

Under the sudden delusion that he is in a house where men are made into mincemeat for the navy, he kills an unoffending fellow-prisoner. Again, under the same exciting cause (alcohol), visions of blood and murder once more cross his mind, and this time, in fear of personal danger, he appeals to the police for protection. Removed to Hayward's Heath, he hears voices urging him now to murder, now to repentance; and swayed to and fro by conflicting notions, he secrets for further use implements found and sharpened by him, and fitted seriously to injure or even destroy life. The patients with whom he is associated are necessarily curtailed of their liberty to provide for his security. The ward has assumed the appearance of a prison rather than of an hospital, and yet the general arrangements of the asylum being ill adapted for these prison uses, G. C— may any day again commit some frightful murderous assault, as he did in Maidstone Gaol, or affect his escape, as before from Barming Heath, to the possible peril of any unoffending person who may cross his path and be the object of his morbid thoughts.

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*Licences and Certificates.* By JOHN CONOLLY, M.D., D.C.L.,  
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THE particulars of the new Acts relative to the care and treatment of lunatics will probably be before the public at the time of the appearance of this number of the Journal. The proposed Act affecting Chancery lunatics has already appeared, and requires no particular comment. It is to be hoped, however, that the enormous expense attendant on opposed commissions may be diminished. The absurd reference of one of the most delicate and difficult of metaphysical questions to a jury will still, no doubt, prevail.

But if the medical proprietors of private asylums are not wholly disheartened by their actual position, it is to be hoped that they will give their promptest attention to the clauses of the bill about to be introduced by the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Desiring no changes that may withdraw protection from the insane, nothing that may decrease the powers of the Commissioners in Lunacy, but rather wishing to see such protection and power more confirmed, let them not be afraid of representing whatever in the new act, or whatever in the Acts now existing, is really opposed to the interests of the insane, and, whilst solely degrading to this department of practice, does but add distress to families into which the worst of human visitations has fallen.

Those who, with the best intentions, undertake to alter the laws of lunacy, and those whom they consult, cannot always have acquired an intimate knowledge of the various effects wrought in private life by the calamity of unsoundness of mind. Varied knowledge and high accomplishments, and even the experience gained in public asylums alone, may leave the observer unacquainted with this under-current. It is the physician in private practice, and whose attention has been for some time devoted to the cure of all forms of nervous disorder, and who has been the adviser of families of various ranks during the whole course of such maladies, from the first dawnings of youthful eccentricity to their successive results, and from the first symptoms that interrupt ordinary worldly functions, through various stages, and in various attacks, and who has seen the dismay, the grief, and the ruin that such circumstances bring in their train, who can justly and fully appreciate the effects of clauses of Acts of Parliament, specious in appearance, but most vicious in their effects. From clauses of this character the Lunacy Acts, even as they now exist, are by no means free.

There is some reason to believe that after the examination of many witnesses by the select committee of the last session, and the comparison of their rather discordant statements, it may have become evident that additional legislation, more minute, more stringent, could do no good of any kind; but the laborious attention of that committee may not have been thrown away. It is possible that the modification of the laws now existing, especially in relation to certificates and other formalities, may have suggested itself to the clear and practical minds of those composing that committee; and, if so, that important and valuable effects may be the result. If these circumstances should have wholly escaped their notice, it is the more incumbent on us to draw their attention to it at this juncture.

To any one who attentively reads the Lunacy Acts now in force, unless already prepossessed against every physician who undertakes the treatment of the insane, and against every proprietor of a residence adapted for the reception of insane persons, it must be evident that the enactments they contain are chiefly directed to the suppression of abuses which were detected and exposed about five and thirty years since, and have been at least gradually disappearing from that time, and now belong to a period that is past. New institutions and new men have arisen; the older asylums have no longer the old character; but of these changes the laws take no cognizance, and a disposition seems to exist to render them still more oppressive and obnoxious to all liberal-minded medical men, and, consequently, in every way more injurious to the interests of the insane themselves. Their general operation, even now, discourages nearly all well-educated physicians from engaging by choice in the prac-

tice of an important branch of medicine, and, instead of being protective of persons who become affected with mental derangement, deprives a considerable proportion of them of that care and treatment, in the incipient stage of the malady, by which their early restoration to health might be effected. Repugnance to the legal part of the treatment, which in this unhappy form of disease claims a strange precedence of the medical, leads to a neglect of medical treatment, and to its postponement until the time lost can never be regained.

