Craignish and Kilmelfort, with populations of 389 and 407, are stated to have a ratio of 170 per 10,000. This sounds very startling; but, when we recognise that the basis of the assertion consists of about thirteen lunatics, which two or three families might supply, it is not likely to cause serious alarm. These raw-baked statistics and reckless methods are unfair and misleading to the ordinary newspaper reader. What would be thought of a sanitary expert who seriously compared the health of the residential part of any town with that of its slums as an evidence of the unhealthiness of the whole district; or who drew conclusions from population groups of three or four hundred and applied them to a whole community? The contribution in question is unworthy of the subject in manner and matter, and not what we have been accustomed to find in the columns of *The Scotsman*.

A REQUEST FROM RUSSIA.

We have received a circular from Professor Bechterew stating that the clinique for mental maladies in the Imperial Military Academy of Medicine at St. Petersburg has now been opened for thirty years, and that a new separate building for nervous diseases will be inaugurated forthwith. It is proposed by the physicians in charge to create two museums, psychological and neurological, to commemorate this event. They ask for contributions of plans, reports, publications, photographs, etc., relative to asylums and their inmates, and for pathological specimens, preparations, apparatus relative to nervous diseases. Those willing to aid are instructed to address packages to "Russie, St. Petersbourg, Clinique des Maladies Mentales et Nerveuses, Rue Samarskaya No. 9. The carriage will be paid by the recipients. Our Library Committee might take a hint and negotiate a fair exchange.

CORRESPONDENCE.

From Dr. Reid, Royal Asylum, Aberdeen.

The installation of the electric light at the Aberdeen Asylum, at the time particulars were asked, was in an incomplete state, and is still so far from being finished that we cannot give definite information either as to the first cost or as to the cost of maintenance. The light has been in use in the Hospital buildings for over a year, and has recently been introduced into Elmhill House, there being in all about 700 lamps in use. It is not yet introduced into the Asylum main buildings, but will be as soon as the proposed reconstruction and alterations are completed, which, however, will not be for some years. When all is finished it is estimated that there will be from 1,500 to 1,600 lamps in use.

With regard to our generating plant for electric lighting, there are two 50 horse-power gas engines with heavy fly-wheels, running at 200 revolutions per minute, driving, by means of laminated leather belts, two dynamos, which are shunt wound, each with a maximum output of 36 kilo-watts. The current is continuous at a pressure of 110 volts. The E.M.F. in each dynamo is regulated by a resistance placed in the field magnet circuit with contacts for throwing more or less of it into circuit.

There is also a storage battery of sixty cells in leaden boxes, of 1,600 ampère hours' capacity on a nine hours' discharge, and a minimum discharge rate not exceeding 300 ampères. Recording ammeter and voltmeter are placed on the main switch-board.

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The gas used for the engines is Dowson gas made on the premises; there being also provided a connection with the town's gas supply in case of any failure in the Dowson plant. When the current is taken direct from the dynamos the lights are to a small extent unsteady. This is got over meantime by running them in parallel with the battery.

In distributing the current conductors are taken from the main switchboard in dynamo room to distributing boards placed at various points throughout the building. It is there divided into two main circuits, either of which can be cut off independently of the other. From omnibus bars connected with these main circuits leads are run to the lamps, which are arranged in groups of from twenty to twenty-five for each pair of leads. They are also arranged so that one of the main circuits can be shut off during the night.

Most of the lamps are 16 candle-power; a few are 32; and some 8. Arc lamps are used in the dynamo room and for lighting the Asylum, Hospital, and Elmhill House approaches.

In the Hospital all single rooms are lighted by bulkhead lights placed over the doors with the switches outside. Day rooms have two-light pendants and wall brackets placed at about eight feet from the floor, and also a few counter-weight lights. The dormitories and corridors have plain cord pendants about nine feet from the floor.

Excepting in the single rooms, as above stated, all the switches are placed inside the rooms, and are quite within reach of patients, but no trouble has been experienced on that account.

At Elmhill all the lights have been placed as they would be in a private house, except that in a number of the bedrooms the switches are placed outside the rooms.

We have no means of decreasing the brilliancy of the light except by turning out a number of the lamps. The dormitories are supplied with a few 8 candle-power lamps with obscured glass, so as to subdue the lights left in over night.

The men who attend to the lighting plant have also charge of the steam boilers; steam being required for purposes of heating, cooking, ventilation, and laundry purposes; and thus it is not easy to state what proportion of the expenses should be assigned to the electric lighting. The staff consists of one engineer and four assistants. It is expected that this staff will be sufficient when the asylum main buildings—at present lit by gas supplied from the city—are lighted by electricity as reconstruction proceeds.

There is at present no general dining-hall nor adequate recreation-room, but these are included in the alteration scheme, and electricity will be used as illuminant.

As to the suitability of electric lighting for an asylum, we think there can be no doubt that it is in every way superior to gas. Its cleanliness, the freedom from vitiated air attending its use, and the absence of danger from explosions and escapes are all in its favour.

From Mr. Townsend.

Referring to Dr. Jones's paper in the last number of this Journal, Mr. Townsend writes:—

Electric Lighting Engines.—Statistics taken during the last five years show (as pointed out by Dr. Jones, p. 761) that high-speed engines coupled direct to dynamos and with improved multitubular boilers, are coming into favour, and prove that their cost of generating current is nearly 10 per cent. lower than with slow-speed engines and belt-driven dynamos—especially when the engines and dynamos are of 50 horse-power and upwards.

Wiring.—The best systems at present known are (1) to run the wires, both

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