

us in this direction cannot be doubted by any impartial observer.

(¹) Höfding, *History of Philosophy*, vol. i, p. 375.—(²) Büchner, *Kraft und Stoff*.—(³) Moleschott, *Der Kreislauf des Lebens*.—(⁴) Ernst Mach, *Erkenntnis und Irrtum*, Leipzig, 1905, p. 4.—(⁵) Maxwell, *Scientific Papers*, Cambridge, 1890.—(⁶) Oswald, *Naturphilosophie*, Leipzig, 1902; *Die Überwindung des wissenschaftlichen Materialismus*, 1905.—(⁷) Mach, *Die Mechanik in ihrer Entwicklung*, Leipzig, 1883; *Die Analyse der Empfindung*, Jena, 1902.—(⁸) Karl Pearson, *Grammar of Science*, 1892.—(⁹) *Ibid.*, 2nd edition, 1900, p. 281.—(¹⁰) The doctrines described in the text have in recent years become the basis of "Pragmatism," a system which has already obtained a firm hold upon the philosophical world. For an exposition of its principles the reader may be referred to Dewey, *Studies in Logical Theory*, Schiller, *Studies in Humanism*, Milhaud, *Le Rationnel*, 1898, William James, *Pragmatism*, 1907. Pragmatism, however, is really an ontological theory, and goes very much farther than the scientific idealism of Pearson, which is really a working hypothesis. The validity of the latter, therefore, is by no means dependent upon that of the former.—(¹¹) Mach, "De la Physique et de la Psychologie," *L'Année Psychologique*, 1906.—(¹²) Fechner, *Elemente der Psycho-physik*, Leipzig, 1860.—(¹³) Höfding, *The Problems of Philosophy*, New York, 1905.—(¹⁴) C. B. Farrar, "Types of the Devolutional Psychoses," *Brit. Med. Journ.*, September 29th, 1906.—(¹⁵) Janet, *Les Obsessions et la Psychasthénie*, Paris, 1903.

The Mental Recreations of the Mental Nurse.⁽¹⁾ By
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OUR distinguished President, Sir William Collins, in his admirable oration delivered to us last year, expressed appreciative sympathy with the main objects of the Asylum Workers' Association. These are, firstly, to raise in the public esteem the calling we have chosen, and secondly, to succour those members of our body who have suffered in the service.

Our President's very eloquent and appealing address, clothed with the literary grace and expressed with the philosophic charm so peculiarly his own, was in matter and manner such that we all fervently hoped for an anniversary of the pleasure experienced last May. The claims made in his speech from the ethical side, *viz.*, upon character and conduct, rather than from the purely intellectual aspect of the nurse's duties, are applicable to all those who minister to the mentally afflicted, and our President's invocation that we, as asylum workers, should not let go our sympathy nor neglect the qualities of the heart out of homage to those of the head, will long be cherished as among his wisest aphorisms.

We regret that Sir William Collins—who was recently

described by a cabinet minister in the House of Commons as one of the ablest members of the Legislature—is not again to address us this year, but we are proud that our leader and the figure-head of our Association is one whose success in so many departments of human activity has been phenomenal, and that whether by the sick-bed, or in the professorial chair, or administering the affairs of the greatest city in the world, or acting as Vice- to the noble Chancellor of our Imperial University, or furthermore, in directing inquiries into the great affairs of State, our President is one who always kindles interest and rouses enthusiasm, and we rejoice that with his multitudinous engagements he still consents to direct our counsels and to extend his sympathetic and practical interest in our very special work. I, as one of his Vice-Presidents called upon to address you, feel the disappointment as much as any of you do, and I crave the kind indulgence and sympathy of my audience as a most inadequate representative of our distinguished President. My only claim—and it is a proud one—is that I am one of yourselves, an asylum worker, and one who for nearly thirty years has taken a continuous interest as well as a sincere pleasure in the work we have selected to do with the best of our ability.

The two-fold object of our confraternity or guild, *viz.*, our advancement and our benefaction, are fully set forth in the Annual Report which has just been read to us, but the roll of membership, 3,000 out of a possible 18,000 asylum workers, can hardly be considered satisfactory, and it is earnestly hoped that before the close of another year a substantial increase will be made in our roll, so that the leaven of our active membership may give such an impetus to the objects of our Association that not only may solidarity and coherence be imparted to it, but that also greater influence, sympathy and vigour may be extended to our work, which, on account of its exceptional claims to humanitarian considerations, should inspire interest beyond all others.

Our medium of inter-communication—and every organisation has its literature of propagandism—the *Asylum News*, has been for many years under the Editorship of our wise and tactful friend, Dr. Shuttleworth, who has done much to cement friendship, to uphold the asylum nurse, to advance his and her status, and to sustain his and her position before the public

gaze ; and it is hoped, now that other arrangements are being made for its continuance, the secret of his successful piloting may be imparted to his successor, Dr. Nicoll, whom we sincerely congratulate upon his honourable selection and distinction. The pages of the *Asylum News* demonstrate only too clearly the need there is for help to those of our numbers who have fallen by the way, and as a plea for these benefactions it may be urged there is no one, unless he has lived in actual touch with the insane, who can in the smallest degree appreciate the relief of change and rest from the peculiarly trying conditions, the arduous stress and the overwhelming strangeness of the work of nursing the insane. Such a rest as our funds permit, insures for our workers a complete change of thought, not only from the objective but from the subjective world in which we live—a world full of phantom voices, visionary sights and unexpected realisations, which cannot be ignored and which not infrequently become dire catastrophes. The constant watchfulness necessary to secure safety, to preserve and encourage order and method in such a world, the need always to exercise tact, sympathy, and forbearance, under the most adverse and trying conditions : the necessity for bringing gentleness, serenity, and kindness into the lives of these “ waifs and strays of intellect ” must and does tell upon any ordinary individual, and the Home of Rest or a pension at the close of a long pilgrimage cannot but be a well-merited recognition for trying duties well performed.

