

The Work of Nursing the Insane.*

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THE Hospital for the Insane in Rochester, New York, is one of twelve such hospitals in the State, and as the Insane of New York are under the "State Care" system, these hospitals have many methods and rules in common. The system of "State Care" was partially outlined and begun in 1836, but it was not until April 15th, 1890, that the Bill for providing such care and maintenance of the dependent insane became law. At that time all the counties came under this law except three, which were exempted for special reasons. The insane in the last of these counties became wards of the State in 1896, when the New York City Asylums for the Insane became the Manhattan State Hospital.

Over these twelve hospitals is a Commission in Lunacy, consisting of three members, all of whom are citizens of the State. These Commissioners are appointed by the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The President of the Commission must be a physician, who must have had "at least ten years' experience in the actual practice of his profession, who has had five years' actual experience in the care and treatment of the insane, and who has had experience in the management of institutions for the insane." The second member of the Commission must be a lawyer, the third is a business man. Each hospital has a Board of Managers also appointed by the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. They all reside in their hospital district, but no person is eligible to the office of Manager who is either an elective state officer, or a member of the legislature; and if any manager become a member of the legislature of an elective State officer, his office as manager becomes vacant.

Two of the twelve State hospitals are Homœopathic institutions; the managers of these two hospitals may be appointed from any part of the State, and they have to be adherents of homœopathy.

The managers have the power to appoint the superintendent and treasurer of the hospital. They establish by-laws, rules and regulations for the appointment and duties of officers and employees of the hospitals, and for the internal government, discipline and management of the same. They visit the hospital frequently, and have the reports of their visits filed with the Hospital records; they make a report to the

Commission in October of each year, which report is incorporated into the Commission's Annual Report to the legislature.

The Lunacy Commission has its office in the Capitol in Albany. The Commissioners are required by law to make at least two thorough inspections of each State Hospital during the calendar year; they are responsible to the legislature for the proper dividing and expending of all money appropriated for the care of the insane; to help them with these, each hospital makes a monthly estimate of all sums to be expended for salaries, wages and supplies. This is sent to the office of the Commission in Lunacy at Albany, on or before the 15th of the month preceding that for which the estimate is made; these estimates are carefully examined, and at the meeting of the superintendents with the Commission, held in Albany the latter part of the month before that for which the estimate is made, any unusual items are discussed along with any matters of general interest to the State Hospitals. These discussions have led to the adoption of many desirable methods in the hospitals, and they also keep up a feeling of emulation among the hospitals, that is a material help in raising the standard of care.

The Commission makes an annual report to the legislature "including estimates of the amounts required for the use of the State Hospitals during the ensuing year, and the reasons therefor; and also the annual reports made to the Commission by the Board of Managers of each State Hospital and by the State Charities Aid Association." The Commission divides the State into hospital districts, assigning to each hospital the territory from which its patients shall come; this division is based upon the capacities of the different hospitals. They keep on file in their office in Albany—

1. A record of medical examiners and also a record of patients, stating the name, residence, sex, age, nativity, occupation, civil condition, and date of commitment of every patient in custody in the several institutions for the care and treatment of insane persons in the State, the name and residence of the person making the petition for the commitment, the persons signing such medical certificate, and of the judge making the order of commitment.

2. The name of the institution where each patient is confined, the date of admission, and whether brought from home or another institution, and if from another institution, the name of such institution, by whom brought, and the patient's condition.

3. The date since the 15th day of May, 1889, of the discharge of each patient from such insti-

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