

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHURCH MINISTRATIONS IN PUBLIC ASYLUMS.

To the Editor of the Journal of Mental Science.

SIR,

I venture, with your permission, to suggest that a portion of the space devoted to correspondents in the *Journal of Mental Science* should be available for the interchange of communications by Asylum Chaplains on matters relating to their special duties.

It will probably be conceded that the mode in which their functions are discharged, exercises a not unimportant influence on both the household and the patients in Asylums. It must, therefore, be desirable that the office of Chaplains in this department of ministerial labour should be fulfilled in the manner most likely to meet the somewhat exceptional wants of those among whom they work.

Their ministrations, in order to be adapted to the circumstances under which they are exercised, must necessarily vary in certain particulars from ordinary clerical work. Even as regards the household and staff, considerations which do not ordinarily apply elsewhere, have to be taken into account, if spiritual services are to be efficiently rendered. *A fortiori* is this the case with respect to those patients who are capable of profiting in various degrees by spiritual ministrations. Questions must frequently arise in a Chaplain's mind respecting such subjects, for instance, as the admission of patients to the Communion—the special treatment of sermons—the formation and management of classes or choirs—clerical visitations of the sick, &c.

And isolated as clergymen are in this department of work, having seldom an opportunity of conference with their brethren of like occupation, who would be able to appreciate their difficulties, and perhaps to suggest a solution, they are cast upon their own unaided resources, and are deprived of the advantages which they might derive from acquaintance with the results of the experiences of their brethren.

Some time ago I attempted to point out in a little pamphlet, on the *Work and Position of Chaplains in Public Institutions*, that Asylum Chaplains and others in kindred spheres of duty, would receive mutual encouragement and assistance if some convenient channel of communication could be opened by which they might confer with each other on subjects of common interest. And as the intelligent and discriminating performance of their duties may fairly, I presume, be reckoned a contribution to the cause of mental science, it may not, perhaps, be unreasonable to request that a space should be offered in the "Journal" for the reception of letters from Chaplains who have some communication to make of sufficient importance to warrant insertion and to elicit discussion. Nor, I venture to think, should the correspondence in this department be exclusively *ad clerum*. No doubt Chaplains might often be benefitted by the friendly counsels and suggestions of their lay colleagues. Observations, or even strictures on their work, could be made sometimes most suitably, and with wider application in the correspondents' column. Many a useful hint might thus be acceptably imparted. And our lay fellow-labourers, by becoming better acquainted with our occasional difficulties, might be more readily able to alleviate them.

I will conclude by making, with all respect, a suggestion for the consideration of my clerical brethren similarly employed. It is that we should make our annual reports as practical and as much in detail as possible, and that some means should be devised for collecting together these yearly *resumés* of our special labours. We could hardly fail to obtain benefit from each other's experience, and to find encouragement and guidance in our work. There would probably be no objection to our forwarding a copy of our MS. reports (after acceptance by our committees), to some printer—say that of your Journal—for the purpose of the private circulation of the collective copies.

May I be allowed to observe that by inviting in the manner proposed communications of the kind referred to, the interest already felt in your Journal might be extended, and its circulation increased?

With apologies for thus troubling you,

I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

HENRY HAWKINS,

Chaplain of the Middlesex County Asylum, Colney Hatch.

Appointments.

LOLD CHANCELLOR'S VISITOR IN LUNACY.

The appointment of DR. LOCKHART ROBERTSON as Lord Chancellor's Visitor in Lunacy will be received with general satisfaction. Dr. Robertson is one of the leading authorities in this country on mental science, and is in every respect well fitted for the duties of a Visitor in Lunacy.—*British Medical Journal*, January 22.

AMSDEN, GEORGE, M.B., C.M. Edin., L.R.C.P. Lond., M.R.C.S. Eng.—Assistant Medical Officer to the Essex County Lunatic Asylum, Brentwood.

ANDERSON, A. D., M.D., has been appointed, by the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, a Director of the Royal Lunatic Asylum at Gartnavel, Glasgow.

FREKE, H., M.D., has been appointed Visiting Physician to St. Patrick's Hospital for Lunatics, Dublin, vice C. P. Croker, M.D., deceased.

GILLAND, R. B., M.D., M.R.C.S., Assistant-Physician at the Essex Lunatic Asylum, Brentwood, has been appointed Medical Superintendent of the new Lunatic Asylum, at Cholsey, for the County of Berks.

HAIGH, H. W., L.R.C.P. Ed., M.R.C.S.E., has been appointed Assistant Physician to the Royal Edinburgh Asylum for the Insane.

HGBLEY, S. H., M.R.C.S.E., has been appointed Junior Medical Assistant at the Gloucestershire Lunatic Asylum, Gloucester, vice S. F. Bagnall, L.R.C.P., appointed Senior.

MAUDSLEY, HENRY, M.D. Lond., F.R.C.P., appointed Professor of Medical Jurisprudence in University College, London, and elected an Honorary Member of the Society for the Promotion of Psychiatry and Forensic Psychology of Vienna.

TAYLOR, W. B., M.R.C.S.E., has been appointed Assistant Medical Officer at the Camberwell House Lunatic Asylum.

WILLIAMS, S. W. DUCKWORTH, M.D. St. And., L.R.C.P., has been appointed Medical Superintendent of the Sussex Lunatic Asylum, Haywards Heath.

OBITUARY.

SIR WILLIAM CHARLES HOOD, M.D., KNIGHT.

We regret to announce the death of Sir William Hood, Lord Chancellor's Visitor of Chancery Lunatics. Sir William commenced his career as Superintendent of the male department at Colney Hatch Asylum, and was afterwards appointed Physician to the Bethlehem Royal Hospital, in which capacity he carried out many excellent and necessary reforms. He resigned this position, being presented with the appointment of Lord Chancellor's Visitor of Chancery Lunatics. He was elected Treasurer of Bethlehem Hospital about a year ago, and immediately afterwards was created a Knight. He was author of several works—"Statistics of Insanity," "Future Provision of Criminal Lunatics," and other writings. His death will be severely felt by a large circle of relatives and friends.—*British Medical Journal*, January 15.

A Meeting of the Members of the Medico-Psychological Association resident in the North of England and Scotland will be held in the Hall of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow, on the 27th April prox. It is requested that notice be sent of papers to the Hon. Secretary, Dr. J. Batty Tuke, Cupar, Fife, on or before the 10th April.