

disorder in the patients experimented upon, and that each turned away in disgust from spirits which the stomach could no longer assimilate. The remedy, in addition, possesses powerful qualities of regeneration, due to an unknown substance called "stimulithe." M. Broca proposes that the serum should be named "Antiethylene," and is convinced that the committee will, by continuing the experiments, soon be able to define the new serum clearly. At present it seems to have no effect upon the organic changes consequent on chronic alcoholism; and the Academy has been informed that, while it abrogates the taste for brandy, the taste for wine is preserved unimpaired! Some of us are even yet unfashionable enough to prefer wine.

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#### ASYLUM CONSTRUCTION.

Many new asylums have been built within the last few years, and by an interesting return obtained by the county of Worcester it would appear that great consideration has been given to the problems of construction by local authorities. Comparatively few invited competitive plans. Most of the architects were selected, either on account of their eminence and experience, or on account of their local connections. The general rate of remuneration would appear to have been 5 per cent. Not a few appointed committees of inspection, and it is to be regretted that this course is not more commonly adopted. We are strongly of opinion that the medical superintendent should be appointed in the first instance, and that he should so advise his committee that they would proceed to the formidable task before them in the light of his knowledge of special requirements, and with him to advise as to which of the existing institutions should be visited. Progress in this direction has been mainly on the initiative of the medical superintendents, and each should, in so far as possible, develop ideas in building and construction. We are glad to note that the acreage held by the committees of recently erected asylums is on the whole satisfactory, although there are still too many content with fifty or sixty acres. The cost per head calculated on the number of patients is stated at sums varying from £150 to £420. These calculations and returns, however, must be received with caution, for there are so many considerations entering into the question that economical management in one locality might be the very reverse in another.

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#### COMPLIMENTARY.

##### PRESENTATION TO SIR JOHN SIBBALD.

At a meeting of Sir John Sibbald's friends in February of last year it was resolved to present him with his portrait, painted by the President of the Royal Scottish Academy. On the 22nd of December last the presentation was made in the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh. The Master of Polwarth occupied the chair, and before calling on Dr. Yellowlees made complimentary reference to Sir John Sibbald's work in connection with the Lunacy Board.

Dr. YELLOWLEES, who spoke in the unavoidable absence of Sir William Gairdner, in the course of his remarks said—I recall a great many memories in going back over Dr. Sibbald's career. I remember him long ago when he went to be resident physician at Perth Infirmary. Afterwards he went to be resident in Brompton Consumption Hospital. He was nearly settling down as a London practitioner. Happily he did not do so, but took to the line in which he distinguished himself. Of all the memories by far the most vivid are those associated with Morningside. I look back on that as the best period of my life. But if I once began with reminiscences I should not know where to stop, although we have scarcely ever met without recalling reminiscences of these days, and of our honoured chief, Dr. Skae. After that memorable time Dr. Sibbald went to Lochgilphead Asylum. That asylum was opened and organised by him. Sir John Sibbald, I am sure, will be the first to acknowledge and recognise that his experience there was invaluable in future administrative work. I remember him leaving that post to become deputy Commissioner, and the long years of earnest and unobtrusive work he did in that

capacity; and then I well remember twenty years ago, on the death of Sir James Coxe, he succeeded to be Commissioner along with Sir Arthur Mitchell. Of that work I have very intimate knowledge, and can speak with absolute certainty as to the admirable way in which it was discharged. I need not say more about Dr. Sibbald's work; it has been attested sufficiently by the Chairman of the Board to-day in your presence, and it was sealed by the knighthood which was so well earned and so worthily bestowed, and in which we all rejoice; but I think I know Sir John Sibbald well enough to say that the gathering to-day touches even a tenderer cord than that, and comes nearer than any public appreciation, and that he cares more for the appreciation of his personal friends, who know him best, than for official recognition. I would like to say something not only about the very admirable work of Dr. Sibbald, but also something about the spirit and the tone in which that work had been done, because I think that of the very utmost importance, and I think that spirit and tone which pervades the whole lunacy administration of Scotland has been of far greater significance than people know. To inspect the work of your professional brother honestly and truthfully, and fearlessly to say what is wrong and what is right, and to do that without giving offence, is no easy matter, and that very delicate duty was discharged by Dr. Sibbald most admirably. It is the distinction of Scotland compared with other countries that the Commissioners were always regarded as the friends of superintendents, that their visits have been an encouragement and a help, and the personal relations that have existed between the board and the superintendents have been a very important factor indeed in making the Scotch lunacy system what it is to-day. In that respect Sir John Sibbald fully sustained the traditions of his board. I speak not for the profession alone, but I speak in the name of this meeting and of subscribers to this picture. So I will do what you have given me the great honour of doing, and will address myself to Dr. Sibbald. In the name of this meeting and of all those represented by this meeting, I now ask your acceptance of this portrait, as a testimony of our high appreciation of your public work. May it long adorn your home, and may it tell to your children's children in future years what manner of man he was whom his friends thus delighted to honour.

