

nature might suggest that the attendants would presumably derive more recreation and amusement from their perusal.

In my report a matter of far greater importance than the trivial details referred to is allowed to pass unchallenged, and will bear its own interpretation and reflection upon the management, viz., "a want of homeliness and domesticity, very little furniture, except tables, benches, and beds, no pictures in the wards, no variation in the colour of the rooms" (not even stencils). With regard to the de-scription of the grounds, I must complain that sections have been extracted from my article and separated from the context, so as to (unwittingly, perhaps) distort my meaning. Describing the male side I wrote: "The airing courts are cramped and small, a high wooden hoarding shuts you round, and no glimpse is got of the outer world. A larger airing court beyond this, I believe, used for some patients, and a still larger one with gardens beyond is, apparently for three classes of patients, but they were unoccupied during my visit." The latter evidently owing to their being in their wards, for my statement proceeds: "On a summer afternoon, pleasantly warm out of doors, all the patients (males) were indoors. Such a state of things would hardly be the case in England." The professor quotes me: "I was informed that there was accommodation for 98 males, 88 females, total 186." These numbers I got from Dr. Korsakoff, and were taken down in his pathological laboratory; they evidently refer to the total number under treatment since the opening, which the professor states was about 150, and if he refers to my opening remarks he will find that I quote the University Clinic as having about 50 patients, the number he himself sets down as the limit of their accommodation.

Either a lunatic hospital is for promoting the cure of mental affliction or it is not, and if not there can be no further justification for its existence. The fact, to quote the professor's own words, of importing "very frequently the most serious cases for scientific purposes, which rapidly end fatally," is barbarous, and does not commend itself as humane or justifiable. It would not be tolerated outside Russia.

I considered, and do so still, with a very vivid recollection of the Clinic and having a fair average acquaintance with home and Continental asylums, that there can be no justification for the existence of an institution having such magnificent pretensions and so little performance. There appeared to me a supineness in the management which pointed to a deplorable administration, and I conclude by reiterating my previous description, that "if ever surroundings influence a mental condition, detention for treatment in such an asylum ought to render a victim hopelessly incurable."

I regret, gentlemen, that in the warmth of controversy, I should appear to use harsh expressions; but they are certainly not with a desire or design to affront the learned professor, whom it was my misfortune not to meet.

I have the honour to remain,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT JONES, M.D. Lond., B.S., F.R.C.S.

Earlswood, Surrey.

#### RATING OF ASYLUMS (LUNACY ACT, 1890).

GENTLEMEN,—Section 263 of the Consolidation Act, 53 Victoria, Chapter V., appears to have given as much trouble to the officials of the pauper asylums throughout England as other portions of that over-carped-at statute have to the authorities of some of the institutions for the reception of private patients. Without going into the entire matter of the rating of asylums, it may perhaps be of interest to many readers of the Journal, who have to consider this subject, if the result of a recent inquiry into one very small, though not unimportant, corner of it, is placed briefly before them. The question asked was to this effect: To which account (building and repairs or maintenance) do you propose to charge the rate levied under the new rating section in the Lunacy Act?

Fifty-four post-cards were sent out; and thanks to the prompt courtesy of the superintendents addressed, fifty-four answers were received. In fifteen asylums it has been decided to charge the entire amount to the maintenance account; fifteen to the building and repairs; four charge the maintenance with that portion of the rate paid on the land, and the balance to the building and repairs account; one charges this latter with everything except the poor rate; while nine counties have not yet settled the question in any way. One gentleman writes: "We are all puzzled as to the construction of the Act." A second says: "As far as I can see there is no choice at all—the new assessment should certainly be charged to maintenance." Another, however, is equally emphatic: "To the building and repairs. Certainly *not* the maintenance;" while a fourth very pertinently draws attention to the fact that, in the form of abstract of account recently issued by the Local Government Board, "there is a place for rates in building account, but none in the maintenance." It is clear that considerable difference of opinion exists on this point at present. Probably much of it will be reconciled when the new auditors have made their report to headquarters. Uniformity, though not always desirable, would, in this instance, be an advantage, especially if it took the shape of insisting upon the amount being paid out of the county rate, and not out of the monies chargeable with the maintenance and care of our patients.

Yours, etc.,

J. BEVERIDGE SPENCE.

#### *Appointments.*

BLACK, R. S., M.A., M.B., C.M., D.P.H.Aberd., appointed Pathologist and Assistant Medical Officer to the Lancashire County Asylum, Whittingham.

BONNEY, A. W., M.R.C.S., L.S.A.Lond., appointed third Assistant Medical Officer to the Worcester County and City Asylum.

BOYCOTT, A. N., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.Lond., appointed third Assistant Medical Officer to the Cane Hill Asylum.

COMPTON, THOS. J., M.B., C.M., appointed Resident Medical Superintendent, Higham Hall Asylum, Norwich.

COWAN, JOHN J., M.B.Ed., appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Roxburgh District Asylum, Melrose.

CRAIG, F. A., M.B., B.Ch., Roy. Univ. Irel., appointed Resident Clinical Assistant to the Nottingham Borough Asylum.

DUNN, E. L., M.B., B.Ch., T.C.D., appointed fourth Assistant Medical Officer to the West Eiding Asylum, Wakefield.

FARQUHARSON, A. C., M.B., C.M., appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Burntwood Asylum, Lichfield.

FITZGIBBON, H., M.D.Dub., F.R.C.S.I., appointed Medical Visitor of Lunatics.

HAY, FRANK, M.B., C.M.Aberd., appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the James Murray Royal Asylum, Perth.

LYONS, ALGERNON WILSON, M.B.Lond., L.R.C.P.Lond., M.R.C.S.Eng., of King's College, London, appointed Resident Clinical Assistant at the City of London Lunatic Asylum, Stone, near Dartford.

MACKENZIE, HENRY J., M.B., C.M.Edin., appointed Resident Clinical Assistant at the Darent Asylum for Imbecile Children, Dartford.

MIDDLEMAN, JAS., M.B., C.M., B.Sc., appointed Resident Pathologist to the Morningside Asylum.

ROUSE, EUSEBIUS ROUSE, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.Lond., L.S.A., appointed Assistant Medical Officer to Camberwell House Asylum, London.

TANNER, C. PRICE, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.Lond., promoted to be second Medical Officer to the Worcester County and City Asylum.

WATSON, W. B. K., M.A., M.B., C.M., appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Lancashire County Asylum, Rainhill.