The disadvantages thus produced to the insane, for whom the laws are, of course, intended to be protective and beneficial, are daily incurred, and can scarcely be exaggerated. Aggravations of mental disorder, and divers evasions of the laws, are among the consequences, and instances of these are so numerous as to make a consideration of them of much greater real importance than any of the new formalities which are apprehended. Nothing, indeed, is so remarkable, and at the same time so surprising, as the manner in which the curative treatment of insane patients is ignored whenever the lunacy laws are under consideration. Animadversions on houses arranged for facilitating such treatment are made with little reflection on the results; the ideas of kidnapping, of secret imprisonment, of exorbitant gains, foster popular prejudices; but it seems never to be remembered that such establishments are indispensable to the insane; or, if such an admission is made, it is so clouded with reflections on those who conduct them as to seem to justify restrictions that cause all the advantages they offer to be disregarded.

In a former paper (in the preceding number of the journal), the complicated forms to be observed by medical men when called in to cases of mental disorder were fully dwelt upon. The testimony of two practitioners generally knowing nothing of such disorders, the requirement from them of precise certificates, the additional written statement of a relative, including several unimportant particulars, all put down in haste and agitation, and all causing delay and distress when immediate relief is required, do not require any further remark. But it surely deserves inquiry how far these forms are necessary or protective, and to what extent they impede proper treatment, and cause it to be, if not abandoned altogether, at least injuriously or even fatally postponed.

My own daily experience convinces me that the certificates required in cases of insanity are regarded with so much dislike by the public as to lead to continual and successful efforts to avoid them. The parents and friends of patients make no objection to placing their children or their relatives in houses with other patients, nor to their being visited by the Commissioners in Lunacy; but they shrink from the exposure of the patient to medical men unknown to them, when they have already been obliged to seek the

opinion of those in whose judgment and honour they confide ; and when they understand that these certificates are to remain a kind of perpetual record of a malady which, although it may be only transient, will not leave the object of their solicitude without an ineffaceable stain. Driven by these things from the course often most necessary to the patient, some friendly shelter in a medical man's private residence may perhaps be sought ; but even there the necessity of certificates pursues them ; and the concealment of the patient's case, and escape from certificates, is either effected by removal to obscure residences, or to asylums on the continent ; the comfort and welfare of the patient being sacrificed, and the chances of recovery greatly diminished.

I am convinced that numbers of young men and of young women, and also of persons of family of more advanced years, are now living in inappropriate lodgings, and under the care of incompetent persons, and with scarcely a chance of recovery or amendment, solely in consequence of the certificate system. Several of the water-cure establishments are known to be half filled with patients more or less mentally affected ; for some of whom such residences may not be very objectionable : but the most serious evil is that many young persons are so placed until their malady makes their removal to asylums imperative, when the days of treatment and early recovery are past, and a long and distressing malady is inevitable. A mother moving in fashionable life perceives a change in the manners of a daughter, of whom she has cherished proud or ambitious hopes ; slight eccentricity, waywardness, irregularity in some trifling particulars of conduct. Portions of family history, almost forgotten, revive in the anxious mother's mind, and give these slight apparent departures from reasonable behaviour significance. These parental anxieties are imparted to the family medical attendant, who advises the withdrawal for a time of the young lady from gaieties, and tries to restore her to health ; but, soon suspecting that he has to deal with the beginning of an attack of insanity, advises that some physician, more conversant with mental disorders, should also be called in. The mother, assured that the attack will probably last some months and then pass away, consents to retire for a time with her daughter, and, being unable to manage her, is told that the best plan will be to place the patient in a residence in which everything is regulated for the protection and management of excitable minds, so that every unfavorable influence may be excluded, and every event of every hour may be salutary. Consent to this reasonable advice would be as uniformly and as willingly given as consent to change of air in any kind of illness requiring it ; but the strange necessity of legal formalities, demanded as a preliminary to this important treatment, throws suspicion over the proceeding, and threatens a publicity which cannot be reconciled