Sir JOHN SIBBALD in reply said—Master of Polwarth, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you, Sir, very sincerely for the great honour you have conferred upon me of presiding upon this occasion, and for the very kind words you have used in regard to me. I have also to thank my distinguished friend, Dr. Yellowlees. He was my friend during the early period to which he has alluded, when we climbed together the hill which all youths must climb, my friend while we journeyed over the table-land of middle life, and now in my declining years my friend—true and kindly as ever. I have to thank all the ladies and gentlemen here present very expressly for the kindness which they show to me on this occasion. I have to thank all who have been associated with them in this presentation; especially I have to thank the committee and Dr. Philip, the Secretary, who must have had an immense amount of trouble in bringing to a conclusion the work which is finished to-day. With regard to the portrait, the kindness of which it is the token will always make it the most valued of my possessions. But apart from that, I value it as a work of art, which, in spite of the imperfections of the subject, is, I believe, worthy of the reputation of that prince of painters, Sir George Reid. Two feelings to which it is impossible I can give adequate expression arise in my mind in regard to this presentation. One of these feelings is the oppressive sense of my own unworthiness of so distinguished an honour; and the other is an overwhelming sense of the large-hearted kindness and magnanimous generosity of my friends who are associated in the presentation. I shall not dwell upon these things, for an attempt to enlarge upon them would tend rather to weaken than strengthen the expression of what I wish you to receive as the outpouring of a heart that is deeply moved.

On an occasion such as this it is scarcely possible to avoid glancing backward over the period of one's working life and thinking of those with whom one has been associated as a fellow-labourer. I have, as most of you know, been chiefly associated with those whose work has been to promote the curative treatment of insanity, and to ameliorate the condition of the insane. If, therefore, in a few words I have still to say, I take occasion to congratulate my fellow-labourers on the improvement that has been effected during the past half-century in the way that the insane have been treated and provided for, I trust that those of my friends who

have not been specially engaged in that work, but whom I have no less reason to thank on this occasion, will not deem me forgetful of their kindness.

There has been more or less improvement during the past fifty years in the condition of the insane in every quarter of the globe, but nowhere has it been more remarkable than in Scotland. Some of those who were leaders in the work have passed from their labours, but others who have been specially eminent are, I am glad to say, still with us, and are now in this room. It has not, however, been an affair of leaders alone. Some of the most effective work has consisted of the recognising and fostering of improvements inaugurated by less prominent, though equally devoted workers. The notable character of the change that has taken place may be measured if we bear in mind the deplorable condition of the insane, in Scotland and over the civilised world, up to the middle of the century that is now drawing to a close. Those who can remember, as I do, the publication in 1857 of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Condition of the Insane in Scotland, do not need to be reminded of the thrill of shame and horror produced by its revelations. A large number of the insane, both in and out of asylums, were found to be in a condition which Mr. Ellice, speaking in the House of Commons, truly characterised as "disgraceful to this or to any civilised country." With the legislation which followed that report, however, a new and happier day began to dawn. An efficient system of lunacy administration was established; and, since then, as time has rolled on, the lot of the insane has been more and more alleviated; and we may now claim that, though there is still room for improvement, they are now cared for in Scotland in a way that accords with the feeling of sympathetic kindness due to those who suffer from the most disastrous of all afflictions. We may claim, indeed, that, as regards the way in which the insane are provided for, Scotland stands as it ought to do, "second to none." Asylums have been transformed from gloomy prisons or cheerless barracks to well-appointed hospitals and comfortable homes, and the insane in private dwellings are under an organised system of supervision which secures, as far as possible, the detection and the correction of abuses whenever they arise. Grave abuses either in or out of asylums now, however, rarely occur. The persons entrusted with the care of the insane are as a whole well worthy of the confidence of the public. In saying this I have not only in view those occupying the higher professional positions, of whose eminent ability we are justly proud. I have also in mind those less widely known who are in more immediate and constant association with the insane, and I am glad of this opportunity of referring to those whom I have known (and I could make a long list of them) whose unselfish devotion to duty, whose capacity for exercising gentle yet effective control, and whose thoughtful tenderness in circumstances of difficulty and trial have again and again, and with increasing frequency in recent years, excited my admiration and commanded my respect. I need not say that I have felt it no small honour to have been a fellow-worker with men and women so distinguished for high and noble qualities.

