probably adopt such a suggestion if it was urged upon them. As we go to press we learn that this suggestion has been urged by the Irish College of Physicians and by the Dublin Branch of the British Medical Association.

The Bill requires no special qualifications for the post of Assistant Medical Officer. The Chief Secretary was probably not acquainted with the fact that our Association holds an examination and gives a certificate in psychological medicine, and that the Royal University of Ireland does the same. We do not think it would be too much to ask that an Assistant Medical Officer should hold one of these or a similar qualification when appointed, or take out such a qualification within say a year of appointment. We think that such a test, easy though it may be, would be of distinct value.

It is to be noted that the provisions with regard to pension leave this question just as it was before, and just as it still is in England. It is understood that the attendants in the Irish asylums petitioned Mr. Gerald Balfour to take up the matter of pensions in this Bill, and to provide, even at a somewhat less liberal rate than at present, a pension scale which would be fixed, as pensions are in other public services, and would come to its recipients as a matter of right. This he has apparently not seen his way to doing, being probably unwilling to seem to limit the fiscal powers of the new bodies. It is a reform which ought, we think, to be effected, and which is evidently bound to come some time or other.

The Sheppard Asylum, Baltimore.

The development of hospitals for the insane of the middle and wealthy classes of the United States of America has not been checked, as with us, by the intervention of State aid. The magnificent buildings of the Maclean Hospital at Waverley, near Boston, have been recently erected in conformity with the latest ideas of asylum construction under the wise direction of Dr. Cowles. They have already been supplemented by gifts of detached houses, so that the accommodation for all classes of private patients is on a level with the demands of the most fastidious.

The Sheppard Asylum, near Baltimore, has lately been enriched by the munificent bequest of the late Mr. Enoch Pratt under circumstances of special interest. We briefly recount the history of this institution, which has the advantage of the able services of Dr. E. N. Brush as medical

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superintendent, in the hope that we shall yet hear of similar charitable projects on this side of the Atlantic.

Mr. Sheppard procured an Act of Incorporation from the Legislature of the State of Maryland, and left nearly the whole of his property to a board of trustees to be used to found an asylum for the insane. He made no suggestion as to the name of the institution; but reluctantly acceded to a proposition that the board, which was in actual existence at the time of his death, should be called "The Trustees of the Sheppard Asylum." He said, "I want no such monument to my living fame." Mr. Sheppard desired to try the "experiment" of ascertaining how much could be done to bring about recovery in cases of insanity by liberal expenditure of money on buildings, nursing, dietary and scientific treatment. He wisely directed that only the income of the trust should be spent, and that the principal should remain intact, anticipating that such a stipulation would permit of the reception of patients gratis or at nominal rates. For that reason it is only within the last few years that the asylum has been in operation.

In September, 1896, Mr. Enoch Pratt, another prominent citizen of Baltimore, died, and by his will left the Board of Trustees of the Sheppard Asylum his residuary legatees, on condition that the name of the corporation should stand as "The Trustees of the Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital," and that the money should be applied in the same manner.

A question has arisen as to whether the change of title proposed would not qualify the honour due to the original founder; but it seems to us that the association of the names of Sheppard and Pratt, *par nobile fratrum*, cannot be regarded as derogatory to the man whose aim was, irrespective of post-mortem fame, to benefit the insane. We should rather expect that Mr. Sheppard's feeling would have been to accept the help tendered by Mr. Pratt in the name of humanity, and to regard imitation as the sincerest form of flattery. We hope and trust that this benefaction will be conserved in the interests of the Sheppard-Pratt Hospital, with which are so intimately connected the future interests of the insane of the State of Maryland.

Since these lines were written we have learned with lively satisfaction that the Charter of the Sheppard Asylum has been amended by the State Legislature in terms of Mr. Pratt's will.

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