

institution on its continued activity under the perennial direction of the veteran Dr. Stearns, whose revered personality is well known to many of us on this side of the Atlantic. These acts of generosity and goodwill towards the hospitals for the insane in America are by no means rare, and we could wish that some of our philanthropists were similarly moved to deeds of beneficence for the mentally afflicted at their doors.

THE MOUNT LEBANON ASYLUM.

This new institution has lately been opened, chiefly owing to the exertions of Mr. Theophilus Walmeir, who has for long served as a missionary in Syria. It consists of a central block with two pavilions, accommodating twenty patients of each sex. Seventeen patients are now resident. Dr. Wolff, lately of the Munsterengen Asylum, Switzerland, is the medical superintendent of this, the first organised institution for the insane in Syria. As funds will be required from Europe to maintain it for some time to come, our readers will note that Dr. Percy Smith is the chairman of the London Committee, and kindly lend their aid in developing a most deserving charity.

ORGANISATION OF PRIVATE ASYLUMS IN THE UNITED STATES.

The *Lancet* states that the Association for the Study and Cure of Inebriates has held a meeting for this purpose. It was pointed out that nearly a hundred asylums exist in the New England and Middle States for the treatment of mental and inebriate cases, that they are without organisation, State or local control, and managed by unknown persons, one half of them being charlatan institutions. We are well aware that grave suspicions have been entertained in reference to these houses, and rejoice to hear that a serious effort is to be made to alter existing circumstances.

THE ASYLUM WORKERS' ASSOCIATION.

This Association has already attained a wonderful success, not only in its numerical strength, but also in having secured a strong and influential list of office-bearers. The annual report states that the roll of members increased from 2890 to 3006 in the course of last year, 1010 new members having been elected. Many asylums not previously represented in connection with the Association have been added to the roll, and the financial statement shows that the ordinary receipts have been considerably in advance of those of the previous year. Starting with a credit balance of £137, the year ended with £147 to the good, and this after all expenses in connection with the *Asylum News*, the *Home of Rest*, etc. The Committee entered into details as to what was done to promote the interests of asylum workers, and specially congratulate the Association on the continued services of Sir James Crichton-Browne as President, and Dr. Shuttleworth as Secretary.

At the annual meeting the President delivered an eloquent address, which we need not reproduce here, as it is accessible in the columns of the *Asylum News*, which should find its way into every institution for the cure and treatment of the insane.

We congratulate the Association on its rapid progress, and the excellent work accomplished on behalf of all asylum workers, for in benefiting the workers it must in the end benefit the insane. In the words of the President, the Association "is deserving of the support of all who wish well to the mentally afflicted, and who desire to ameliorate the lot of those who immediately minister to them."

GENERAL HOSPITALS AND MENTAL DISEASES.

Out-patients suffering from mental disorders have been for long treated at St. Thomas's Hospital and elsewhere. The results of experience have shown that good work has been done in relieving many sufferers, and in avoiding the necessity for asylum care in not a few cases. It is, indeed, strange that so many of our general hospitals lag behind in this matter. The quarterly Court of Governors of the Newcastle Infirmary has decided to institute such a department, as reported by the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* of November 1st. Dr. G. H. Hume, in

moving the resolution at the meeting, pleaded for the fundamental ideas of prevention and cure, and it has been decided that a physician, qualified as the rules require, and occupying an appointment in a public asylum in Northumberland or Durham, should attend at the infirmary one day in each week and prescribe for the out-patients placed under his care. Of course there were the usual objections, and even a notice of motion to rescind part of the resolutions; but it is to be hoped that the practical good sense which has been so far successful will carry the day at the next meeting, and in the end prove the wisdom and utility of the course adopted.

In several districts of the State of New York reception buildings have been provided in connection with general hospitals. The *Albany Medical Annals*, referring to the matter, says:—"It is anticipated that cases of acute delirium, alcoholic or otherwise, may be by these means protected from dangerous delay and neglect, that doubtful cases may be observed during consideration of the proper disposition to be made, and that commitments may be carefully and judiciously considered, to the advantage both of the patient and the State institution to which he may be sent."

THE LONDON INEBRIATE REFORMATORY.

The inebriate reformatory for females established by the London County Council at Farmfield, near Horley, has been opened for the reception of inmates. Two mansions on an estate of 300 acres have been modified for the purpose in view, and Mrs. Matthias has been appointed superintendent. The institution will be watched with great interest, and as it is stated by Dr. Collins that the accommodation at disposal is already nearly fully occupied, we shall soon be in possession of information as to methods and results.

EPILEPTIC COLONY NEAR MANCHESTER.

The David Lewis trustees have decided to purchase an estate at Warford, and to erect extensive buildings for the care of epileptics there. At least £50,000 are to be expended on the various houses of the proposed institution, which will be for private cases only.

HYPNOTISM IN EXCELSIS.

The *Daily Mail* of the 24th September gives a long account of Dr. Forbes Winslow's use of hypnotism in the British Hospital for Mental Disorders and Brain Diseases. The writer was astonished. He concluded that what he witnessed was more wonderful than mere curative hypnotism, or else mere clowning. A case of obsession was not hypnotised at all, but Dr. Winslow professed to hypnotise May, his hired "medium," and to assure him that he had the patient's feelings. Unfortunately the patient could not assent to the proposition that transference had taken place and, in spite of the application of magnets, left the hospital with her mental confusion unabated.

Dr. Forbes Winslow thereafter wrote to the *Lancet* explaining that May is an electrical engineer, married, with two children, aged 32 years. He finds that mental concentration is difficult to obtain in nervous cases, and that suggestion must therefore be made indirectly through a transference medium. That is why Mr. J. May, qualified as above indicated, is employed to attend every week at the hospital. Dr. Winslow has no doubt that there were cases of transference shown among the hypnotic patients exhibited at the Paris Congress, and concludes by challenging any one to wake his medium by any fair means. The *Daily Mail* man indicates that the process is both rapid and facile. Perhaps it would be better to rouse our less expert hypnotists to a sense of their inferiority, before proceeding to wake Mr. J. May in the performance of his weekly duties amongst mental disorders and brain diseases.