SOUTH-WESTERN DIVISION.

THE Spring Meeting of the above Division was held by kind permission of Dr. MacBryan, at 17, Belmont, Bath, on Thursday, May 6th, 1915.

The following members were present: Drs. Aveline, MacBryan, Macdonald, Lavers, and J. R. P. Phillips, who acted as Hon. Divisional Secretary in the unavoidable absence of Dr. Blachford.

Dr. Macdonald was voted to the Chair. Dr. Blachford was re-elected Honorary Divisional Secretary and Drs. Lavers and Pope as Representative Members of Council.

Dr. Lavers and Macdonald were elected as Members of the Committee of Management.

The Autumn Meeting was fixed for Friday, October 22nd, 1915, and the Spring Meeting on Friday, April 21st, 1916.

IRISH DIVISION.

THE SPRING MEETING of the Irish Division was held at Hampstead Asylum, by the kind invitation of Drs. Henry and William Eustace, on Thursday, April 15th, 1915.

Members present: Drs. Hetherington, Drapes, Lawless, J. O'C. Donelan, Greene, Mills, Rainsford, W. Eustace, H. Eustace, Redington, Gavin, and Dr. Leeper (Divisional Secretary).

Communications regretting unavoidable absence were read from Dr. Nolan, of Downpatrick, and Dr. O'Mara, of Ennis.

Dr. HENRY EUSTACE, having been moved to the chair, and before the business was proceeded with, said he wished to bring before the meeting the sad loss which the Division had sustained by the untimely demise of one of their most valued members. By Sir John Lentaigne's death they had lost a friend from amongst them whom they all honoured and respected, both in his private and official capacity.

After some discussion it was proposed by Dr. Rainsford, and seconded by Dr. Thos. Adrian Greene: "That the Irish Division of the Medico-Psychological Association, at their first meeting since the lamented death of their fellow member, Sir John Lentaigne, desired to place on record their sense of the loss they, in common with the medical profession in Ireland, have sustained. Sir John Lentaigne always took a very keen interest in the work of the Association, and his presence at their meetings was always both agreeable and instructive. They desire to tender to his family this expression of their most profound sympathy with them in their bereavement."

The resolution was passed unanimously in silence, the members standing in their places.

The minutes of the previous meeting were then read and signed by the Chairman.

A letter was read from Mrs. Hetherington stating that Dr. Hetherington had recovered from his recent severe illness caused by a murderous attack made upon him by an insane patient in his asylum. As Dr. Hetherington was present at the meeting, the members cordially expressed their pleasure at having him again amongst them fully recovered from his unfortunate accident, and congratulated him upon his escape from any ill-consequences from so serious an injury.

Dr. HETHERINGTON thanked the members for their kind congratulations and good wishes conveyed to him during his illness.

The following letter was read by the HON. SECRETARY, who received it from the late Sir John Lentaigne on November 22nd, 1914:

42, Merrion Square, Dublin.

Dear Dr. Leeper,—I beg you will convey to the members of the Irish Division of the Medico-Psychological Association my heartfelt thanks for their kindly sympathy with me and my family on the death of my boy in France.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN LENTAIGNE, M.D.

Dr. R. R. Leeper was unanimously elected Hon. Secretary.

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Dr. E. D. O'Neill, Medical Superintendent, Limerick Asylum, and Dr. Nolan, Medical Superintendent, Downpatrick Asylum, were unanimously elected representative members of Council for the ensuing year.

Dr. J. O'C. Donelan and Dr. J. Adrian Greene were nominated as examiners for the certificate in Psychological Medicine of the Association.

The following dates of meetings were fixed:

For the Autumn Meeting, Thursday, November 4th, 1915.

For the Spring Meeting, Thursday, April 6th, 1916.

For Summer Meeting, Thursday, July 6th, 1916.

Dr. Eustace having temporarily vacated, and Dr. Hetherington having been moved to the chair,

Dr. H. M. EUSTACE read his paper on "A Case of Insane Impulses in an Asthmatic Patient" (see p. 446), prefacing his remarks by a few well-chosen words of welcome to the members present, and expressing his gratification at the good attendance, notwithstanding the sad and difficult times through which we were passing.

A lengthy discussion followed in which most of the members joined.

Dr. DRAPES drew attention to the differences of medical opinion as regards the causation of asthma, all were agreed, however, that a strong nervous element entered into its causation. He referred to asthmatic cases which had been cured by hypnotism, and opinion seemed to vary between a purely physical causation (such as vascular turgescence or vaso-motor spasm and high arterial tension) and a purely psychical element. Asthma occurred in his experience more often as a complication of melancholic states than in other forms of mental disturbance. Statistics, however, were not very definite as regards the form of insanity in which it was most frequently found. He mentioned a case under his care where marked gastric crises occurred almost with the regularity of ague, associated with asthmatic seizures. The patient was a woman who was certified as melancholic, with suicidal tendencies, but since her admission in February last, except for very mild depression, hardly noticeable, she had not manifested any overt symptoms of insanity. He surmised that in this case the pneumo-gastric nerve, or its centre of origin in the brain, might be affected. The difficulty in these cases was to determine whether there was any essential or necessary connection between the asthmatic paroxysm and the mental disturbance. In Dr. Eustace's case he was inclined to think there was none.