to the feelings of a mother, whose hope is, and that not an unreasonable hope, that before the next season her daughter will be restored to society. She cannot persuade herself to sign a document pronouncing her daughter a lunatic; the sight of certificates alarms her; vague fears of a residence so suspiciously dealt with as the residence recommended is by these awful papers arise in her mind; the step is delayed, and precious opportunities are lost. A few months later, the advice is followed, for the superintention of worse symptoms has shown that such a measure, however painful, must be submitted to.

Examples of this kind might be added to an extent almost incredible; and the subsequent history of many such is full of affliction.

Every observer of what is passing in families around him must know, whether he is a physician or not, how many cases there are in which, under domestic mismanagement, and from a dread of exposure to the forms now demanded as preliminary to proper treatment, mental peculiarities and habits indicative of mental infirmity, in children and young persons, are allowed to grow up and gain strength; and irregularities of temper, and morbid selfishness, are submitted to, until they assume a character decidedly maniacal. In all these cases the law, as it at present stands, presents obstacles to proper treatment, and prevents it. Whoever attempts to provide a residence even for juvenile patients, will be embarrassed by finding that the consent of parents is not sufficient to protect him from pains and penalties. The young people, if they do not become manifestly insane, usually live to be a torment to all about them. It is not at any time legal to place them under the control which would be salutary or perhaps curative. Medical men do not consider such cases as justificatory of certificates of insanity; and whether they are controlled from home under certificates, or without certificates, the person taking care of them is placed in jeopardy.

Many young men to whom gentle control, and conformity to regular life, under the superintendence of physicians well acquainted with mental disorders, would have been most beneficial in the beginning of moral disorder, become madly drunken and extravagant, and by degrees insensible to shame and disreputable, and finally violent and dangerous, by being denied that preservative treatment in consequence of the requirement of certificates, and although eventually sent to asylums, are sent there too late, when no control can do more than mitigate symptoms which might have been entirely remedied but for that obstacle to medical and moral treatment by persons competent to conduct it.

The instances of men of various professions and business, overworked, and threatened with insanity, or melancholia, or paralysis, persons not yet insane, but quite conscious that they require at-

tention, and rest and tranquillity, and not unwilling to reside for a time in a private asylum, but who are deprived of that resource in the same manner, are numerous. The number of ladies also, who, having once recovered in an asylum, would willingly return when they have warnings of a recurrent attack, provided asylums were places to which they might go for medical treatment without calling in two medical men to write them down as lunatics, or making it necessary for their friends to sign a very superfluous order and statement, is very great; and much injury is incurred by them in consequence of their being deprived of what would be a consolation to them, and enable them to return into the world as if they were convalescent from any other illness.

In all these cases, and in many more which might be cited, the required certificates afford no kind of protection to the patients, and give no kind of security to the public; they simply impede the prompt and proper treatment of insanity, increase the reluctance to attend to it, and strengthen prejudices which operate widely and very hurtfully. The present time may be favorable to obtaining attention to these facts, and to the possibility of dispensing with certificates in many cases, and to making only one certificate required in all cases; the immediate report of every case to the commissioners being strictly enforced, and their visits in every case not permitted only, but invited. Neither patients nor the friends of patients object to such visits; but their feelings are wounded by the filling up of printed forms, which seem to make them the publishers of family affliction, and accusers of the capacity of their afflicted friend or relative. No pain would be occasioned to them by the communications passing between the physician of the asylum and the commissioners; no protection would be withdrawn; and the early treatment of the insane would be as earnestly sought for as it is now anxiously postponed or evaded. Many an unhappy patient now languishing in foreign asylums, where all the abuses of old days yet linger, and who are forgotten and without hope, would be brought, as it were, to life, by being permitted to return to the land of their birth; and doubtless, of these some would recover, and all would be made happier.

