

5. The single are sent to Asylums in proportion greater than the married as 2·83-1; the widowed as 3-2, *i.e.*, in proportion to the numbers of each in the general population above 20 years of age, though the actual numbers of single and married admissions are nearly identical.

6. It is almost certain that in the excess of single above married, the excess is due, not to celibacy causing insanity, but to insanity or a tendency thereto preventing marriage. If this be so, about 1 per cent. of the single among the general population, aged 20-30, and about 3 per cent. of those aged 30-40, are so from mental defect ultimately causing their admission to an asylum.

7. General paralysis is more frequent among males than females, but at the age 40-50, when the disease is most frequent, this relative frequency is least marked.

8. Unlike insanity in the mass, general paralysis is hardly more frequent in the single than in the married, a circumstance probably traceable to the comparative rarity of congenital defect in general paralytics.

9. General paralysis results much more frequently than ordinary insanity from causes implying business energy, and the use (and abuse) of the activities of life; much less frequently from defects inherent in the individual.

Notes of a Visit to the Idiot School at the Hague. By
FLETCHER BEACH, M.B. Lond., M.R.C.P., Medical
Superintendent of the Darenth (late Clapton) Asylum.

While on a trip through Holland in the year 1877, I visited the well-known School for Idiots at the Hague, and, thinking that my observations might perhaps prove interesting to others as well as myself, I have put together the following notes:—

The Institution owes its origin to three public-spirited men, who in the autumn of 1854 met at the Hague to endeavour to found a School for Idiots. These were the Minister, C. E. van Koetsveld, the Doctor, J. Brouwer Stark, and the Schoolmaster, H. van den Heuvel, Professor Schroeder van der Kolk assisting them with his advice. Subscriptions were raised, the Queen of Holland alone putting 2,000 florins at their disposal, a house was hired, and on the 15th of May, 1855 a school was opened with eleven out-

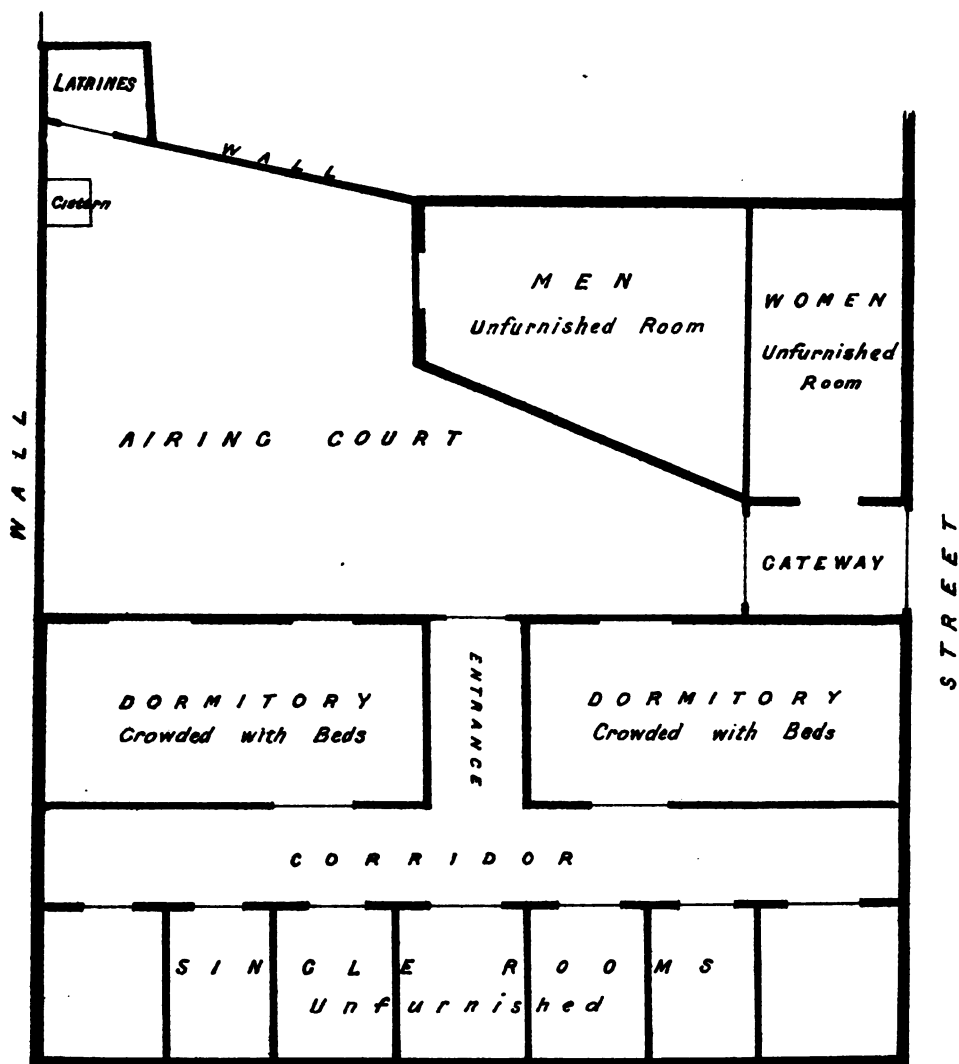
door pupils. The experiment proved a success, subscriptions and donations flowed in freely, and a large house with a garden at the back was bought for 20,736 florins. The house was re-modelled in view of its future purpose for the sum of 7,795 florins, and on the 1st of January, 1858 the present Institution was opened. The pupils increased in number, and additions were made to it from time to time, more especially in 1867, when a building adjacent to the garden was bought, and schoolrooms, workshops, and a gymnasium were constructed.

