

can be little doubt that a measure of the kind would be heartily welcomed, and would meet with great support.

Your Committee trusts that the session will not terminate before the introduction of the promised Bill.

Such a Bill should include:

1. The compulsory therapeutic detention of habitual drunkards, after a judicial process, on sworn medical testimony, and with every possible safeguarding of the liberty of the subject.

2. The establishment and management of special homes for inebriates for the poorest, for criminal and non-criminal inebriate offenders.

3. The inclusion of intoxication by any narcotic in the term "habitual drunkenness."

4. The appearance of voluntary applicants for curative detention before one justice instead of two justices as at present, or before some other authorised official.

5. Magisterial discretion to award a term of curative restraint in a reformatory or hospital, instead of a term of imprisonment in a gaol.

It would also be desirable to have all habitual drunkards under curative treatment subject to State or municipal inspection.

The Committee is glad to learn that in Austria, while the authorities are considering the project of special legislation for inebriates, one clinic has been set apart specially for the treatment of habitual drunkards.

The Committee has to thank Sir Charles Cameron, Bart., M.P., Dr. Farquharson, M.P., and Mr. Lees Knowles, M.P., for excellent parliamentary services. The reports of the Massachusetts State Hospital for Inebriates have been specially valuable.

The Committee recommends its re-election as follows: The President and President-elect, *ex-officio*, the President of Council, Mr. D. B. Balding, J.P., F.R.C.S.; Dr. R. Welsh Branthwaite, Dr. T. Bridgwater, J.P.; Sir Charles Cameron, Bart., M.D., M.P.; Dr. C. R. Drysdale, Mr. Geo. Eastes, Dr. J. W. Eastwood, J.P.; Dr. R. Farquharson, M.P.; Dr. W. T. Gairdner, F.R.S.; Dr. J. Hill Gibson, Dr. A. Grant, Mr. F. J. Gray, Dr. C. J. Hare, Dr. Arthur Jamison, Mr. H. R. Ker, Dr. Norman Kerr, Dr. Longhurst, Mr. R. H. Nicholson, Surgeon-Major G. K. Poole, M.D.; Brigade-Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel R. Pringle, M.D.; Fleet-Surgeon Geo. Robertson, M.D.; Dr. Jas. Stewart, Dr. Geo. Danford Thomas (coroner), Dr. Wynn Westcott (coroner), and Dr. H. W. Williams.

NORMAN KERR, M.D., Chairman.

#### REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE MEDICAL CHARITIES COMMITTEE.

Your Committee beg to report that as they had shortly before the last annual meeting communicated with the authorities of the chief metropolitan medical charities or personally interviewed them in regard to the reforms suggested as necessary to the better administration of the out-patient departments of hospitals, it has not been deemed necessary during the past year to take any further steps in the same direction.

Your Committee are, however, confident that the work done since the Medical Charities Committee was first constituted in 1891 has been, and still continues to be, productive of good results. The publication of the exhaustive reports of our Subcommittees and the promulgation of the recommendations of the Association have directed public attention to the subject, and, we believe, stimulated others outside the profession to action on similar lines, and we may hope that their efforts will have considerable influence in assisting to bring about the object we all desire, namely, a more satisfactory administration of our medical charities. It is most gratifying to observe that during the last few months the question of hospital reform has been much discussed both in the London and the provincial newspapers, and that the public now generally recognise the fact that reform of the out-patient departments of our medical charities to more effectually check abuse is absolutely necessary.

It is especially satisfactory to find that the Charity Organisation Society has taken up this subject, and has formed a strong Committee, consisting of leading members of the medical profession as well as influential representatives of

the general public interested in medical charities to endeavour to effect the reforms aimed at by our Association. This Committee have adopted a petition to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, asking for the formation of a Central Hospital Board to administer the Hospital Fund founded in commemoration of the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen.

Your Committee believe that such a Board would be of the greatest service in bringing about hospital reform, and suggest that the opinion of the members of the Association should be taken at the forthcoming annual meeting of the Association as to the desirability of supporting the action of the Charity Organisation Society, by passing a resolution to be forwarded to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, expressing approval of the suggested Board as a guarantee to the benevolent public that the administration of our medical charities has been placed on a sound basis.

During the past year the efforts of your Committee have been supplemented by the recently-formed Hospital Reform Association, of which Dr. Ward Cousins, our late President of the Council, is President. The investigations of this new organisation confirm in their entirety the reports of our Subcommittees, and although its chief recommendations are identical with those suggested in the report of our Sub-committee dated April 6th, 1892, and which have been repeatedly laid before the managers of the various metropolitan medical charities, the fact that the Hospital Reform Association consists of members of the general public as well as medical men renders it probable that the conclusions of the new organisation may have some weight with persons who would not be influenced by the opinions and suggestions of an association wholly composed of members of the medical profession.

Your Committee suggest that they be authorised to take such action as may be necessary either alone or in combination with the Charity Organisation Society to promote the formation of a Central Hospital Board.

THOMAS BRIDGWATER, Chairman.

#### REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON THE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITIONS OF CHILDREN.

Your Committee on their reappointment continued the study of the conditions of childhood in conjunction with the Committee appointed by the Congress of Hygiene and Demography. Last year we referred to the Report<sup>1</sup> on 100,000 children seen in schools 1888-94 as published by the help of your liberality; that report has been circulated, and forms a basis of facts that has been appreciated by many engaged in advancing the welfare of children, especially those less favoured in mental and physical development. The report, or census of childhood, has been used in Governmental inquiries by Committees of the Local Government Board, the Home Office, and the present Departmental Committee of the Education Department on Defective Children; extended evidence from these researches was given to each by Dr. Francis Warner at the request of the Committee.

During the past year it was decided that it was desirable to found a society to continue the work initiated by the Council of the British Medical Association in 1888, the usefulness of which has been established; this has been effected under the title of the Childhood Society, for the scientific study of the mental and physical conditions of children. Lord Egerton of Tatton is the President, and Sir Douglas Galton, F.R.S., is Chairman. This Society proposes to continue scientific inquiry and research, and to report on schools and institutions as well as to give evidence or advice on questions concerning educational methods as far as they relate to mental and physical conditions of childhood, especially the training of feeble-minded children.

Lectures by members of the Society and others have been delivered during this year on the scientific and educational aspects of child life followed by useful discussions.

The work conducted by your Committee for a period of nine years has been followed by efforts for the benefit of children

<sup>1</sup> Report on the Scientific Study of the Mental and Physical Conditions of Childhood, with particular reference to children of defective constitutions, and with recommendations as to education and training.—Published at Parkes Museum, Margaret Street, London.