patients in 1851. The ability manifested and the success which attended his labours in this important undertaking may be considered as having fully justified their choice. What evidence of painstaking diligence and high conscientiousness he had shown in the pursuit of medical science were the more manifestly developed in the discharge of the duties which he had thus undertaken. It is hardly doubtful whether in this aspect of his varied labours he did not belong to the "countless numbers" referred to by the Premier at the last meeting of the Medical Association, who "are true martyrs of humanity, exhausting themselves in a ceaseless unnoticed anxiety for those whose sufferings they seek to alleviate." It is well known to the writer that not only was Dr. Thurnam much respected as well as beloved by the poor patients in the midst of whom he spent so large a portion of his life, but in the difficult duty of governance his patience and tact in settling disputes which from time to time might occur won for him the title of the "peace-maker," or, as one of his *employés* recently expressed himself on the same subject, "he ought to have been a judge." His practice on such occasions was such as might well be followed by others under similar circumstances. He would allow each to state his case, and then appoint a time a few hours later, on that or the following day, when he would hear them more fully, and decide the point in hand, thus allowing time for the passions of each to subside. By these means, we have understood, he uniformly succeeded.

For some time previous to his death he had complained of headache and drowsiness, but which he hoped that change and rest would prove adequate to remove. Not having been able to effect his purpose, but expecting to do so shortly, he remained at his post to the last; and even on the morning on which he died he had been into the Asylum to attend to some sudden call of duty. Even his last words evinced the perfect possession of his faculties immediately previous to an apoplectic seizure which soon terminated his existence.

Dr. Thurnam has left a widow and three sons, with whom we know a large number of friends, both lay and professional, deeply sympathise. Of him it might be truly said that he died beloved and lamented. All those who worked with him and the patients (*i.e.*, those of the latter who were in a condition to comprehend what had occurred) evinced most sincere grief at their unexpected loss.—*Medical Times and Gazette.*

We have only to add to this brief memoir that Dr. Thurnam was twice President of the Medico-Psychological Association—once in 1841, and again in 1855; that he always took an active interest in its proceedings; and that to him, as a member of the Committee on Asylum Statistics, we are mainly indebted for the statistical tables which are now adopted in nearly every county asylum. In the *Journal of Mental Science* for April, 1866, will be found an important paper by him on "The Weight of the Human Brain, and on the Circumstances affecting it."

Appointments.

BURMAN, J. WILKIE, M.D., Deputy Medical Director, West Riding Asylum, Wakefield, has been appointed Medical Superintendent of the Wilts County Asylum, Devizes, *vice* Dr. Thurnam, deceased.

DODSWORTH, G. H., M.R.C.S.E., has been appointed Assistant Medical Officer at the Bucks County Lunatic Asylum, Stoke, near Aylesbury.

HAGGART, J., M.B., C.M., has been appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Inverness District Lunatic Asylum, *vice* Pearson, resigned.

LEVINGE, E. G., A.B., M.B., L.R.C.S.I., has been appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Borough Lunatic Asylum, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, *vice* Butler, resigned.

MACKENZIE, G. H., M.B., C.M., has been appointed Assistant-Physician to the Fife and Kinross District Lunatic Asylum Cupar, N.B.

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.19.88.645 Published online by Cambridge University Press

MERRICK, A. S., M.D., L.R.C.S.Ed., has been appointed Resident Medical Superintendent of the Donegal Lunatic Asylum, Letterkenny, *vice* Eames, appointed to the Cork District Lunatic Asylum.

STEWART, JAMES, B.A., L.R.C.P.Ed., L.R.C.S.I., ex-Surgeon, R.N., and late Deputy Medical Superintendent of the Cambridge County Asylum, has been appointed Second Assistant Medical Officer of the Kent County Asylum, Maidstone, *vice* Hughes, resigned.

TUKE, J. B., M.D., has been appointed Morisonian Lecturer on Insanity at the College of Physicians, Edinburgh.

WRIGHT, F., M.R.C.S.E., has been appointed Clinical Assistant at the West Riding Lunatic Asylum, Wakefield, *vice* Levinge, appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Newcastle Borough Lunatic Asylum.

WOOD, THOMAS, M.R.C.S., has been appointed Third Assistant Medical Officer of the Kent County Asylum, Maidstone.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MATRONS IN LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

To the Editor of the Journal of Mental Science.

SIR,—On reading the review of the Asylum reports in the October number of the "Journal of Mental Science," I was somewhat surprised at the captious tone of the remarks on the report of the Matron of Hanwell Asylum as dealing with matters beyond her supposed sphere of duty, but it may be easily understood that a writer whose experience may have been limited to a Licensed House or a small Provincial Asylum with Matrons of the "Cook and Housekeeper" class cannot properly estimate the responsibilities devolving on the Matron of an Institution containing above 1100 female patients, and employing about 120 female officers and nurses, or the importance of the services of an educated and experienced lady; and I know that by none are the valuable services of the matron of Hanwell Asylum more highly appreciated than by the Medical Superintendents and staff of that Asylum.

In County Asylums the majority of the patients are females. Lunatics are increasing in number, and asylums are being continuously enlarged, and the growing importance of a higher order of female superintendents is obvious. Nowhere are the ministrations of a gentlewoman with tact and intelligence more valuable than in a Lunatic Asylum, and nowhere is male meddling more misplaced than when interfering with the employments and amusements of female patients, while the inconveniences resulting from the natural reluctance of females to confide their bodily ailments as well as their mental grief to a man are often very serious, whereas a matron possessing such qualifications as are indicated becomes the trusted friend of the patient and understands and soothes their waywardness. As regards the control and regulation of so large a staff of female officers and servants, the medical officers of Hanwell Asylum have too proper a sense of their professional status and authority to desire to intervene in the unavoidable jealousies and squabbles of the servants' hall.

All this may perhaps be admitted, but the grievous fact remains of a matron inditing a report of her department, and thereby assuming an official status and so approaching the awful supremacy of a medical superintendent. "As for her reading and writing, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity." Medical jealousy of female employment is well known, and redounds but little to the credit of a noble profession, which can well afford to give a fair field of peculiarly appropriate employment to women.

A VISITING JUSTICE OF HANWELL ASYLUM.

We willingly give insertion to this well-put plea for the nearly extinct species of lady asylum matrons. Theoretically the services of a lady matron may have all the value our correspondent attributes to them. If, however, he wishes to see a sketch

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