

Act 38 and 39 Vict., cap. 67, sec. 10, provided that persons from and after the expiration of sentence must be regarded and treated in all respects as if admitted to the asylum as ordinary cases, and the local gaol being the prison for the counties of Clare and North Tipperary, lunatics from these counties committed in Limerick became chargeable to the city of Limerick. Lunatics incapable of pleading at assizes were also committed, the Government, however, paying the cost of maintenance. Dr. O'Neill alluded to the steps taken to redress these grievances, and suggested further action. The year's expenditure amounted to £18,368, the gross average cost being £27 3s. 5d. It was agreed by resolution to bring the facts regarding the transmission of patients under the notice of the Chief Secretary.

England and Wales.

[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS.]

BIRMINGHAM.

THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

MR. GEORGE HEATON has resigned the post of Honorary Surgeon to the hospital, and in recognition of his valuable services has been appointed Honorary Consulting Surgeon. Mr. A. W. Nuthall, late Surgeon for Out-patients, has been promoted to Honorary Surgeon, and Mr. Seymour G. Barling has been elected Surgeon for Out-patients.

HOSPITAL SATURDAY FUND.

At the annual meeting of the Birmingham Hospital Saturday Fund, held on July 13th, the Chairman stated that the sum received already this year was £20,042, as compared with £19,567 received at the corresponding period last year. The number of contributing firms was 2,062, as against 2,045 last year. In addition to the sum of £10,000 which is given to the hospitals annually, the Fund provides for many convalescent homes. The number of patients treated in the homes for the half-year was 1,435, as compared with 1,284 for the corresponding six months last year. Many consumptive patients are treated at the sanatorium at St. Leonards-on-Sea, but it is hoped that before long the Fund will have a sanatorium of its own, and it is thought that the present would be a favourable time to provide one as a memorial to the late Sir William Cook. Already £2,000 has been privately subscribed, and it is hoped that at least another £2,000 will be contributed.

WEST YORKSHIRE.

BRADFORD AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT ACT, 1907.

It was determined, at a meeting of the Bradford City Council held some time ago, to put into operation various clauses of this Act. Some of these are of great interest to the medical profession, and one of them—namely, Clause 7 in Part IV—is of vital importance to its interests. This clause was recently considered by the Executive Committee of the Bradford Division, and it was determined to point out to the city council the inadvisability of adopting it. The clause in question states:

That no person, who has the care of a child, who is, or has been, suffering from infectious disease, or has been exposed to infection, shall, after a notice from the medical officer that the child is not to be sent to school, permit such child to attend school, without having procured from the M.O.H. a certificate that in his opinion such child may attend without undue risk of communicating such disease to others.

It is the custom in Bradford for the medical officer of health to give a certificate that the child may return to school when the house in which it resides has been thoroughly disinfected, and his certificate, which is granted without visitation, is really one as regards the premises, and not the individual. It is obvious that the medical man in attendance is the only one who can speak from personal knowledge and inspection of the child. The adoption of this clause would entirely prevent the issue of a certificate by the only person with an intimate know-

ledge of the case, and is really a retrograde step and not one of public utility. These points were suggested to the Bradford City Council at its meeting held on July 14th, and, although they were read before that body, evoked no remark, and it was determined to make application in due time and form for an order to put the clause in force. Such action is an example of the way in which ill-considered and unworkable legislation is adopted by local authorities. It will be quite impossible for the medical officer of health of a large city like Bradford to give certificates with any knowledge of the classes of cases mentioned.

ANTHRAX IN BRADFORD.

A coroner's inquest was held in Bradford on July 9th on a man 51 years of age, who only manipulated wool in the shape of tops and noils, which are supposed to be free from dust. In one side of the cellar, however, in which he worked, unwashed wool was stored in sheets. Occasionally he had to go into the blending-room, but he had no occasion to touch the wool. Dr. William Mitchell, in giving evidence, stated that he had no difficulty in finding an abundance of anthrax bacilli in the man's body. He considered that death was due to anthrax, contracted by inoculation in the first instance, and afterwards becoming general. The firm that employed the man stated that wools scheduled by the Board of Trade as dangerous were not dealt with at their works, and, further, that the whole of the wool the deceased handled would previously have been washed in water, heated to a temperature of between 120° F. and 130° F., and would have been passed through rollers heated to 220° F.

HALIFAX HEALTH REPORT.

The report of Dr. Neech, Medical Officer of Health for Halifax, for the year ending December 31st, 1907, was issued recently. The birth-rate and death-rate were the lowest on record, the former being 17.7 per 1,000 and the latter 14.3 per 1,000. Of the great Yorkshire towns, Halifax had the lowest death-rate. The infantile mortality during the year was 102 deaths per 1,000 births registered, also another of the lowest recorded.

MANCHESTER AND DISTRICT.

SEWAGE TREATMENT AT OLDHAM.

THE Oldham Corporation is just now engaged in an interesting experiment in the treatment of its sewage. The disposal of the solid matter left after settling or filtration of sewage has long been a difficult question for inland towns. Manchester and Salford alone ship something like 1,500 tons every day by the Ship Canal to be deposited outside the estuary of the Mersey. Such a method is obviously impossible for Oldham, and the Corporation is giving a trial to a method devised by Dr. J. Grossmann of Manchester. The sewage is first passed along settling tanks, where the solids in time sink to the bottom. After a week or two the liquid is drained off and the sediment is passed through presses and still further freed from water. The sludge that remains is then treated chemically and distilled in a special retort with superheated steam. In this way all grease is carried over with the steam and collected on the surface of cooled water. The residuum in the retort is a fine black powder, quite odourless and rich in nitrogen. From a flow of 3,000,000 gallons of sewage about 20 tons of compressed sludge are obtained, and this yields about a ton of grease, worth about £8 or £10 a ton. The presence of so much grease is easily accounted for by the fact that practically all the soap used in the district passes into the sewage. The dry residue forms an excellent manure, which it is expected will realize over 6s. a ton from artificial manure manufacturers. The cost of the process is estimated at about 5s. a ton of compressed sludge, and it is estimated that the products of each ton will realize about 9s. If these expectations are correct, there would seem to be a great future for the process, as, apart from the commercial gain, the residue is quite free from all offensive qualities, and it only needs the addition of some phosphates to make it a good manure for farmers.