Supposing these things, of which we who constantly see the insane, live with them, and know their feelings, can have no doubt, should happily occupy the thoughts of those who are to make the new laws, there is still one other point to which their attention may be beneficially extended. It is a point intimately connected with the treatment and cure of the insane, to which the Acts of Parliament now existing show little regard. The present law, I cannot but repeat, deals with things as they were, not as they are. Their useful modification can only result from a reasonable consideration of the improved state of medical practice in cases of insanity within

the last thirty or forty years. Of this improvement, the reformed condition of asylums, private and public, is a most important part. Full credit is given to the officers of public asylums for the poor, and much honour has often been done to them. But the proprietors and physicians of private asylums, following these public examples, and at great expense modifying their houses so as to afford the rich all the advantages happily enjoyed by the pauper lunatic, have been treated with no consideration whatever. They are simply regarded as the keepers of boarding-houses, eager for gain, and careless as to the means. Although the majority of them are men of liberal education, and many of them of rank in their profession, they are regarded by the law as dishonest tradesmen, and have to apply for a licence, to be renewed yearly, after the manner of public-house keepers, and proprietors of tea-gardens and dancing-rooms; a degradation that is very generally complained of, and might most easily be removed.

The necessity of having private asylums seems to be unavoidable. Families of a certain station in society will never be persuaded to send their relations to large asylums of a public character, governed by Boards of miscellaneous composition. The advantages of such an arrangement are purely visionary. Large asylums, like large hospitals, will continue to be places of treatment for those who cannot afford to pay for private attendance. The richer will always seek for treatment separately; but as in mental disorders the patients cannot always be treated separately, there must continue to be small hospitals for them, and private asylums are really such hospitals. The general treatment of a case of insanity—a malady affecting the mind as well as the body—demands a regulation of the mental functions and habits, as much as an attention to the bodily functions and habits. Direct medical instructions are often limited to the restoration of the general health, in the hope that nature, unembarrassed, may work her salutary masteries in the mind. The obstacles to the restoration of the mind's health have a wider extent, and are only to be removed by careful attention to every mental influence. When drugs have done their rude office, the regulation of habits and daily thoughts, the warding off of all the great and all the little irritations of daily life, protection from the anxieties, and toils, and excitement of business or of pleasure, from injudicious opposition, disturbing visits, perplexing studies, disorderly habits as to dress, food, exercise and sleep,—these are the important agents of cure, and these can only be commanded in houses systematically and specially arranged, and conducted by persons of superior education and of high character. Yet, I believe, there is no physician who is the proprietor of an establishment of this kind, who does not feel that his position is injured by the nature of the licence he is compelled to apply for, and by the

perpetual disposition manifested to characterise him as unworthy of trust. He may be liberal in his house, kind, forbearing, and judicious in his management of those committed to his charge, generous to his patients' friends, and to those in straitened circumstances most humane and considerate; but the law is always directed against him, and he is pronounced unworthy of any appointment of trust and honour in his own department of medicine, and even unfit to be permitted to certify to the necessity of treatment for any insane person, if he is himself the physician applied to for the care and treatment required. None of these circumstances confer any advantage on the public. If they have any effect beyond creating personal mortification, it is that of making those most in need of an asylum reluctant to apply to one.

The remedies for all the evils enumerated would appear to be easy. A registration of every house, instead of a licence obtained in the present manner (as suggested in a letter recently published by Dr. Nesbitt, and addressed to Lord Shaftesbury), might be practicable, and the previous inspection of the house and premises enforced; and even without a diminution of the annual payment now made for licences: and certainly professional respectability would be thus better acknowledged. The certificate of a qualified medical practitioner, accompanied with the signature of the person now required to fill up the order and statement, instead of two medical certificates from persons who have not attended the case, when an asylum is resorted to, and the same kind of certificate from the medical man in attendance when a patient is placed in a private family; the permission of patients voluntarily to resort to asylums, without a certificate, and, in all cases, an immediate return of the patient's name, residence, &c., to the commissioners, whose inspection might be immediate, would relieve medical men from unmerited dishonour, and the friends of patients from much mental pain; and would cause many patients to be submitted at once to necessary treatment, and prevent many from being concealed in neglected abodes with incompetent guardians, or transferred to most objectionable asylums abroad, to be hidden there for life. And if security against too prolonged and improper detention is of importance, as it must be, as well as protection from neglect or any kind of improper treatment, it would in no respects be diminished by these modifications of the law, but really and considerably increased.

