

This first kind of reports would be for the information and satisfaction of the inspectors.

The second sort are already to some extent in use, but require to be modified if they are to produce much benefit. They are, general reports made at stated periods (1) by the medical chiefs, and (2) by the inspectors where they exist, of the condition and further requirements of the institutions. These reports should be as short as possible, and directed particularly to certain prescribed points, and might be made semi-annually. If they were sent to this country and published in one general volume, together with Reports of the kind next to be mentioned, and the whole re-distributed throughout all the colonies, they would become a valuable means of comparison and of disseminating useful suggestions and true principles of management.

The third sort are reports of a statistical kind for scientific purposes. It is no doubt very important that such reports should be periodically made up on an uniform plan, but they are involved in so many difficulties that it does not appear to be desirable to attempt to introduce them generally, except in the most simple form. It must be remembered that a mere number of tables of admissions, discharges, ages, duration of disease, per-centages, antecedents, &c., resulting in isolated numerical sums, are of no scientific value and cannot lead to any result. What is wanted is not merely numerical statistics of many sets of facts, but the relations between such different sets of facts. But these relations cannot be exhaustively shown without an almost infinite series of comparative tables. It therefore becomes necessary to select those particular series of facts between which it is especially desired to discover a relation, and to frame a table for each such relation. But even with the most frugal selection of relations to be illustrated, and with the clearest directions for filling up the forms, the work has some tendency to become too cumbrous for any but practised statisticians to manage. It must also be considered that most of the colonies are too small to give any security that in them exceptions may not override the ordinary facts and give a false colour to the whole, and that even if full statistics were obtained from all the colonies, the area from which they would be drawn would still be but a small portion of the globe, so that the importance of the returns would not by any means equal their number.\*

An extended form of statistical returns for lunatic asylums has been prepared which is intended to illustrate those relations which seemed to be most important. This form has been modified by the Commissioners in Lunacy, who suggest that it should be tried as an experiment in one of the larger colonies. Canada would seem to be the best field for trial, both because of its nearness and because of the number of its asylums, and of the perfection of its system of inspection. There is also appended a short and manageable form for all other asylums, and another for hospitals. If more full statistics are desired from hospitals, it will be desirable to procure forms from the College of Physicians, or to obtain a sufficient sanction for those which are given in Miss Nightingale's "Notes on Hospitals" (1863), and which are not untried, and appear to be approved by high authorities.

There would be this advantage in enforcing somewhat elaborate returns—that whether accurately filled up or not, they would lead to greater care and diligence in the use of the ordinary case-books and records.

52. To sum up the measures proposed in the three last sections, it is suggested—

I. That for those colonies, for the condition of which the Crown is responsible, a draft ordinance should be framed to regulate all conditions of sites and construction in future hospitals and asylums, and to enforce such alterations in existing ones as may be necessary for the provision of proper sewerage, drainage, space, area, ventilation, water supply, light, and other sanitary requisites; and also, if this should appear practicable, to fix a minimum number of attendants in each kind of institution, with other permanent economical regulations; and that the great expediency of framing and passing similar measures should be suggested to the legislatures of the colonies which have responsible governments.

II. That where boards exist, if the local authorities should see fit, they

\* It would be necessary in general to limit the demand for returns to such as could be furnished by officers of ordinary intelligence without any unreasonable amount of trouble.