Dr. RAINSFORD said that he had treated a number of insane patients whose condition was more or less associated with asthma. He considered the case described by Dr. Eustace as of great medico-legal interest, and thought that the existence of a condition of automatism in an inebriate was a subject upon which a lawyer could throw some light. In such a case was the patient conscious of the difference between right and wrong?

Dr. GAVIN said he had recently seen a similar case to that described by Dr. Eustace in which automatic actions were present, and occasional verbal aberration occurred in the course of patient's conversation. His patient suffered from asthma from boyhood, but the asthma had disappeared synchronously with the advent of these symptoms of mental disturbance. He had in his mind the similarity between the automatic actions of his patient (such as suddenly pawing the air and saying he was feeling for cobwebs, and the entire subsequent loss of memory of his performance of these automatic acts), and a condition of "*petit mal*."

Dr. DONELAN had many cases under his care, but comparatively few associated with asthma. He had a case in which epilepsy, asthma, and insanity were all present, and seemed to be alternating conditions.

Dr. GREENE spoke at length upon the medico-legal aspects of Dr. Eustace's case, and mentioned a remarkable case of automatism in an inebriate, who subsequently had no recollection of the many complicated and difficult actions he had been able to perform whilst in the inebriated state. The question of criminal responsibility was one of much vagueness, and judges seemed to hold very divergent views upon the subject.

Dr. HETHERINGTON spoke in similar terms.

Dr. EUSTACE, in replying, said he was gratified by the valuable discussion his paper had evoked. He thought Dr. Greene had struck the point, as Moses struck

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the rock, when he said that the question of criminal responsibility was one fitted for the elucidation of lawyers, as their ideas seemed very vague upon this interesting subject.

The following Resolution, which was passed at the February meeting of the Educational Committee, was read by the Secretary:

"EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE.

"It is resolved that no candidate be excused the nursing examinations or any part of them on any ground whatsoever.

"It is resolved that those male and female nurses who have served during the present war in either the Navy or Army be excused all the items of training mentioned in paragraph 8 of the training regulations except (*a*) requiring twelve months' attendance on the insane.

"It is resolved that in the case of any attendant or nurse, who, by reason of war service, has been prevented from sitting for the preliminary examination, the statutory interval between the two examinations be not insisted upon, provided that the necessary three years' service be not shortened."

It was felt that the resolution of the Irish Division has been somewhat drastically dealt with by the Educational Committee, but it was agreed that no further action should be taken in the matter.

The discussion which took place at the Autumn Meeting last year having proved such a success, it was suggested by Dr. Rainsford that another similar discussion be introduced at the meeting in November next. Dr. J. O'C. Donelan kindly consented to open a discussion on the subject of "Alcoholism and Insanity," and his proposal was cordially agreed to.

It was proposed by Dr. GREENE and passed with acclamation that the best thanks of the Division be tendered to the Doctors Eustace for their kindness and hospitality in entertaining the meeting.

Dr. EUSTACE having replied, the proceedings terminated.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE.

Minutes of Meeting held in London on February 18th, 1915.

Present: Dr. Percy Smith (Chairman), Drs. Adair, Chambers, Collins, Newington, Rows, and Thomson.

(1) Dr. Collins proposed that Dr. Percy Smith be elected Chairman of the Committee. This was seconded by Dr. Adair and carried unanimously.

(2) Dr. R. G. Rows was appointed Honorary Secretary of the Committee.

(3) Dr. Hayes Newington and Dr. D. Orr were co-opted members of the Committee.

(4) Letters from Dr. T. W. McDowall to Dr. Collins and the Board of Control were read and considered. After some discussion Dr. Collins moved the following resolution: "That the Research Committee approve the principle contained in the letters of Dr. McDowall, and ask the Council to direct the Parliamentary Committee to further legislation, when such is possible, to allow of conjoined expenditure on Research by local authorities governing public Asylums." This was seconded by Dr. Thomson and adopted.

(5) Dr. Collins proposed "That the Meetings of the Research Committee be held, as far as possible, at the time of the ordinary Meetings of the Association." This was seconded by Dr. Adair and adopted.

(6) Dr. Collins proposed "That the Research Committee ask the Council whether it would be willing to make grants in aid of original work on the recommendation of this Committee." This was seconded by Dr. Chambers and adopted.

(7) It was decided to hold the next Meeting of the Committee on Tuesday, May 18th.

List of Committee: Dr. T. Stewart Adair, Dr. J. Shaw Bolton, Dr. J. Chambers, Dr. M. A. Collins, Dr. H. Devine, Dr. T. Drapes, Dr. E. Goodall, Dr. J. R. Lord, Dr. Hayes Newington, Dr. D. Orr, Dr. W. Ford Robertson, Dr. R. G. Rows (Hon. Secretary), Dr. Percy Smith, Dr. D. G. Thomson, Dr. Tulloch.

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