

should be made an offence and should be punished by a fine or short imprisonment. At the conclusion of the discussion on Dr. Sutherland's paper a resolution was moved to bring the question under the consideration of the council of the British Medical Association.

Dr. ARCHDALL REID contributed a paper on "The Relation of Alcoholism to Heredity," in which the prevalent belief that the offspring of alcoholic parents were liable to suffer from the drink craving was controverted on *a priori* grounds. It was added that drunkenness in parents arose from some innate vice or from some internal blemish, and that the latter might reappear in the children in the form of some nervous or other disorder, but not as an impulse towards drink. From historical considerations it appeared that nations indulged in drink in an inverse ratio to the length and antiquity of their use of intoxicants.

Surgeon-General HARVEY read notes on some of the asylums of India.

Dr. LIONEL WEATHERLEY read a paper on the question, "How can we instil rational ideas on the subject of Insanity into the public mind?"

Dr. MILNE BRAMWELL read a paper on "The Conditions involved in the Post-hypnotic Appreciation of Time."

All these papers gave rise to discussion.

The following papers were taken as read on account of the absence of the authors or from lack of time: by Dr. Hyslop, on "Double Consciousness;" by Dr. Harry Campbell, on "Morbid Self-assurance;" by Dr. Macphail, on "Post-operative Insanity."

The interest in the work of the Section was sustained up to the last hour.

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#### PARLIAMENTARY NEWS.

##### TREATMENT OF INEBRIATES IN SCOTLAND.—*April 11th.*

The LORD ADVOCATE, replying to a question by Sir John Leng, said that the local authorities in Scotland have been duly informed by the Secretary for Scotland as to the regulations formulated by him for the use of certified inebriate reformatories, but that as yet he had not received any applications for the appointment of such a reformatory. Her Majesty's Government proposed to defer the expenditure required for the establishment in Scotland of a State inebriate reformatory until experience has been had of the operation of the new legislation and the permanent demand it is likely that such an institution will have to meet.

##### INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES.—*April 20th.*

Mr. PICKERSGILL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many inebriate reformatories had been certified under the Inebriates Act, 1898, and how many of these had been established by county councils and borough councils respectively; whether any inebriate reformatory had yet been certified for men; whether several cases had occurred in which men who had been ordered by courts to be detained under the Act had to be discharged because there was no institution to receive them, and if so, what steps he proposed to take in order to prevent similar miscarriages in future; and whether any State inebriate reformatory had yet been established, and if not, what temporary arrangements, if any, had been made for the reception of persons committed under Section 1 of the Act.

Sir M. WHITE-RIDLEY.—Three inebriate reformatories have been certified. No local authority has yet established a reformatory, but several are to my knowledge actively considering the question, which, I need scarcely point out, is not one that can be settled in a day. There is as yet no certified reformatory for men; but though I am officially aware of one case such as the hon. member mentions in the third paragraph of his question, and though there are probably a few others, I do not think I am called upon to take any steps. I am confident that magistrates will not, as a rule, commit persons under the Act until they know that provision exists for their reception into a reformatory. No State inebriate reformatory has been established. All the institutions already certified are, with one small exception, willing to receive persons committed under Section 1 of the Act.

IMBECILE CHILDREN.—*April 24th.*

Sir JOHN GORST, in answer to Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, said that the Government intended to bring in a Bill to deal with the recommendations respecting feeble-minded and defective children contained in the report of the Departmental Committee.

## THE INEBRIATES ACTS.

Mr. HOBHOUSE asked the Secretary for State for the Home Department if he was aware that owing to there being at present no State or certified inebriate reformatory having accommodation for males, the Inebriates Act of last year is almost a dead letter, and what steps he proposed to take or recommend the local authorities to take to enable the Act to be put in force?

Sir M. WHITE-RIDLEY. — I cannot altogether agree with the suggestion in the first paragraph of the question. At the same time I should be very glad to see local authorities coming forward more readily, and assisting the operation of the Act, particularly as regards males, by either establishing reformatories themselves alone, or in combination, or by promising grants or contributions to private persons or associations who are willing to erect reformatories. As I have already stated, I do not at present feel justified in setting up a State reformatory, but I have secured substantial Government contributions for persons committed to certified reformatories. It is to these reformatories that in any case the largest number of committals would be made, and it is upon them that the effectiveness of the Act must mainly depend. I may add that I am collecting information from the police authorities throughout the country as to the number of persons within their districts apparently qualified for committal under Section 2 of the Act. When this information is complete, I propose in proper cases to draw the special attention of the local authorities to their responsibility in the matter.

Mr. HOBHOUSE.—Does my right hon. friend admit that at present there is no accommodation for males in any certified reformatory?

Sir M. WHITE-RIDLEY. — Yes, that is, of course, true. One or two of the arrangements which I had hoped would come into effect have broken down.