The school accommodates 16 day scholars, who daily go to and from school (a feature new to institutions of a similar character in England), and who pay 100 florins a year for their tuition. There are also 44 boarders, who are divided into two classes, the first paying 600 and the second 300 florins a year. Voluntary and State contributions added to this provide the requisite amount of money for carrying on the work. Exteriorly the edifice is very plain, being simply one of a row of houses in the centre of the town, opposite to the cathedral. Entering the hall, and passing by the reception-room, we find on the right-hand side of the ground floor a dormitory and dining-hall, destined for the first class of pupils. In the hall are found a library and play-things for their use when out of school. From the corridor which conducts us into this hall proceed two passages, one situated at the front, the other at the back of the building. Between the two is found the apartment of the director and the kitchen. The left side of the building has two rooms, provided with all the necessary apparatus for hot and cold water baths, &c., and, in addition, a dormitory. From the corridor first mentioned a large staircase conducts us to the first floor, where the children of the second class, who are the most numerous, are placed. Here they sleep, and have their meals, the greater part of the day, however, being spent by them in the school or in the open air. One of the rooms is used as an infirmary, but there is little sickness, and epidemics of all kinds have spared the Institution. The dormitories are clean and airy, the bedsteads separated from one another by curtains, and above each bedstead is placed the name of the patient occupying it. The mattresses of the wet and dirty cases are divided into three parts, so that the middle portion can be easily removed and re-filled with straw, dry cabbage leaves, and other similar material. In each bedroom sleeps an attendant. At the back of the house is

a court, paved with bricks, where the children play. It was formerly a garden, but has been altered to suit its present purpose. On the left-hand side of this court are the schools, workshops and gymnasium, communicating with one another. The Institution is under the judicious direction of M. Moesveld, and employs for purposes of teaching a schoolmaster and two assistants, a schoolmistress and five assistants, a work-mistress, two teachers of gymnastics, one of mat making and one of cigar making, a somewhat novel employment for imbeciles. A medical man, non-resident, attends to the general health of the inmates.

In the first of the schoolrooms, that nearest the main building, are the three lowest classes, who are placed under the care of female teachers. These children are taught elementary notions of objects, such as form, colour, size, weight, &c. Great pains are also taken to improve the defective articulation so common in patients of this class, while the faculty of imitation is not neglected. Ideas of number are also inculcated. A noteworthy feature in this schoolroom is a desk of horse-shoe form, on the concave side of which sits the teacher, who is thus able to give individual as well as collective teaching to the children standing round the convex side of it. At times, the children form a circle, and sing simple melodies, or play games on the Kindergarten system. Passing on, we find ourselves in a second room, where instruction of a higher order is given. Here, among others, are found the day scholars. The children are divided into classes, and are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, drawing, history, &c., by easy stages. Moral and religious instruction is not neglected. The pupils sit at desks, accommodating at most only two or three scholars, an obvious advantage to the long desks and forms formerly so commonly used. Desks of this and the horse-shoe shape, I found in the American Idiot schools, and, indeed, the ones in use here were made from an American pattern. In this room are two cabinets, one containing stuffed animals, the other objects of natural history. By this means the children are taught a practical knowledge of nature. Next we enter a room in which patients of a very low type are placed. Some of these, having improved, are at times sent to the schoolroom, others, after many unsuccessful efforts to impart instruction, are sent home, and others to a lunatic asylum. Adjoining this room is the gymnasium, fitted up with all necessary appliances. In the rear are two workshops, one

LUNATIC ASYLUM, CAIRO,
EGYPT.



Sketch of Ground Plan

for the making of mats, the other of cigars, 4,000 of these being produced annually.

Patients are discharged (1) when they attain the age of 28 years ; (2) after being in the school for five years ; (3) when the state of their health requires it ; (4) if there is no hope of progress and improvement.

In conclusion I must acknowledge M. Moesveld's kindness in showing me everything which I expressed a wish to see.

Two Visits to the Cairo Asylum, 1877 and 1878.

I. By A. R. URQUHART, M.D., Warwick County Asylum.

It has been pointed out that, however potent Islam has proved in the history of civilisation, progress within its narrow boundaries is unknown—its development is at once full-blown. And especially is this true with regard to the treatment of its lunatics ; for whatever credit may be due to the pioneers of Mohammedanism in originating the idea of the separation of the insane from the sane, it is sadly marred by the fact that in thus caring for the welfare of the community at large they have quite overlooked that of the luckless minority.

It may be that the improvement of the condition of the insane of Grand Cairo is relegated to the golden age—the every-day dream of the modern Egyptian—that is to be inaugurated “when England annexes Egypt.” Manifold indeed are the changes to be consummated then—divers in their aims as the interests of the missionaries, the magazine writers, the stockbrokers or the statesmen that propose them. But as it is, in the matter-of-fact present, amid all the wonders of Cairo, amid the Mosques and Bazaars, amid the gaities of the Oriental Paris sprung up under the fostering care of the Khedive, amid the gigantic relics of that wondrous civilisation of Ancient Egypt, there is no more melancholy, degrading fact than their common madhouse.

Doré with pencil among the noisome alleys of London, Dickens with pen in the horrors of the Fleet, have made us familiar with miseries and loathsomeness that would be comforts and cleanliness to *Les Misérables* of Cairo ; and though travellers' tales and special correspondents' telegrams are looked on with suspicious eyes in these latter days, an unvarnished statement of the condition of lunatics in