ences are, of course, partly due to differences in environment, but they must be partly innate, for they are observable in quite young children. It is difficult to account for these phenomena unless we assume that impulses can in some way become surcharged with energy from the self-preserved and race-preserved centres, and that this energy will then expend itself on any object, however unpromising, if it cannot find an outlet through an established sentiment."

Professor WEYGANDT's book on psychiatric diagnosis¹⁰ is characterized by the variety and excellence of the photographic pictures and coloured plates of lunatics of all sorts which it contains. The pictures are helped out by a clearly written and comprehensive text; full details of the methods of examination employed are given throughout. The volume may be recommended to the attention of alienists.

The *Medical Register*¹¹ for 1922 shows that the gradual increase in the number of registered practitioners, which has been noted in previous years, is still maintained. The total number on the *Register* at the end of 1921 was 45,408, as compared with 44,761 in 1920, and 44,510 in 1919. Of the total 49.52 per cent. were registered in England, 31.41 per cent. in Scotland, and 14.51 in Ireland; 4.34 per cent. of the names appear in the colonial list, and 0.22 per cent. in the foreign list. The *Register* contains for the first time the provisions of the new Dentists Act, 1921. The *Dentists Register*¹² for 1922, which has also just been published, shows that the number of dentists, 5,831, has increased from the previous year, when it was 5,610. The numbers and the qualifications of those on the *Dentists Register* will, however, be very considerably affected in the next *Register* by the provisions of the Dentists Act, 1921, which are included in this year's *Register*.

The *Minutes of the General Medical Council*¹³ for 1921 contain an account of the proceedings of the Council, the three branch councils, and the various committees, including the Dental Committee; appendices are added consisting mainly of reports of certain special committees, accounts, and the president's memorandums on Indian universities and the teaching of midwifery. A *General Index to the Minutes*¹⁴ has also been published.

¹⁰ *Erkennung der Geistesstörungen (Psychiatrische Diagnostik)*. Von Dr. phil. und med. W. Weygandt. München: J. F. Lehmann. (Sup. roy. 8vo. pp. 251; 318 figures, 18 plates. M. 34.)

¹¹ *The Medical Register for 1922*. London: Published for the General Medical Council by Constable and Co., Ltd. 1922. (Sup. roy. 8vo. pp. xciv+1283.)

¹² *The Dentists Register for 1922*. London: Published for the General Medical Council by Constable and Co., Ltd. 1922. (Sup. roy. 8vo. pp. xxvi+146.)

¹³ *Minutes of the General Medical Council and of its Various Committees for the Year 1921, with Fourteen Appendices*. Vol. lviii. London: Published and sold for the General Medical Council by Constable and Co., Ltd. 1922.

¹⁴ *General Index to the Minutes of the General Medical Council, of its Executive and Dental Committees, and of its Three Branch Councils, 1903-1921*. Vols. xl to lviii. London: Published and sold for the General Medical Council by Constable and Co., Ltd. 1922.

ROYAL MEDICAL BENEVOLENT FUND.

At the meeting of the Committee held on February 14th 30 cases were considered and £314 voted to 27 applicants. The following is a summary of some of the cases relieved:

Daughter, aged 76, of M.R.C.S.Eng. who died in 1855. Applicant's sole income is derived from investments which bring in £21 per annum. Up to quite recently she was taken care of by her own sister, aged 74, but owing to helplessness has had to have a nurse, who is provided by friends. Voted £18 in twelve instalments.

Widow, aged 34, of M.B.Lond. who died in 1921. Applicant and two children left totally unprovided for, and when late husband's estate is realized it is only expected that there will be enough to pay the creditors. She has received £20 from the Officers' Families Fund and £20 from friends. At present staying with father. Voted £15 in three instalments.

Widow, aged 44, of M.R.C.S.Eng. who died in 1921. Applicant left with five children; husband's estate is not yet settled, and up to the present the creditors have only received 15s. in the £. Applicant's share of the estate amounts to a share of the furniture only. Mother has only a home to offer, as she is entirely dependent on her married sons. Voted £15 in three instalments.

