

PARLIAMENTARY NEWS.

February 9th, 1922: Asylum administration.—Mr. T. THOMSON asked whether, in view of difficulties in securing some of the evidence necessary to enable the Departmental Committee of the Ministry of Health to investigate completely charges made as to the treatment of asylum patients, Sir Alfred Mond would reconsider the desirability of recommending the appointment of a Royal Commission with full powers both of investigation into the present system and a recommendation as to the future treatment of all types of mental disorder. —Capt. LOSEBY asked a question on the same subject.—Sir A. MOND, in a written answer, said that the question of the appointment of a Royal Commission was under due consideration. It would, however, necessarily involve a long delay before any practicable steps could be taken, and would postpone reforms which by general agreement he hoped might be introduced at an early date. In view of the necessity for an expeditious investigation into the allegations made by Dr. Lomax he had appointed a Departmental Committee. He was informed that neither of the medical members was, nor had been, associated with any asylum maintained out of public funds, nor was it correct to say that the chairman was in any sense a representative of the system criticised. He feared that it was impossible for him to obtain the services of any expert who had not already shown interest in Dr. Lomax's criticisms. He regretted that Dr. Lomax was not prepared to substantiate before the Committee the charges he had publicly made, and that the National Asylum Workers' Union had refused to defend their members against Dr. Lomax's charges; but he could not admit that either Dr. Lomax or they were entitled to dictate the composition of any tribunal or inquiry on the issues raised, for the appointment of which the Minister was solely responsible.

February 15th, 1922: The asylums inquiry.—Capt. LOSEBY and Mr. MILLS asked further questions of Sir A. Mond in regard to the departmental inquiry into lunatic asylum administration.—The MINISTER repeated that in his opinion the tribunal appointed to investigate the allegations made by Dr. Lomax was quite impartial, and that it was now for the latter to substantiate his charges or to withdraw them. In reference to the refusal of the Asylum Worker's Union to be represented at the inquiry, Sir A. Mond said that his information was that they refused because they wanted to have a representative on the Committee. Considering that they were the people who were mainly attacked by Dr. Lomax, it obviously would not be proper to put them on the Committee.

February 16th, 1922: Mental deficiency.—Mr. LESLIE SCOTT asked whether the Minister of Health had been able, in consultation with the Board of Control and the Treasury, to reconsider the position created by the circular of the Board of Control of August last in relation to the financial limitation of local authorities in dealing with urgent cases of mental deficiency. He asked whether the circular would not be withdrawn, as its operation would prevent large numbers of cases being dealt with under the Act, with results to the rates and taxes that would be far more expensive.—Sir A. Mond said that in view of the economy which it should be possible to secure on the mental deficiency service generally, he hoped that local authorities could now make such provision as was essential to enable new urgent cases to be dealt with, and he was causing the Board of Control to issue a circular accordingly.

February 23rd, 1922: Asylum administration inquiry.—On further question by Mr. R. RICHARDSON, as to the refusal of the National Asylum Workers' Union to submit evidence before the Committee on Asylum Administration, Sir A. MOND said that in the first instance the Union made a verbal request for representation on the Committee. When he refused this the Union declined to give evidence, and sought to justify its action on the ground that representatives of the Medico-Psychological Association predominated on the Committee.

EDUCATIONAL NOTES.

London County Council: The Maudsley Hospital.—Lectures and practical courses of instruction for a Diploma in Psychological Medicine, fourth course, 1922:

Part II.—Six Lectures on the Pathology of Mental Diseases, including Brain Syphilis, its Symptomatology and Treatment. By Sir Frederick Mott, K.B.E.,