During the hours of the day 71 escapes and 83 attempts were recorded, whilst at night the numbers were 18 and 23 respectively.

It was from the quarters of the workers that most of these occurred, since the supervision was less in this section of the building, and there was a reasonable chance of success. As a rule the patients sought to get away during the first month of their detention. The great number of escapes did not have any serious consequences, thus necessitating no greater restriction, since they could have been prevented by a larger staff. The author, however, considers that it would be advisable if those cases which are known to be really dangerous to society were confined in a special asylum or kept under a special service.

A visit to this asylum would be instructive, so as to learn the amount of freedom given to the patients and also to see what kind of supervision was maintained. SIDNEY CLARKE.

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10. Asylum Reports.

(*Continued from Vol. LIV, page* 780.)

Some English County Asylums.

Cumberland and Westmoreland.—Dr. Farquharson has adopted the new tables, adding the optional Heredity Table. We venture to think that some day the Annual Meeting will add this to the other official requirements. And now that the table is designed to have an exclusive value this step should be welcomed. The need in former days only to record heredity, *when found*, produced a valueless heap of troublesome figures. But, of course, it would be necessary that each and every direct case should be examined and returned in the same way as ætiological factors are now treated, namely, as cases where there is absolute record and cases where there is no record, the latter being again divided into "no record after full examination" and "no record, because of there being no reliable history obtainable." Dr. Farquharson is firmly of the opinion that alcohol is not such a prolific cause in his district as in others. He is, we think, wise in not using his experience to disprove the experience of all others, as is not infrequently the case. He does not account for the smaller proportion by saying, for instance, that others make too much of a symptom and so on, but he only assumes that his district differs from others in this respect.

Kent.—The reports of the two asylums in this county are now issued bound together. Both asylums have adopted the new tables, and, in consequence, the volume is substantial. It would be too much to hope that the two sets of tables should be worked together, as is done in the case of the London County asylums. But perhaps some enterprising spirit may take this in hand some day, as to the more important matters at all events. Whoever will do this will deserve well of psychiatry. It would, in any case, be a benefit in counties where there are more than one asylum if, somewhere in the report, the separate areas served by the respective asylums were set out, or, failing this, if the principles on

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which patients were sent to one or other asylum were stated. There are points of difference in statistics which can only be explained by variations in the environments and class of the patients admitted.

Barming Heath.—Dr. Wolseley Lewis contributes to the report a valuable and instructive history of this old asylum, illustrated by a plan of the whole estate, which shows in various coloured inks the additions that have been made from time to time. The first dealing with the treatment of lunatics by the county authorities was in 1828, when plans were passed for the erection of an asylum. This was opened in 1833, having accommodation for 174 patients. The safe-keeping of inmates being the first consideration, the buildings were much on the lines of prisons. In 1840 better ideas began to prevail, and in 1844 Quarter Sessions reported against the improper practice of sending patients too late for the promotion of recovery. But in this year among other additions was a bath of surprise. The latter is instructive as illustrating the barbarous methods of treatment in those days. "It was reserved for the very violent patients, over whose head was placed a hood, and round whose waist a girdle with rope attached was fastened; they were then led by a side door to this bath of cold water, into which they unexpectedly plunged." Since that day improvement has gone on by degrees, till now Dr. Lewis can write that the last additions represent the latest ideas in asylum architecture. Alcohol does not seem to be a prolific factor of insanity, only 40 cases out of 387 having this marked up against them. Heredity occurs in a third, while senility and prolonged mental stress account each for about one-fifth of the admissions. General paralysis was found in 30 out of 194 men, while in only 1 case in 219 women. Melancholia, acute, was found in 32 and 82 cases respectively, and largely exceeded the acute mania cases—23 and 37. The general recovery-rate is 41 *per cent.* on comparison of direct admissions and direct recoveries.

Chartham.—Alcohol does not seem to be a more important factor than at Barming Heath. General paralysis occurred in a considerably smaller proportion, but the facts as to melancholia and mania were reversed, mania being found in 50 and melancholia in 35 out of 186 admissions. The recovery-rate was somewhat lower than at Barming Heath, but this can be probably accounted for to a large extent by the greater delay in the admission of recent cases. Of those brought within 3 months of falling ill, there were 57 *per cent.* of total admissions at Barming Heath, and only 41 *per cent.* at Chartham.

London County.

The rate of increase in the number of patients under the care of this authority on December 31st, 1907, shows a tendency to go upwards again, after three years of gradual decline. As is pointed out in the report, there is always a tendency for the opening of a new asylum to be followed by a rush of cases, which have been kept back on account of accommodation being deficient pending the opening. Long Grove was opened in June, 1907. Still, as matters stand now, there is great improvement over the figures of former years. We note that the direct

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