

## THE ASYLUM CHAPLAIN'S COLUMN.

*"Ut Co-operatores simus."*

*A Plea for Daily Services in Asylum Chapels.* By Rev. H.  
HAWKINS.

In a memoir of Dr. Conolly, of Hanwell, the following passage occurs:—"The tone of the chapel bell coming across the narrow valley of the Brent still reminds me, morning and evening, of the well-remembered and mingled congregation of the afflicted, and who are then assembling, humble yet hopeful, and not forgotten, and not spiritually deserted." These words of the famous mental physician strike the keynote of the following paper, the purpose of which is to invite attention to some of the advantages of *daily* morning and evening prayer in chapels of lunatic asylums. Such services "daily throughout the year" are beneficial in various ways. They are helpful to chaplains by their fixedness, involving the exercise of their ministrations daily at regular hours. Any restraint imposed on their movements would be amply compensated by the privileges for their congregations and themselves accruing from continuous worship. The chaplain's presence at morning and evening prayer keeps the congregation and himself in close communication, and many of those who may not *themselves* attend the daily services are yet aware that the opportunity is within reach. The benefits of such services to many of the patients of an asylum are various. The interval of *quietude* before the commencement is no doubt felt by many to be restful and soothing. The spirit of a sensitive patient which may previously have been ruffled and discomposed by noise or some irritating occurrence is often calmed and quieted in chapel. The daily morning service is a *preparation*, as elsewhere, for the day's occupations. To use the expression of a patient unfailing in attendance, evening and morning, the early worship "fortifies for the day." Another referred to the daily ministrations in chapel as "a great comfort." A letter from a discharged convalescent contained the remark, "The services at the chapel which I have had the privilege of attending have been to me, as it were, wayside seats, where I have often sat and refreshed myself." "Dear old chapel," another remarks, "I have spent many sacred hours there." Another benefit incident to attendance at daily services is *relief to the monotony* of the lives of many in

asylums, especially of the unoccupied. The walk to and from chapel and its services are a *break in the day*. This is not a *chief* advantage; still, it is not valueless. The services for morning and evening prayer appear to be specially well adapted to the circumstances of an asylum congregation. The Prayer Book has a soothing tendency very beneficial to sorrowful and disturbed spirits. Many "weary of earth and laden with their sin" have been relieved by joining in the prayers, by hearing some comfortable words of the Bible, by taking part in some well-known hymn, or by some remark from the pulpit which seemed to apply to their own cases. Again, many patients who neither have a Bible of their own nor ready access to another may yet become profitably acquainted with parts of the Holy Scriptures read at chapel services; and what tender memories, healing in their influence, may be awakened by the words and harmony of some familiar hymn, such as "Rock of Ages"—associated, may be, with earliest recollections. The regular use of daily prayers in chapel may indirectly exercise a wholesome influence on the household at large, and not merely on the accustomed congregation. The very knowledge of the regular hours of prayer may be consolatory to some who perhaps themselves cannot attend. The sound of the bell for chapel service may be a reminder of the duty of worship, and perhaps awaken a desire to go to the house of God. The writer recalls the case of a bedridden patient to whom the sound of the chapel bell was a call to his own devotions. Week-day services may afford an opportunity for the occasional invitation of preachers who might not be conveniently able to come on Sundays. Their presence is valuable, and they supply *variety* of ministrations, specially desirable for congregations who are necessarily restricted in their movements. Not to patients only, but also to members of the staff—attendants, nurses, etc.—the occasional opportunity of attending week-day services in an asylum chapel may in some cases be beneficial, fortifying and bracing the spirit for the day's work, or refreshing it after the long hours of labour. The merciful invitation, "Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile," may be gratefully responded to by resorting, for a brief interval of rest and quietude, to some of the frequent chapel services. These should be short, on week-days not exceeding, as a rule, 20 or 25 minutes; on occasions when a special sermon is given somewhat longer time must, of course, be allowed. Ordinarily the shortened

service indicated in the Prayer Book furnishes an office of suitable brevity. It should be made bright with simple chants and hymns in which the congregation can join, and occasionally a very short devotional reading might be welcomed. Others besides members of the English Church (for in large asylums are various religious denominations) would often be comforted by opportunities for frequent worship, and be led to value the ministrations supplied. For the reasons mentioned, and others besides, week-day services in asylums are very valuable. They should be steadfastly maintained where they already exist, and introduced where they do not. *Experto crede.*

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## PART II.—REVIEWS.

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*La Reina Donna Juana la Loca, estudio historico.* Por ANTONIO RODRIGUEZ VILLA. Madrid, 1892, octavo, pp. 576.

This book may be said to clear away the cloud of obscurity which has for well-nigh four centuries hung over the history of Juana, the Queen of Castile. The kingdoms of Castile and Aragon were politically united by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella. They had five children, Isabella, Juan, Juana, Maria, and Catalina.

Ferdinand, the Catholic, the most sagacious prince of his time, was solicitous to increase his power and territory by dynastic marriages. Isabella, the eldest daughter, became Queen of Portugal, and Juana, at the age of seventeen, was betrothed to Philip, Archduke of Austria, whose sister had been promised to Don Juan. Philip was the son of the Emperor Maximilian, by Mary of Burgundy, from whom he inherited the low countries. A fleet of about 100 sail was sent to convoy the Princess past the dangerous shores of France. She arrived at Rotterdam on the 17th September, 1496; but it was a month before the Archduke met his bride at Ostend. Philip was one of the handsomest men of his time, and was said to be amiable to those around him, but selfish, fickle, indolent in business, and fond of pleasure. Princes in those days, though they recognized only one wife, had many mistresses; practically they were polygamists.