

Committee of Public Asylums who had come under his observation, and deprecated the supposition that they would countenance or permit cruelties on the part of attendants.

Dr. RHYS WILLIAMS said that he, to a great degree, concurred with Dr. Tuke. He had never known an instance of ribs being broken in the hospital at Bethlehem, nor had he found any such cases in the records. It might be that Dr. Sankey would think that this rather supported his theory, as general paralysis was excluded from Bethlehem to a great extent. However, he (Dr. Williams) should like to have further proof of the fragility of bone alleged to exist in such cases.

Dr. SANKEY replied there was not time to review this discussion as he should wish. With regard to Dr. Tuke's remarks, he would say at once that he had no intention of answering newspaper remarks, or of noticing them. His paper was simply what it purported to be, a statement of facts tending to account for what was otherwise an almost inexplicable series of accidents.

Dr. SABBEN's paper, printed at page 52, was then taken as read, and after a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Dr. Lockhart Robertson, and to the President and Fellows of the Medico Chirurgical Association, the meeting adjourned to the last Thursday in April.

THE SCOTCH LUNACY BOARD.

The subjoined correspondence has been published in the *Scotsman*:—

“Rossie Priory, Incheure, January 12th, 1870.

“MY DEAR CAMPERDOWN,—I am very glad to hear that you have been appointed to inquire into these Scotch Boards.

“I am able to give you the history of the Lunacy Board, as I endeavoured, but in vain, to stop the Board being made *permanent*.

“Mr. E. Ellice some years since brought under the notice of Parliament, in a very forcible manner, the state of the lunatics in Scotland, and the want of proper provision for their detention and maintenance. A Royal Commission was appointed, and with the aid of the county police and Poor Law Board, a report was framed and presented to Parliament, and a Bill founded thereon passed, appointing the Commissioners as a Board to exist for *five years* to carry out its provisions. Before the expiry of this time an attempt was made more than once to make the Board *permanent*. I succeeded in stopping it for one session at least, representing to Mr. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, the absurdity and extravagance of maintaining such a Board merely to superintend a few asylums and those pauper lunatics allowed to be at large, at a cost (as the return showed) of from £4,000 to £5,000 per annum.

“Sir George Grey, then at the Home Office, promised me not to fill up the vacant offices of Sub-Commissioners. Certain Edinburgh influences, however, prevailed. Situations must be found for poor relations. The offices were filled up, and the Commissioners succeeded in getting their appointments made permanent.

“If you examine Sir John M'Neill, he will tell you that the Poor Law Board could do all the work with a small addition to their staff—indeed, the Lunacy Board cannot make work for themselves, even by their members travelling about ordering a pair of shoes here and under garments there, for some few pauper lunatics not in the Poorhouses, but *under the charge of the local parochial board*.

“You will be told that the members of the Lunacy Board have a vested interest. But why should there be any difference between ‘big fish’ and ‘small fry’—the Commissioners or Admiralty clerks? The former have had a rich harvest for some years for doing nothing; and there would no injustice in naming a period at which the Board of Lunacy should cease and determine.

"You will, I have no doubt, find other cases, such as the Northern Lights and Fishery, and other boards, useless or requiring reform, but none worse than the Lunacy Board.

"Wishing you every success in your labours, I remain yours faithfully,
"KINNAIRD."

"The Earl of Camperdown."

"General Board of Lunacy,
"Edinburgh, January 26, 1870.

"MY LORD,—My attention has been directed to two letters addressed by your Lordship to the Earl of Camperdown, and, at your request, published in the *Scotsman* of the 24th. In those letters your Lordship makes certain statements in regard to the manner in which the officials of this Board have been appointed, and in which they have discharged their duties, that are unfounded and offensive. My object, however, in writing to you is not to enter on any controversial correspondence, but simply to express my opinion, in the most unmistakable terms, that this attempt on the part of your Lordship to sway the judgment and prejudice the minds of a Commission actually engaged in a delicate and important inquiry, would have been unfair and unjust in any man, but is especially reprehensible in one who shows himself to be so lamentably and profoundly ignorant of the matters on which he writes.

