

## MEDICO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.—IRISH MEETING.

A quarterly meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association was held at the College of Physicians, Dublin, on November 18. There were present Dr. Duncan, Dr. Patton, Mr. W. Zachary Myles, Mr. J. Molony, and Mr. Conolly Norman.

Dr. PATTON having been voted into the chair, a letter was read from Dr. Maziere Courtenay, the Secretary, apologizing for his unavoidable absence, and requesting Mr. Norman to act for him.

The following gentlemen were elected members of the Association:—W. Rutherford, M.D., Visiting Physician Ballinasloe District Asylum; Thomas H. O'Shaughnessy, M.D., Assistant Medical Officer Ballinasloe District Asylum (both the above having been proposed by Dr. Maziere Courtenay and seconded by Dr. Fletcher); George P. Cope, L.R.Q.C.P.I., &c., Junior Assistant Medical Officer Richmond District Asylum (proposed by Mr. Conolly Norman and seconded by Mr. W. Z. Myles).

Mr. CONOLLY NORMAN read a short paper "On the sedative properties of aceto-phenone" (hypnone), which he had injected hypodermically in several cases to produce sleep. (See "Clinical Notes and Cases.")

Dr. DUNCAN asked whether the drug possessed any advantages over morphia used in a similar way?

Dr. PATTON inquired as to the chemical constitution of hypnone, and wished to know whether it had been observed to communicate any particular odour to the urine.

Mr. MOLONY inquired as to the local effects of the injections, also as to the age and physical condition of the patients with whom hypnone had been used.

Mr. MYLES said that he had, in conjunction with Mr. Norman, used hypnone in the manner described in a couple of cases. The experiments made were few, but he was inclined to think that the medicine had decided hypnotic properties.

Mr. CONOLLY NORMAN, in replying, said that he was not disposed to attribute any specific virtues to hypnone. In some cases he thought he detected an odour in the urine similar to that produced by turpentine. He had never found any local effects from the injection of pure hypnone further than a discoloration of the skin, resembling an ecchymosis. Several of the patients were young, some middle-aged, one was an old broken-down woman with atheromatous arteries. In the last case great caution had been used, and the dose was never increased beyond six minims. Untoward consequences had not in any case been observed.

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*Obituary.*

## ROBERT NAIRNE, M.D., F.R.C.P.

Dr. Nairne has not long survived his resignation of the post of Commissioner in Lunacy, which he held for so protracted a period, namely, from the year 1857 to July, 1883. His death occurred at his residence, Mosley, Beckenham, November 5th, 1886. He was educated in Edinburgh, and at Trinity College, Cambridge, graduating in 1832. Six years afterwards he obtained the Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians, London, and in the following year he was appointed Physician to St. George's Hospital, where he became lecturer on medicine. He was not, we believe, altogether successful as a physician in the Metropolis, and in 1857 the Lord Chancellor presented him with the office of Commissioner in Lunacy. In 1856 he married a daughter of John Gott, Esq., of Leeds, who survives him. It is singular that Dr. Nairne should, like the late greatly respected Mr. Gaskell, have been knocked down by a cab in one of the London streets, and it seems probable that this unfortunate accident had something to do with his death. This, however, can hardly be regarded as pre-

mature, he having attained the advanced age of 82. If Dr. Nairne was somewhat formal and distant in his bearing to those having charge of asylums for the insane, we believe that he endeavoured to perform the duties of his post to the best of his ability, with fairness and assiduity, but at the time of his appointment he laboured under the disadvantage of not having had any practical acquaintance with Lunatic Asylums.

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JOHN P. GRAY, M.D., LL.D.

We record with great regret the death of Dr. Gray, the superintendent of the New York State Hospital for the Insane. His removal creates a vacant space in American medical psychology which is not likely to be soon filled by a man with like characteristics. Few men possessed more striking individuality, and foes as well as friends will admit that he had enormous force of character and occupied a remarkable position in the United States. We will not go so far as to say *De mortuis, nihil nisi bonum*, but this is not the occasion on which it would be seemly to discuss the right or wrong of the many questions in regard to which he came into fierce conflict with the opinions of others, both in regard to his management of the asylum at Utica or the position he took in the *cause célèbre*, still fresh in the memories of all on both sides of the Atlantic, for the points then raised were of universal interest and importance. In person the terse description often given of Dr. Gray was not by any means inapt, and would no doubt be accepted by his best friends—"the head of Jupiter and the body of Bacchus." It expresses at any rate what caricatures are intended to express, the salient features of the man's character, intelligence, and jollity. In social life he was certainly "jolly," and could tell a good anecdote as effectively as anyone. His lectures on mental disorders were clear and forcible, and retained the attention of the class during their delivery.

We proceed to condense from the obituary in the "Utica Daily Press," Nov. 30th, 1886, some of the particulars of his life:—He was born in 1825 at Halfmoon, Pennsylvania. His first post was that of a resident physician at Blookley Hospital, to which he was appointed in 1849. In 1850 he was appointed third assistant-physician at the New York State Asylum. In 1852 he was promoted to be first assistant, and the health of the superintendent, Dr. Benedict, failing, Dr. Gray was soon after appointed acting superintendent during the illness of that officer. Subsequently the State of Michigan, having determined to erect an asylum, offered the superintendency to Dr. Gray in January, 1854. This he accepted, and prepared a plan of the projected building. In June, however, Dr. Benedict not having regained his health, resigned, and Dr. Gray was appointed to succeed him, July 14th, 1854, and retained the post until his death.

Dr. Gray was a permanent member of the American Medical Association; an ex-President of the Medical Society of the State of New York; a member of the Association of Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane; an honorary member of the Société Médico-Psychologique of Paris; an honorary member of the Società Freniatria Italiana; and an honorary member of the Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain. In 1874 he was appointed lecturer on psychological medicine and medical jurisprudence in Belle Vue Medical College, New York, and in 1876 he was appointed to the same position in Albany Medical College. He was the second President of the New York State Medical Association, and in that character delivered an address on "Insanity and some of its Preventive Causes." He wrote a paper on "Mental Hygiene," and on "Heredity" among others. In the latter article he opposed the doctrine that insanity is hereditary. "His paper showed that the many thousands of patients who had been in the asylum under his supervision had afterwards become the parents of many more thousands of children, and of these