THE CASE OF MARY ANSELL.—*July 17th.*

Mr. DALZIEL asked, in the case of Mary Ansell, if consideration was given to the facts that her two sisters are insane, that all her mother's sisters died in asylums, that Dr. Forbes Winslow had pronounced his emphatic opinion that the prisoner was not responsible for her action, that no evidence on the question of insanity was produced at the trial, and whether he had objection to the publication of the report of the two experts appointed to inquire into the case.

Sir M. W. RIDLEY.—Following the course which has always been adopted by my predecessors, I must decline to lay before the House a report made for the purpose of assisting me in giving advice to Her Majesty, for which I alone am responsible. I may, however, state that all the circumstances of the case, including the family history of the convict, were most anxiously considered by me, as well as by all those who assisted me. The opinion of Dr. Forbes Winslow, who was, however, not consulted by me, was also before me, and was fully considered.

*July 18th.*

Mr. DALZIEL asked the Home Secretary whether his attention had been called to the foreman of the jury in the case of Mary Ansell having stated that, had the evidence in regard to the prisoner's insanity been put before the jury, his opinion was that they would have been unanimous in recommending a commutation of the death sentence; and whether he could postpone the execution pending an independent inquiry into the prisoner's sanity.

Sir M. W. RIDLEY.—I am satisfied, as the result of very full inquiry, and after consultation with the judge, that if the question of insanity had been raised at the trial, there is no evidence to that effect which could properly have affected the verdict of the jury. The answer to the last paragraph must be in the negative. It is my duty to protest against the insinuation which appears to be conveyed by the word "independent" in this paragraph.

Mr. DALZIEL.—I wish to be allowed to explain that the word "independent" means officers not retained by the Home Office. I also ask whether the attention

of the right hon. gentleman has been called to the fact that the prison chaplain has expressed his difficulty in deciding, and has, in fact, insinuated that in his opinion the girl does not understand the gravity of her crime.

Sir M. W. RIDLEY.—Every single point which has been alluded to by the hon. member has been fully within my knowledge during the last week, and I have given each of them my best consideration.

**MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF CONVICTS SENTENCED TO DEATH.—July 22nd.**

Sir M. WHITE-RIDLEY, replying to Mr. Yoxall, said the discretion of the medical men whose opinion was obtained by the Secretary of State from time to time in regard to the mental condition of convicts was not restricted in any way by a form of questions. In the case of an inquiry into the mental condition of a convict under sentence of death, he proceeded in accordance with Section 2 of the Criminal Lunatics Act, 1894. Any medical man forming an opinion on a question of this kind must take into account the facts of the convict's family history, and all available evidence on this point was placed before the medical man in charge of the inquiry. They were expected to report on all the aspects of the case, including the past history of the convict, as well as his state of mind at the time the crime was committed and at the time of the trial.

**THE INEBRIATES ACT (1898) AMENDMENT BILL.—July 26th.**

Mr. CALDWELL said that the Act of last year applied not only to England but also to Scotland and Ireland, but this amending Bill related to England only. Why should there not be a corresponding amendment applicable to Scotland and Ireland?

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS said that Ireland and Scotland were not affected in the same manner, and, therefore, the bill did not prejudice them.

Mr. PICKERSGILL gave notice of amendment, viz. "That this House declines to proceed with the Bill until the means have been provided for putting into operation the Inebriates Act, 1898." The object of Mr. Pickersgill was to draw attention to the unsatisfactory state of things, in which magistrates find it impossible to exercise their powers under the Act.

The Inebriates Act (1898) Amendment Bill (*March 4th*) is designed to remedy omissions in last year's Act. It was necessary to bring in this measure to provide that the expenses of prosecutions under Section 2 should be payable as in cases of felony. This is the object of the first clause; the second gives power to deal summarily with breaches of the regulations made by the Secretary of State with respect to inebriate reformatories. The Home Secretary has promised to consider the appointment of a woman inspector, should it become necessary, in addition to the medical man who has already been appointed.

**THE TREATMENT OF CRIMINAL LUNATICS.—August 7th.**

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Home Secretary if he had yet had an opportunity of considering the representations of the Lunacy Commissioners with regard to the increasing numbers of criminal lunatics in county and borough asylums, and to the hardship which the practice inflicts upon the ordinary patients, and the indiscipline and danger which it involves; whether Broadmoor was fully occupied; and whether further accommodation could be furnished, so as to enable criminal lunatics to be treated elsewhere than in ordinary asylums.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE-RIDLEY.—The question of providing additional accommodation for criminal lunatics is engaging my serious attention, and inquiries are now in progress with a view to obtaining a site for the building of a new criminal lunatic asylum. I propose in the course of the autumn to make the necessary application to the Treasury. The male accommodation at Broadmoor is fully occupied, but there are still vacancies for females at that establishment. It is intended that accommodation in the new asylum shall be provided both for male convicts becoming insane as well as the other more serious cases of criminal lunatics, but of course it will in no case be possible to relieve altogether county and borough asylums from their statutory obligation to receive criminal lunatics.