"Not satisfied, however, with the endeavour to affect the decision of the Commissioners, your Lordship has sought, by the publication of your letters, to influence and pervert public opinion—a step which appears to me to be even more censurable and unjustifiable.

"Had your Lordship chosen to appear before the Commissioners, your evidence would have been received and treated with all the consideration due to it; and no one would have had a right to complain. But I cannot avoid characterising the one-sided course which you have seen fit to adopt as an insult to Lord Camperdown, an impertinence to the late Lord Advocate, and as a calumny on the Board over which I have the honour to preside. I am obliged by your Lordship's example to send a copy of this letter to the *Scotsman*.

"I remain, your obedient servant,
"J. DON WAUCHOPE."

"To the Lord Kinnaird, &c."

Edinburgh, January 26, 1870.

SIR,—I shall feel obliged by your inserting the enclosed letter to the Lord Justice-Clerk.

I am, &c.,
ARTHUR MITCHELL.

"Trinity, Edinburgh, January 25, 1870.

"MY LORD,—In consequence of my absence from town, I did not till late in the evening see the remarkable letter from Lord Kinnaird which appeared in the *Scotsman* of yesterday.

"That letter is full of inaccuracies, and does me and my colleagues, as well as your Lordship, great injustice.

"Till I read it I was not aware that I had received my appointment, as the letter asserts, because I was one of your Lordship's '*poor relations*.' I am the '*poor relation*' of no man, and Lord Kinnaird has done me a wrong in making a statement so offensive and so entirely without foundation. No one, indeed, has ever at any time held an appointment in connection with the Lunacy Board

who had the honour of being related to you in the most distant degree; and neither kinship, nor political creed, nor any other creed, so far as I know, has influenced any of the appointments.

"I imagined till now that I had been chosen because I was believed to possess the qualifications which fitted me for the position. I imagined, too, that for the last twelve years I had been a hard worker—taking pleasure in my work, and having its success at heart. But I find from Lord Kinnaird that I have been mistaken, and that all these years I have been simply making 'a rich harvest for doing nothing.'

"This grave and most unjust charge applies to the Commissioners and to my colleague as well as to myself, and could not possibly have been made by Lord Kinnaird if he had possessed fuller and better information than his letter shows him to have had.

"In the most literal sense I have devoted my whole time to the discharge of my duties, and have done everything in my power to render the condition of the insane poor in Scotland satisfactory. I am proud of the public position I have occupied, and of the humane work in which I have been engaged. I have never treated lightly the important trust reposed on me, but, on the contrary, have felt its responsibilities. I say nothing here of myself that is not equally true of my colleague Dr. Paterson. We may not have done all the good we aimed at, or hoped to do, but this most certainly was not because we did not try, or were the *do-nothings* which both commissioners and deputy commissioners are now sweepingly declared to have been.

"The condition of the insane in Scotland thirteen years ago was a disgrace to civilisation. If we—that is, the Board and its officers—have no other reward for our work, we have it at least in the great change for the better which has taken place, and which is everywhere seen and everywhere acknowledged. In spite of many difficulties and hindrances, we have attained a very considerable and satisfactory success; and Scotland may now safely boast of the thoroughness of the care bestowed on her insane poor. We owe not a little to the fact that we have the best Lunacy Law in Europe—the most comprehensive and the most benevolent. It does not content itself with providing, as is often done, for the special care of some, neglecting others with equal claims, but its humane provisions extend to the whole of the insane poor wherever they are placed. In this respect it has no parallel, and in the different countries of the Continent and the colonies all proposed changes in the laws relating to lunacy are in the direction of those provisions which are characteristics of the Scotch law.