Perhaps I ought to say before I sit down, that I do not forget how much the improvement that has been made in the condition of the insane has been promoted by influences independent of the efforts of those who have specially devoted themselves to the work. We must recognise that these efforts could not have been attended with great success had there not been much in the circumstances of the time to favour them. The improvement would, I fear, have advanced but slowly, if it had not been borne onward by the flowing tide of intellectual and moral progress which has been a distinguishing feature of the last half-century. That period indeed has been one of great enlightenment. Our knowledge of the world in which we live, and of man himself, has advanced by leaps and bounds, and we have been enabled to obtain truer views of much that was formerly shrouded in mystery. As a result of this, the superstitious ideas connected with insanity, which deprived the insane of the sympathy that was their due, have ceased to influence the public mind. And the flood of light which the researches of physiologists, pathologists, and psychologists have shed upon the functions of the brain, has made us realise, in a way that our fathers could not realise, that mental disorder is, as truly as bodily disorder, a state of disease, that is governed by the same laws and must be treated on the same principles. The mere increase of scientific knowledge has thus done much to benefit the insane. But they have benefited also by

movements which are more moral than intellectual. There has been during the past fifty years a great awakening of the public conscience to the responsibility of society for the welfare of its constituent members. There has been a general quickening of philanthropic movement. Benevolent action in every direction has been developed and made more efficient; and in such a movement the insane could not fail to be benefited. The era of that great reform in hospital administration, and in the nursing of the sufferers from bodily disease, with which the name of Florence Nightingale will ever be associated, must needs have been a favourable time for improving the treatment of sufferers from mental disease.

I have ventured on this occasion to refer to the improvement that has been made in the condition of the insane, because it has fallen to my lot to be one of those who have endeavoured to promote that improvement; and I am glad to have lived at the time when it and kindred triumphs of beneficence have been achieved. These triumphs have, no doubt, been mingled with much failure and imperfection. The benevolent work of the time has been often ineffective, often misdirected; and it leaves much misery and evil still untouched. Yet we may claim for the last half-century that in spite of tragic episodes, such as that which at present weighs upon our hearts, it has been the greatest period in the history of philanthropy. And I think that we may, not unfitly, while thinking of the past and hoping for the future, adopt the words of the apostle who, having reached the last stage of his journey to Rome, "thanked God and took courage,—*gratias agens Deo, accepit fiduciam.*"

Dr. CLOUSTON.—Master of Polwarth, ladies and gentlemen, this function is not quite over. We have yet something to do before we part. You, Sir, said you looked on it as a privilege and pleasure to preside here and speak of Sir John Sibbald. Now it is a still greater pleasure, if that is possible, for me to stand and speak in name of this meeting in regard to Lady Sibbald. Dr. Yellowlees has spoken entirely of Sir John. I give to Lady Sibbald a good deal of the credit which has been accorded to him. That being so, his friends have done me the great honour of making me their spokesman in asking Lady Sibbald if she would be good enough to accept at our hands those bowls, so that in her future life and at her own table when she sees them she will feel that she and her husband have had many friends, and by means of that little present she will remember us with kindness and affection, I hope. I now ask Lady Sibbald in your name to accept those bowls that stand on the table. (Applause.)

SIR JOHN SIBBALD having returned thanks for Lady Sibbald, and a vote of thanks having been accorded to the chairman, the meeting separated.

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#### OBITUARY.

##### WILLIAM WHITNEY GODDING, M.D.

We regret to have to record the death of Dr. Godding, who was elected an honorary member of the Medico-Psychological Association in 1886. The following notes are taken from the memorial written by Dr. Witmer, his distinguished colleague and senior assistant physician.

With but a few days' illness, death came suddenly to Dr. William Whitney Godding, late Superintendent of the Government Hospital for the Insane at Washington, D.C.

He passed away quietly in the early morning of May 6th, in the midst of his labours, and within the walls of the institution over which he so zealously presided for twenty-two years. The best record of his splendid career as an alienist, and of the spotless integrity of his life, are embalmed in the annals of the great hospital which was but *in embryo* when he undertook its superintendency, and its development was still advancing when death removed him from that office.

An only child, he was born in Winchendon, May 5th, 1831. From early manhood with singleness of purpose he devoted himself to the study of mental diseases, both in theory and practice. His preparatory education was begun in Andover. His named is enrolled among the alumni of Dartmouth College. Crowned with the academic bays of his *alma mater*, Dr. Godding attended the medical school of Castleton and, after graduation, the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New