CHARGES AGAINST ASYLUMS.

The Minister of Health has appointed a Committee consisting of Sir Cyril Cobb, K.B.E., M.V.O. (Chairman), R. P. Smith, Esq., M.D., F.R.C.P., Bedford Pierce, Esq., M.D., F.R.C.P., with Mr. P. Barter, of the Ministry of Health, as secretary, "to investigate and report on the charges made by Dr. Lomax in his book, *The Experiences of an Asylum Doctor*, and to make recommendations as to any medical or administrative improvements which may be necessary and practicable in respect of the matters referred to by Dr. Lomax without amendment of the existing Lunacy Laws."

The Committee will ordinarily hear evidence in public, and the time and place of meetings for this purpose will be announced in the Press. The Committee will, however, reserve the right to hear evidence in private in any case where they consider such a course desirable.

The Committee will hear such evidence as is necessary for the investigation specified in the terms of reference, and cannot undertake to hear evidence in regard to the amendment of the existing Lunacy Laws.—*Vide The Times*, January 9th, 1922.

THE GEDDES REPORT.

Board of Control, England and Wales.

1913–14, audited expenditure, £21,464; 1921–22, net estimate, £511,364; 1922–23, provisional net estimate, £535,968.

Since the provisional estimate was submitted a revised estimate has been put forward, showing a reduction of £5,528.

The number of places provided at present in the institutions to which the State contributes is 15,000 and there are now 9,000 patients in those institutions. We were told that there was a large number of mentally defective persons outside the institutions. If this were not an activity which we regard as essential to the physical and moral health of the nation, we would have recommended a substantial reduction in the vote in order to enforce economy. In the circumstances we refrain from any reduction, pointing out, however, that a larger number of these afflicted persons could in our opinion be taken into these institutions within the limits of the estimates. There are at the present time 6,000 places unoccupied.

We recommend that the necessary steps be taken to change this grant from a "percentage" basis to a "*per capita*" basis coupled with provisions to ensure adequate treatment and economical management.

Scotland.

1913–14, audited expenditure, £6,139; 1921–22, net estimate, £71,733; 1922–23, net estimate, £76,333.

Since this estimate was prepared it has been intimated that the amount to be provided for 1922–23 will be increased by £28,325.

The average cost per head is lower than in England. We recommend no reduction in the sums asked for, but, as recommended for England and Wales, the grant should be on a "*per capita*" basis, and all necessary steps should be taken to ensure economy.—*Vide The Times*, February 11th, 1922.

BOARD OF CONTROL COMMITTEES OF INQUIRY.

The Board of Control have, with the approval of the Minister of Health, appointed the following committees:

Dietary.—Dr. R. W. Branthwaite, C.B. (Chairman), Commissioner of the Board of Control; Dr. M. Greenwood, Medical Officer (Medical Statistics), Ministry of Health; Dr. R. Worth, O.B.E., Medical Superintendent, Springfield Mental Hospital; Dr. L. O. Fuller, Medical Superintendent, Three Counties Mental Hospital, Arlesey, Beds.

Clinical Records, etc.—Dr. A. Rotherham (Chairman), Commissioner of the

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Board of Control; Dr. H. A. Kidd, C.B.E., Medical Superintendent, Graylingwell Hospital, Chichester; Dr. S. J. Gilfillan, O.B.E., Medical Superintendent, Colney Hatch Mental Hospital.

Nursing Service.—Dr. C. Hubert Bond, C.B.E., F.R.C.P. (Chairman), Commissioner of the Board of Control; Dr. G. F. Barham, Medical Superintendent, Claybury Mental Hospital; Mrs. E. How-Martyn, M.Sc., Chairman of the Springfield Mental Hospital Committee; E. A. Medus, Esq., Chairman of the Netherne Mental Hospital Committee; Mrs. Hume Pinsent, Commissioner of the Board of Control; Dame Louise Gilbert Samuel, D.B.E., Member of the Chelsea Borough Council; E. Sanger, Esq., J.P., L.C.C.; Miss M. M. Thorburn, R.R.C., Matron, Horton Mental Hospital; Dr. H. Wolseley-Lewis, F.R.C.S., Medical Superintendent, Barming Heath Mental Hospital.

THE ASSOCIATION REGISTER: A CORRECTION.

Owing to an unfortunate misunderstanding the name of Dr. Alexander Ninian Bruce was struck off the Association register published in the January number. A letter of apology and regret has been addressed to Dr. Bruce by the General Secretary and his name restored to the register. The number of ordinary members was thus 632, bringing the total membership up to 667. (*Vide* p. xxix, January number, 1922).

OBITUARY.

Henry Kingsmill Abbott, B.A., M.D., B.Ch.Dublin, D.P.H.

Dr. Abbott, a member of the Association since 1900, died on February 27th, 1922, at Fareham Asylum, of which he was the Medical Superintendent. He was born at Monkestown, Co. Dublin, in September, 1863, being the eldest son of a well-known scholar, the late Rev. Thomas Kingsmill Abbott, Litt.D., D.D., Senior Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin. He was educated at the old Kingstown Grammar School and at the Evesley College, Dublin, and entered Trinity College in 1881. He obtained term honours in Natural Science and Logic, and graduated B.A. in 1885. He obtained the degrees of M.B., B.Ch. in 1887 and the degree of M.D. was conferred upon him in 1887. He took his D.P.H. with honours in 1898.

During his university career Dr. Abbott was fond of all kinds of athletics. He rowed for the old Dublin University Boat Club and was keen on both cricket and football. His interest for sport was maintained throughout his life, and until quite shortly before he died he bicycled over regularly from Fareham to Hayling Island Golf Club to indulge in his favourite game. He was an excellent bridge and billiard player and was a much respected member of the Royal Albert Yacht Club at Southsea. After serving a short time as surgeon on one of the shipping lines to India, Abbott was appointed in 1890 as Assistant Medical Officer at Hants County Asylum, and in 1906 he succeeded the late Dr. Worthington as Medical Superintendent. He was also for a time Stewart Lecturer on Mental Disease in Trinity College, Dublin, and Examiner in Psychiatry for the University.

He was a man of wide culture and a great reader, but he was an extremely reserved and unassuming man and few people suspected the extent of his knowledge. He went quietly about his work and administered his asylum conscientiously and with conspicuous ability. He was extremely just in his decisions, sound in his judgments, and the writer often found his advice of great value in administrative problems. He was a man of remarkable will-power, and this was seen particularly in the fortitude and courage with which he bore the prolonged illness which terminated fatally. He made no difference whatever in the routine of his life, and scarcely ever referred to his illness even to his most intimate friends. Almost up to the end he played golf and did his work, and he only took to his bed a few days before his death. He was buried in the Asylum Cemetery, according to his wishes. His funeral was attended by his brother, Canon T. F. Abbott, B.D., and other relatives, members of the Visiting Committee, the Staff, and a number of his personal friends. He will be much missed in the asylum, to which he gave thirty-two years of faithful service.

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