"Yet to one of these provisions—the care and supervision given to the insane who are not in asylums—Lord Kinnaird refers in a sneering manner, which is most unfair. No part of the work of the Scotch Board has tended more to ameliorate the condition of the insane, and to remove what was the disgrace of the country, than that which relates to those of them who are not in establishments. The allusion to it, however, in Lord Kinnaird's letter, gives no correct indication of its nature, and tends only to mislead. But even if it were correct, it would surely be wrong to speak lightly as he does of the benefit of supplying clothes to a lunatic whose clothing is insufficient. If Lord Kinnaird will himself try what is meant by insufficient clothing, and will shiver through a January in rags, I feel quite satisfied that he will indorse the opinions I and my colleague have often expressed as to the great importance of comfortable and warm clothing to the insane, who are generally of feeble vitality, and less able than the sane are to resist the depressing influences of cold. It is not, however, the bodily health only, but the mental state also, of the insane which is affected by clothing. And this is a point which concerns the ratepayer, for many a lunatic is inoffensive and good-natured, and can be cheaply kept at home, when he is warmly clothed, has a comfortable bed, and plenty of food, who becomes ill-natured, unmanageable, and dangerous, and must be sent to an asylum, if he is insufficiently clothed, rises unrefreshed from a comfortless bed, and has to feel the pinchings of hunger.

"In these remarks no reflection is cast on parochial boards and inspectors of poor, whom, I have pleasure in saying, we find always ready to co-operate with.

us, and whose duties in general are admirably performed. It must be remembered, however, that before the institution of the Board of Lunacy it was not understood as it now is—mainly in consequence of these visitations—how much can be done for the amelioration of the condition of the insane poor, and for securing their easy management, by attention to matters which Lord Kinnaird appears to regard as trifles.

“My reason and my excuse for writing to your Lordship is the desire to let you know how I personally feel under the charges brought against us by Lord Kinnaird. I have the authority of my colleague, Dr. Paterson, to state that he concurs in every word of this letter, and feels entirely as I do in reference to these unfounded and injurious charges.

“It is unnecessary for me to say anything to you in defence of my superiors in office, who have been attacked in this letter as much as the deputy-commissioners have been. I am perfectly certain that our able and indefatigable, but unpaid, chairman, and the other commissioners, paid and unpaid, may challenge comparison as public officials with any in the empire. Our annual reports, which are written by Sir James Coxe, are universally admitted to be documents of the highest value, which have advanced the knowledge of lunacy, and have influenced opinion as to the care and treatment of the insane, both at home and abroad.

“With great respect, I am, my Lord, your faithful and obedient servant,

ARTHUR MITCHELL.

Deputy-Commissioner in Lunacy.

“To the Right Hon. the Lord Justice Clerk.”

DR. CONOLLY.*

THIS book contains some account of the life of a man to whom it was given to accomplish a great work of wisdom and benevolence, and to see the fruits of his labours. A “long and pleasant friendship with Conolly,” and a “natural desire to do justice to his memory,” have induced Sir James Clarke to place on record the chief incidents of his public career; but in this record the history of the individual is rendered subordinate to that of the reforms which he brought about. A few brief pages tell all that is told of his parentage, of his birth-place, of his early years, and of his practice as a physician at Chichester, Stratford-upon-Avon, London, and Warwick. The narrative may almost be said to commence with his appointment as Resident Physician to the Lunatic Asylum at Hanwell, and thenceforward we obtain only glimpses of Conolly as a man. We have little or nothing of his domestic life; his marriage is barely mentioned; the cause and manner of his death are told in half-a dozen lines. We have, it is true, an occasional tribute to the unfailing kindness and the exquisite urbanity that charmed all who came into contact with him, and that went so far to account for his great personal influence over the insane. We have a few—too few—of his unstudied compositions in the shape of familiar letters—letters that display character and modes of thought; letters of the kind that confer value upon so many biographies, and that, in the future, it will be so little the custom to write. But the book is devoted in the main to the history of the great change that he wrought at Hanwell, and of the still greater change that he wrought indirectly, both in the medical profession and in the public, with regard not only to the treatment, but to the estimation of insanity. Of this change there could be no better evidence than the fact that all Europe has lately been moved to indignation by the discovery of an insane nun, who had been for years immured in dirt and darkness in the cell of a convent at Cracow. In 1839, when Conolly went to Hanwell, such a discovery would have excited no remark. At that time, and

* “A Memoir of John Conolly, M.D., D.C.L.; comprising a sketch of the treatment of the Insane in Europe and America.” By Sir James Clark, Bart., K.C.B., M.D., F.R.S., Physician in Ordinary to the Queen. London: Murray, 1869.