

(2) Through its Standing Committee it has done, and is still doing, most valuable work. The Parliamentary Committee watches all new legislation. The Educational Committee successfully stimulated University Authorities to establish special diplomas in Psychological Medicine. It controls the Examinations for the Nursing Certificate, which has been of such striking value in improving the training and status of mental nurses.

(3) Special Committees are frequently set apart to initiate new developments, and the Association has a successful record of work carried out in this way.

(4) The *Journal of Mental Science* takes a high place in the literature of Psychological Medicine. Under new conditions it will again grow in size and importance. Besides publishing original articles it contains an excellent abstract of current literature. No one interested in the subject can afford to ignore the *Journal of Mental Science*, whilst its pages have not rarely first brought to the notice of the public a new worker in psychiatry who subsequently has become distinguished.

But we believe the chief value of the Association lies in the facilities it provides for the interchange of ideas and the discussion of difficulties and problems. Further, there is a manifest gain from the personal intercourse at the meetings of members united by a common bond of interest. The Association is a democratic body, innovations calculated to enhance its usefulness are welcomed, and in the new order of things that has commenced the signatories to this letter believe that the members generally will gladly support new developments likely to advance the objects of the Association.

Yours very truly,

(Signed)

BEDFORD PIERCE, *President.*

JAMES CHAMBERS, *Hon. Treasurer.*

REGINALD WORTH, *Hon. Secretary.*

*P.S.*—Members are elected at the General and Branch Meetings of the Association. Forms of application for membership can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Dr. R. Worth, Springfield Mental Hospital, Tooting, London, S.W. 17, and should be returned to him a month before the meeting at which election is desired, so that the names may appear in the Agenda.

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#### MINISTRY OF HEALTH: FIRST ANNUAL REPORT (1919-20).

##### LUNACY AND MENTAL DEFICIENCY (TRANSFER OF POWER ORDER), 1920.<sup>(1)</sup>

It was always intended that the Ministry of Health should become the Department responsible for the care and treatment of lunatics, but the Home Secretary's powers could not be transferred in their entirety, as they included powers in relation to criminal lunatics which could not be dissociated from the general administration of criminal law. Section 3 (2) (b) of the Ministry of Health Act, 1919, accordingly provided for the transfer by Order in Council to the Ministry of all or any of the powers and duties of the Home Secretary under the enactments relating to lunacy and mental deficiency. A draft Order in Council was prepared in consultation with the Home Office and laid on the table of both Houses in the autumn of 1919. But certain minor amendments proved to be necessary, and a fresh Order had to be laid at the beginning of the present Session, with the result that the actual transfer of powers did not take effect until May 17th, 1920. This Order in Council marks an important step in the process of centralising all health administration in a single department, and the Minister of Health is now responsible to Parliament for the administration of the Board of Control. No change is made in the constitution or procedure of the Board, but the effect of the Order is to allow of the treatment of mental diseases being co-ordinated more closely with the treatment of other forms of disease than would have been possible while the responsibility for the administration of the Lunacy and Mental Deficiency Acts rested with the Home Secretary.

<sup>(1)</sup> Statutory Rules and Orders, 1920, No. 809. [Price 1*d.* net.]