Widow, aged 59, of L.R.C.P.Lond. who died in 1903. Applicant had a home for children, but failed during the war. She received £7 7s. for looking after a small boy during the holidays and £15 from investments. Now lives with married daughter. Voted £18 in twelve instalments.

Subscriptions may be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, Sir Charters J. Symonds, K.B.E., F.R.C.S., at 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, London, W.1. The Royal Medical Benevolent Fund Guild is overwhelmed, in these days of exorbitant prices for clothing and household necessities, with applications for coats and skirts for ladies and girls holding secretarial posts, and suits for working boys. The Guild appeals for second-hand clothes and household articles

for the benefit of the widows and children who in happier times would not have needed assistance. The gifts should be sent to the Secretary of the Guild, 43, Bolsover Street, W.1.

MOTOR NOTES FOR MEDICAL MEN.

By H. MASSAC BUIST.

LEGISLATION AND TAXATION.

ABOUT the time these notes are published the Government will issue the recommendation of the Ministry of Transport's Departmental Committee on the Taxation and Regulation of Road Vehicles. As regards the main points under consideration, the issue lies between two alternatives: the raising of the speed limit from 20 to 30 miles an hour, or the abandonment of any restrictions as to speed and the substitution of a system of regulations under the heading "driving to the danger of the public."

In face of the long proved fact that none can determine safety in terms of miles an hour, in that there are many circumstances in which it would be dangerous to travel at even 5 miles an hour, it is not surprising that the conclusion arrived at, and recommended to the Department as a result of this investigation, is against the use of any speed limit whatsoever. Therefore the abolition of the 20 miles an hour law is recommended. The alternative proposition, that of prosecution on the ground of driving to the danger of the public, has the theoretical disadvantage that no two individuals, or even groups of individuals, would agree as to what constitutes driving to the danger of the public. There would be prejudice in certain cases, either for or against motoring as such; altogether apart from which there is the very great difficulty of weighing evidence under this head. Therefore, very few motorists would look forward with pleasure to a bald change of conditions whereby they would become liable to be proceeded against on anybody's word as to their having driven at a certain time at a given place to the danger of the public. This point has been appreciated by the committee, and the result is that, when its report is published, it will be found that it has striven to define, otherwise to limit, what constitutes danger to the public. The matter will be gone into after the official publication. Nor is there any urgent hurry for the public to rush to conclusions on the subject, since even if the matter were proceeded with during this session, still the new law would not come into operation before the autumn at the earliest. There is even a possibility that the existing motoring laws will continue in force until New Year's Day, 1923, when the new rules will become operative. The existing laws, though they were passed in the summer of 1903, did not come into force until January 1st, 1904. Consequently precedent would be followed were the enforcement of any new regulations delayed until next New Year's Day.

MOTOR OWNERS AND THE BUDGET.

Meantime, the imminence of the Budget is causing a stir of activities among motoring bodies. Those concerned more particularly with the ownership of private vehicles are aiming to secure some change in the method of taxation. An instance of this is afforded by the set of questions sent out by the Automobile Association and Motor Union to its 150,000 odd members, each of whom is the owner either of a car or of a motor cycle. This organization has always objected to the current system of taxation on the ground that it is a levy on ownership, not on road use. It is therefore desirous of a return to the fuel tax. But, as I have pointed out in these columns on previous occasions, it seems to be impossible for a large number of reasons to revert to that. The prime reasons are that the Excise authorities could not guarantee its collection; that any such tax would have to make a differentiation in favour of home-produced motor fuels; that any such differentiation would result inevitably in some motorists escaping the payment of at least part of the tax, whereas others would pay in full, and that nobody is yet in a position to define what constitutes motor fuel. Nor is the proposition of the Automobile Association, which is carefully phrased to indicate that it is desired to substitute for the current horsepower taxes a tax on petrol, anything else than an evasion of the question. If petrol alone among motor fuels is taxed, then such a system would be most unfair to such motorists as used it, because those who ran their motor vehicles on benzol or any alternative spirit which has been, or may be, evolved and marketed for use in the liquid fuel internal

combustion engine, would escape the levy. It is therefore for those who desire a change in the principle of levying the motor tax to suggest some alternative to the horsepower tax other than a fuel tax. Representatives of the movement were, in fact, invited by the Government to do so at the time the law now in force was in the making. The only alternative so far suggested is a tax on tyres. But no motorist would consent to that because, whereas when he buys a pint of motor spirit he buys a pint of power, when he buys a tyre he may secure a perfect or a faulty one. The man who has had luck with his tyres would never be willing to pay an extra proportion of taxes on that account as well as the necessary extra sum of money to get substitute tyres. That would be multiplying his injuries.

