

Medical Chief.

rainwater, should be provided. It should be carefully analysed, to determine the proper material for pipes and tanks. The tanks should be covered in.

ii. The resident medical chief should have qualified both as a surgeon and as an apothecary. He should pay especial attention to sanitary matters and to the conduct of the servants, and should have the charge of all records, and frequently inspect the wards, cells, and every other place, and the provisions in store.

In cases where the powers of boards may be transferred to him, he should have the same powers of suing for all dues and debts to the institution which at present belong to the boards.

Clerk.

iii. The clerk or storekeeper should examine all contract supplies before acceptance and all the stores daily. He should give the security of a bond for the performance of his duties. He may be non-resident.

Sub-Chiefs.

iv. The institutions should be in all cases divided into sections, each under the superintendence of a head matron or keeper, whose especial duty it would be to enforce cleanliness, and overlook the inferior attendants, and to make daily reports to the medical chief and to the inspectors. Such head attendants ought to be well enough paid to make it an object to them to keep their places by zeal and honesty.

Attendants.

v. On the character of the attendants depends in a great degree, especially in asylums, the comfort, tranquillity, and chances of recovery of the diseased. Their wages ought to be liberal, and they should receive periodical increase for good service. They ought to be, if possible, sufficiently well educated to be able to read to the patients.

Diet.

vi. Patients ought not to be limited in the quantity of their food by way of punishment, unless with the express authority of the medical chief. Also the food should be from time to time varied in kind, and should be, so far as may be practicable, assimilated to that naturally used by the patients.

55. Suggestions with reference to hospitals only:—

i. In many of the hospitals the existing small wards should be consolidated wherever it is practicable, by removing the partitions.

ii. Provision should be made for limiting the period of office, if not in the case of the medical chief, at least in that of the other physicians and surgeons. Such a system was tried by Sir H. Barkly in Demerara, and afterwards by him introduced into Jamaica. It is said, by increasing the chances of appointments, to induce the immigration of students.

iii. There will almost always be private practitioners who would be willing to visit as honorary medical officers. The external element thus introduced would be of great value.

iv. In every hospital having twenty beds or more there should be at least one resident medical officer who shall not be engaged in private practice.

v. With proper provisions for sufficient space, area and ventilation, contagious and infectious diseases, with the exception of small-pox, may be received in limited numbers in general wards appropriated to adult patients.

vi. In wards containing less than thirty patients, the proportion of nurses should not be less than one to seven. For any number of patients not exceeding forty contained in a single ward one night nurse is sufficient. For forty distributed in two or more wards at least two night nurses are required.

vii. Where there are many native or Indian patients there should be a native or Indian employed to advise as to prejudices and requirements. It is found in Mauritius and elsewhere that natives are very unwilling to enter the hospitals.

56. Suggestions as to asylums only:—

i. The provisions regulating the admission of lunatics into asylums are not in the majority of the smaller colonies sufficiently definite, or calculated to exclude the possibility of abuse. The forms which are prescribed in Nova Scotia* seem to be well adapted for such small colonies as have not regularly organized Lunacy Commissions. The certificates should be made upon oath.

ii. Classification of lunatics is generally precluded by the nature of the buildings, but its want is in some of the returns made a matter of regret. It is, therefore, necessary to observe that all recent experience has proved much classification to be generally injurious. Many lunatics of one type

* Appendix, Note IV.