry expressed great admiration of Miss Lanchester's conduct, while Mrs. Weldon is reported to have said that she sympathised with the parents.

The case may even yet appear before the tribunals, and we will therefore abstain from any direct expression of opinion as to the question of sanity or insanity. We must, however, reiterate that the allegation of insanity was not based, as a portion of the lay press alleged, on Miss Lanchester's views in regard to marriage, but on the question whether in her case they were associated with or were the outcome of mental disorder.

The Four-Shilling Grant.

We observe that the important question of the Government Grant has been again before the Lancashire Asylums Board. It would appear that the resolutions of the County Councils' Association were in favour of extending the four-

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.42.176.136 Published online by Cambridge University Press

shilling grant to chronic pauper lunatics maintained in workhouse wards under special regulations, and to idiots maintained in public institutions. It was pointed out, however, that there was a material departure from the resolution adopted by the Lancashire Board, which prescribed that, before the grant was to be extended in that manner, the patients must have been treated in an asylum—a period of two years having been mentioned. Thereupon a deputation to the Local Government Board was appointed, and the Lancashire Asylum authorities are to be congratulated upon having made a stand for their own opinion. The treatment of acute insanity cannot be effective under workhouse regulations. An asylum is a hospital, and should receive the mentally-afflicted in the first instance. A workhouse may, under proper authority, be fitted to accommodate harmless dements; and, in the interest of the ratepayers as well as of the insane, such a rearrangement is highly desirable. It is, however, of essential importance that the cases selected for the cheaper, simpler, and less specialised care of workhouse officials should have passed through the local asylum and under the review of the Commissioners. We are not inclined to fix any term of residence in asylums, preferring to leave their physicians unfettered by such a regulation as the two-year limit spoken of at Lancaster. It is quite probable that a very much shorter period of observation would suffice to determine the propriety of passing a hopeless, easily-managed case from an overcrowded asylum to the lunatic ward of the neighbouring workhouse. We need not support these views by lengthy reference to the results obtained in Scotland under such a system as is now recommended, but must congratulate Dr. J. A. Campbell on the eminent success attending the proposal which he brought forward at our Annual Meeting of 1893.

The Increase of the Association.

We do not intend to anticipate Dr. Outterson Wood in any way. The results of his laborious research into the early history of our Association will be published in the next number of the Journal, and must prove of lasting interest to every loyal member. As it has become necessary, however, to increase the size of the Journal as well as to instruct the printer to produce a larger number of copies, in

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