should have run, 'Resolved that in future we be collectively as brave as we have been individually timid, and that we take heart of grace and carry away from the meeting sufficient strength to do, in the exercise of our functions as the licensing authority, what we have always known to be our plain duty to our country and our God.'"

Sir Horace Plunkett's book is dated 1904, and was placed before the reading public in the second month of that year. Only by considering that he is too much absorbed in the cares of his office to take any note of current events can we account for the blazing indiscretion of this last sentence. The Irish magistrates have about as much power of defending themselves in Ireland as the Cherokee Indians have in America. Like the latter they are dispossessed, outnumbered, and unarmed. But what of the Prime Minister of the Government to which Sir Horace Plunkett belongs? Does he deserve no respect, or are his enemies of his own household? On the other hand, if the unvarnished truth be admissible, is it not the plain duty of that high functionary to his country, etc., to recant his recent base submission to the grog-shop interest, and to take heart of grace and be as brave as he has been timid in this question so vitally important to the well-being of the community?

In view of the pledge given to the publicans by Mr. Arthur Balfour last autumn that the powers of refusing licences shall, in the interest of the licencees, be removed from the hands of the magistrates, does Sir Horace Plunkett believe that the extreme of moral cowardice is peculiar to Ireland?

Caution Cards.

The interesting and valuable discussion originated by Dr. Marnan at the last meeting of the South-Western Division is one of many evidences of the good work that the Divisions are performing.

Mechanical routine in the treatment of the most serious danger of mental disease should receive the most stringent criticism in regard to its necessity and the extent of the need.

The primary result of caution cards, as Dr. Marnan points out, is to fix responsibility on the attendant in actual personal

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charge of the case, the indirect responsibility of the physician being thereby materially lightened, since, in case of neglect, the whole blame is thrown on the attendant.

Relief of responsibility may, however, be purchased too dearly by loss of freedom in treatment. The patient must be treated both by physician and attendant as suicidal so long as the caution card exists, and the physician is debarred from any relaxation which his experience and judgment might otherwise consider as beneficial. With caution cards the physician may be tempted to rely on the certain punishment of the attendant if he fails in his duty; without them he must be much more assured of the character and reliability of the attendant.

The general percentage of suicides since the adoption of caution cards have not materially decreased, and it would be quite easy to adduce the example of asylums that for a long series of years (prior to the use of caution cards) had no suicides, or suicides very much below the permilliage that now obtains. Some of these examples are sufficiently striking to prove that this immunity was not the result of mere chance, but of the conditions of treatment existing in these asylums. Is it not possible that a careful study of these might evidence a system of treatment better even than that which now predominates in England, while so sparingly adopted in Scotland and Ireland?

The primary principle in the treatment of suicidal tendencies ought to be to divert the attention of the patient from the idea, and it is to be feared that the caution-card system, if not necessarily, yet frequently defeats this principle as the patient comes to know all about the card.

Caution cards cannot be regarded as free from drawbacks, and there can be little doubt that this discussion will make men pause before extending their use.

International Home Relief Congress.

We draw special attention to the provisional programme of the International Home Relief Congress, which is to be held in Edinburgh in June. The subjects for discussion are of great importance to those engaged in local administration and the charities of the country. We trust that there will be a successful meeting.

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