

for the more speedy and extended adoption of the means for the special treatment of incipient disorder by hospitals and reception houses, which afford the best hope of making any marked progress in the prevention of insanity.

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*New (Ninth) Asylum for London.*

“The cry is still they come,” and speculation tries in vain to foresee the end of the procession.

In the new annual report of the London Asylums Committee just published it is stated that “as a result of the report <sup>(1)</sup> of the asylums’ engineer (Mr. Clifford Smith) we shall in due course recommend that the ninth asylum be a modified form of the villa type. The preliminary plans, etc., in connection therewith will be prepared by the asylums’ engineer, the Council having voted a sum of £1000 for this purpose, but until they are completed we are unable to give particulars as to accommodation or an estimate of the cost.”

The issue of the plans will be awaited by the specialty with considerable interest, although the general arrangement of the new asylum may be imagined from the description of its being of the modified villa type, in the light of the engineer’s very lucid report.

The estimate of cost will also be awaited with interest; it will be disappointing if an institution on such lines cannot be provided at a cost very greatly below that which has been attained in previous asylums.

<sup>(1)</sup> Elsewhere alluded to in this issue of the JOURNAL.

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*Insanity in Jerusalem.*

The letter published in “Notes and News,” from the Superintendent of the English Hospital in Jerusalem, draws attention to the want of provision for the enlightened treatment of the insane, as well as to an interesting instance of maltreatment.

The Christian (?) belief that insanity is due to possession by evil spirits, etc., led to much if not all of the barbarous maltreatment of the mentally afflicted throughout Christendom

during the middle ages, and even into the beginning of the nineteenth century.

That this horrible idea should still flourish in the scene of Christ's teachings twenty centuries later is one of the most grotesquely ironical facts that can be conceived.

The picture of an almost nude lunatic chained for forty days and nights (the period of Christ's temptation?) to the altar of an "orthodox" Christian church is one that should bring a blush of shame to every believer in Christianity, and should stir up an indignant desire to overcome such an anachronistic and antichristian anomaly.

Mahommedans treated insanity, as mentioned in our last issue, in connection with their hospitals, recognising it as disease, and the first hospitals for the insane in Europe were those established in Spain,—due, no doubt, to the influence of Moorish ideas and examples. If the above-mentioned fact were sufficiently widely known, there is little doubt that an effort would be made to remove this reproach from the Christian Mecca.

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*Another Messiah.*

The latest claimant to Messianic dignity is Mr. Piggott, of Clapton, who has been associated with a body known as the Agapemonites, and some members of that body have accepted him in this aspect.

The Clapton public, however, appears to have taken the matter very seriously and excitably, with the result that the new Messiah has received very extensive advertisement in the daily papers. This is to be regretted, since it is exactly what would best further the aims of designing imposition, and would be unkind if it were mere lunacy.

That the press and the public are not better informed of the frequency of the Messianic delusion is also a matter for regret. If the statistics of the number of persons now in our asylums who labour under this special delusion could be publicly announced, it is possible that the appearance of one more claimant would be received with greater equanimity, and lead neither to local commotions nor sensational paragraphs.

The treatment of these unfortunates prior to their qualifying