The Commissioners in Lunacy would find their duties less obstructed, and their influence much extended by these changes. They have strongly represented the unsatisfactory condition of single patients, many of whom, but for the objections which I have spoken of, would be comfortably and far more advantageously placed in asylums, and thus brought more directly within their efficient su-



pervision. They have expressed their belief that "a very large number of insane persons are taken charge of by medical men and others, without any legal authority," of which there cannot be a question; and the instances of this kind would be far less frequent if the lunacy laws were adapted to the necessities and habits of the present time. The whole character of the present laws also places the commissioners and physicians attending insane patients in an unnatural state of opposition. Every communication from the commissioners' office is made unwelcome; their visits, and the entries made by them in asylum books, too often produce agitation, and frequent and irritating remonstrances. A licensed housekeeper scarcely feels at liberty to make observations which would prevent misconception; he is not himself honoured with any. By an improvement of his position, confidence would be created, every suggestion of the commissioners more willingly received, their true objects more efficiently and far more cheerfully promoted, and their injunctions and wishes more strictly carried into effect.

I have confined my observations to points which chiefly occupy the attention of medical men, and which are especially interesting in relation to the treatment of insanity, and to the satisfaction of those devoting their lives to so arduous and peculiar a duty. Those conscientiously so occupied have no desire to avoid supervision, but they deprecate a publicity hurtful to the insane, and regulations derogatory to their own professional character.

My personal interest in these matters is now inconsiderable. But it has been my happiness to witness, and my privilege to have opportunities of promoting, important changes in the general treatment of the insane; changes now firmly established in England and Scotland; and which, although but slowly taking place on the continent of Europe, have been received with more favour, and adopted widely in the vast United States of America. I now fervently desire the aid of the enlightened physicians, who are still in all the provinces of our country furthering progressive amendments, to improve the condition of all who are engaged in similar efforts, or devoted to the same duties. Unity of purpose and temperance in action will render their success certain, although it may not be immediate.

At the last annual meeting of our Association, a committee was appointed, with the entire confidence of those present on that occasion, to watch the parliamentary proceedings in relation to the lunacy laws. The committee, still in existence, might perhaps usefully draw up a statement of the actual position of medical men engaged in the special practice of medicine in mental disorders, and, at least, respectfully request attention to it, when new laws are under consideration. They might with great truth represent that the existing laws are not adapted to the existing state of things;

that they are unjust to medical men, and unfavorable to the interests of the insane. The disadvantageous circumstances connected with the system of licences, and the objectionable requirement of certificates, might be shown to be ineffective for any good purpose, and the modification of both fairly represented to be compatible with the fullest security for the insane, and even productive of extended advantages to persons so afflicted. There are other points worthy of notice by the committee, and which must some day obtain public consideration: as the neglect of medical opinions, and of all sanitary principles, in the construction of county asylums; and the incredible disregard of mental disorders in the course of study in our English medical schools. These are only defects arising from the unregarded position of our specialty, but the time has arrived when they ought to be removed.

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## QUARTERLY PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW.

### NOTES ON BOOKS, ETC.

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#### *What's in a name?*

THE name of our Journal has been the subject of some cavil, as if it were too ambitious for the practical objects of our association. As the members are aware, it is not the name originally selected by ourselves, but is one which was selected and adopted at a general meeting of the association, and is therefore stamped with an authority which we do not think within the scope of our editorial powers to alter. But as it has been made the theme of somewhat vehement protest, by those whose opinions we respect, it will be worth while to inquire whether the name is fitting to our work and becoming to our purpose.

“What's in a name?”

That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet,”

says the fair Juliet, arguing, as it must be owned, rather sophistically in the heat of her passion; for in very truth, there is much in a name, a fact which poets are not slow to recognise when it suits their purpose.

“O, Amos Cottle! Phœbus, what a name!

To fill the speaking-trump of future fame!”

And who will assert that Byron's sarcasm was not weighed with logic, though it was pointed with malice. “He well knew that