But the questions issued by the Automobile Association are, nevertheless, of interest in that the aim is to obtain from

every motorist the results of his practical experience on the road during 1921. Thus he is asked to make a return of his total annual mileage, average fuel consumption, amount of tax paid, the net period during which his car or motor cycle was out of use, and the difficulties, if any, experienced in obtaining his registration book, or licence, or both; and an expression of his personal opinion as to whether the present system of taxation "should be superseded by a petrol tax," and so on. In order to make the results of the inquiry as representative as possible, owners of private motor vehicles who are willing to assist by filling up a form, and who are not members of the Automobile Association, are nevertheless asked to send a postcard to the Secretary, 66, Whitcomb Street, London, W.C.2, asking for a form. All this information will be collated at the association's head offices and utilized in the representation it will make to Parliament.

THE MEDICAL STUDENTS' REGISTER.

REFERENCE is made elsewhere (p. 485) to the issue by the General Medical Council of the *Medical Register* and the *Dentists Register* for 1922. With them we have received a copy of another publication issued annually by the Council—*The Medical and Dental Students' Register*.* This gives lists of the students registered during the year 1921, together with statistical tables and other information. A note is appended to the present edition drawing attention to the fact

that on January 1st, 1923, important changes in the regulations for the registration of students will come into force, and a list is given of preliminary examinations in general knowledge which were formerly recognized but are no longer accepted. Copies of the regulations of the General Medical Council in regard to the registration of medical and dental students can be obtained from the Registrar, 44, Hallam Street, Portland Place, London, W.1, price 1s. 2d. post free.

An interesting feature of the *Students' Register* is the analytical summary of the medical students registered during each year in each of the three divisions of the United Kingdom from the commencement of students' registration in 1865 to the end of 1921. It records in tabular form the fluctuations in the size and distribution of the medical student body during the past fifty-seven years. We have given graphic form to these figures in the accompanying chart, which brings before the eye the remarkable disturbances of the past few years. It should be mentioned, however, that as registration of students is not enforced by all the licensing authorities, the totals shown throughout the chart probably fall short of the actual number of students entering in any year.

The establishment of a *Students' Register* in 1865 was one

* Lists of Medical and Dental Students Registered during the Year 1921. London: Constable and Co., Ltd.

of the direct results of the Medical Act of 1858, which set up a General Council of Medical Education and Registration for the United Kingdom. It will be observed that whenever a sharp rise occurred this was soon followed by a fall, probably reflecting some apprehension about an overstocked profession in the minds of parents and guardians. For very many years the "record" entry was that of 1891, which was generally put down to the announcement of the forthcoming compulsory five years' curriculum, whereupon there was a rush of young men anxious to register as students under the old regulations.

The total for that year, 2,405, was, however, exceeded by more than a thousand in the demobilization year, 1919. That year, with an entry of 3,420, represented the high-water mark of the recent flood. In 1920 the total fell to 2,531, and last year to 1,808—"a more manageable number," to use the expression of the President of the General Medical Council.

The medical schools of England, Scotland, and Ireland have all shared in the decline since 1919. In that amazing year 1,375 students were registered in England, the largest ever recorded; but in Scotland the total was 1,387, which had never been approached in any previous year by any of the three kingdoms, and was 445 more than the "record" Scottish total of the previous year.

In all, during the fifty-seven years of students' registration 92,746 medical stu-

dents were registered in the United Kingdom, the percentage for England and Wales being 46.86, for Scotland 33.38, and for Ireland 19.76.

It is interesting to observe a correspondence in recent years in the figures of dental students registered. The total entry of dental students in 1919 was 612, as against the previous highest figure of 361 recorded six years earlier; in the past two years the totals have been 560 and 371. Altogether since the beginning of dental students' registration in 1878 there have been rather more than 9,000 entrants.