

by Section 11 of the Act and by the latter part of Section 10. Section 11 requires the resident medical superintendent or the visiting physician to certify that the person has either become of sound mind or has ceased to be dangerous, while the latter part of Section 10 enables relatives or friends under certain conditions to take the lunatic under their care and protection on entering into sufficient recognisances for his safe keeping. But the Court of Appeal has held that there is no absolute right conferred by this section, and that it remains optional with the governors of the asylum to so transfer the custody of the lunatic.

*Reformatories for Inebriates.*

Dr. Farquharson asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether it was his intention to introduce, during the present session, the bill for the establishment of reformatories for inebriates, mentioned in the Queen's Speech; and, if he did so, whether he would include in it arrangements for the reception of habitual offenders in labour settlements, as recommended in the Departmental Committee (1895) on Habitual Offenders, Vagrants, Beggars, Inebriates, and Juvenile Delinquents (Scotland), and the report from the Departmental Committee on Prisons (1895)?—Mr. Balfour: No, Sir, I do not think there is any probability of the Home Secretary being able to introduce such a bill during the present session.—Dr. Farquharson: If the right honourable gentleman cannot find time to introduce the bill in this House, can he follow the precedent of the Private Bill Legislation (Scotland) Bill, and introduce it in another place where there is plenty of leisure?—Mr. Balfour: I will consult the Home Secretary.

THE RICHMOND ASYLUM.

The following letter, published in *The Dublin Daily Express*, conveys the views of a layman on the state of affairs in regard to this institution:—

*To the Editor.*

Sir,—In a leading article in your issue of this day you suggest that possibly I take a pessimistic view when I say that the first section of the permanent buildings of the new asylum at Portrane will not be available until well into the next century: in other words, ten years after the Inspectors of Lunatics earnestly asked the Board of Control for additional lasting accommodation. I wish I could agree with you that my anticipation will be falsified by the result. Unfortunately, the history of the Board of Control in reference to the Richmond is a long, gloomy tale of delay and indifference. Permit me to give you the latest instance of their tardiness in response to what I might call the persistent clamours of the governors. On the 14th December last the architect of the Board of Control made a report on the temporary buildings at Portrane, in which he wrote: "Block No. 3 will be put in hand immediately after Christmas. This block will contain two wards, one for fifty chronic patients, and the other for thirty-five sick and infirm patients, with the necessary allowance of dormitory space per bed." In the ordinary course of business this block should have been finished early in last March, and this was the time the Board of Control fixed for its completion. In all reasonableness I ask what are your readers to think when I tell them that this shell of a refuge will not be ready for some months yet? Six months ago I ventured to suggest at a meeting of governors that the energy of the Board of Control would not be equal to the putting up this wooden structure in the time specified. One of the governors (Mr. J. Walker) on that occasion angrily assailed me for making such an assumption. What has Mr. Walker got to say now? I do not wish to be an alarmist, but to-day I have ascertained that the number of patients attacked with beri-beri has increased to over forty.

—Yours truly,

JOHN CLANCY.

Bellevue, Sutton, 19th July, 1897.