There is absolutely no parallel to asylum work in any vocation, and I am certain that the services of the staff in many of our asylums who assist so faithfully to keep down the sum total of human suffering are not justly, adequately, nor fully recognised.

Our report indicates a greater demand than at any previous time upon the Home of Rest Fund, and although there has been an inordinate call upon it during the year, yet there is still—through the careful oversight of our Treasurer, Mrs. Chapman—a small balance left to the good. It is probably not too much to say that the special work of benefaction organised by this fund is a most deserving charity, and needs to be brought prominently—as we know only our President can do—before a sympathetic public, which only requires to be convinced of merit in order to assist its due reward.

It is true that in some instances public authorities refuse pensions to their well-worn employees ; still, the London County Council, happily, has always shown a readiness to consider services faithfully rendered in their asylums, services rendered in isolation from family life, and which are not unattended with serious risks and danger to life and limb, which are constant on week-days and Sundays, night and day alike, and which must never be allowed to pall, or the object of our service is unattained. In the asylums of the London County Council the leave of the staff has been extended to a full day and a half per week for the male attendants, and to three weeks annual leave for nurses, and every evening from eight to ten o'clock is free to nurses of both sexes to go out of the asylum. Furthermore an increase in wages and emoluments has recently been made, all of which tend to show that the greatest municipal authority in the world pays a due regard to the nature of these duties, to the need for rest, and also for home life and the comfort of those engaged in their services—a consideration which, in the presence of members of this authority, I beg to state, is keenly recognised and appreciated.

Within the last few years nursing the sick in mind and body has become much more exacting, and greater stress has been laid upon the requirements of the asylum staff, confronted, as it is, with the risks, difficulties, troubles, and anxieties inseparably associated with the care of the insane. The Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland, which grants a certificate for proficiency in mental nursing, has recently extended the minimum period during which the necessary training and experience can be obtained to three years, but probably few nurses will be enabled to complete their full course of studies within this period, so that a high state of efficiency is expected from them, and the acquisition of the certificate may be taken to imply qualifications and attainments of no mean order.

Text-books are published upon mental nursing, and the duties of the mental nurse are therein precisely defined and fully described, and I myself am guilty of publishing a treatise, may I venture to hope, for the further delectation of the asylum nurse? All these facts suggest that those who have selected the vocation of nursing the insane are under an obligation to extend the usefulness of their talents by applying their minds

diligently to reading, studying, and observing ; to attendance at lectures and demonstrations, and by presenting themselves for examination. As the elevation of the mind is the principal end of all studies, so it should be our pleasure and purpose to work with zeal and enthusiasm, for work done with thoroughness leads to success, and in no department of medicine is a good nurse of such incalculable value as in a case of insanity, where the essence of treatment is that alluring, baffling, and even mysterious influence of one mind upon another, and it is remarkable what power can be exercised over an insane person—his habits of attention and trains of thought—by a well-disciplined mind. Attacks of mental disorder may be cut short, infinite anxiety and risks saved to both patients and relatives, accidents avoided, suicides averted, and valuable lives restored to reason through the efforts of a good mental nurse.

It is essential therefore that we should obtain as high a class of applicants for asylum work as possible, persons of good character, and those who will make the welfare of the patients their personal interest, and who will persevere by example and precept to promote their recovery and well-being. It is only by providing surroundings suitable to their responsibilities that the best type of nurse—refined and cultivated women—can be encouraged to join asylum service.

With this preamble, which I admit has been at rather undue length, I would like to point out more especially that the duty cast upon the mental nurse of either sex to cultivate and improve their art—which in most instances is the re-education of the reason—psychic pedagogy as it is called—has furthermore another aspect, *viz.*, that the nurse owes also a duty to herself. Every person is bound to make his life worthy, and for this the nurse must have proper leisure, adequate rest, and opportunities afforded for mental and physical recreation. It is only by means of proper leisure that self-culture can be possible, and the best self-culture helps to enthrone the sense of duty within us. Sir James Crichton-Browne, in his Presidential Address of 1902, referred to the nurse's recreation, and that he might see nurses mounted upon suitable motor cars, after having shown competence in golf and bridge ! Although these are probably figurative and hyperbolic attainments, yet there is no question but that the asylum nurse should receive

ample opportunity for bodily, and more especially for mental, improvement.

In the life of Darwin we are told how his father, Dr. Darwin, declared that he had "often seen the paramount importance, for the sake of the patient, of keeping up the hope and with it the strength of the nurse in charge."

In my few remarks, I have chosen more especially to dwell upon the mental aspect, in order to advance the claims for mental diversion, which, in my opinion, are equally as, even if not more, essential to health than are the purely physical claims. The mind must have occupation, for lack of interest and idleness lead to irregularities, and if the mind is kept busy and well disciplined the person is true to the best of himself.

The mind of each one of us is probably endowed with a vast number of gifts of totally different variety, and, like the limbs of the body, if they are not exercised they waste and we are crippled.

It is of supreme interest therefore for the mental nurse to possess a well-arranged mind, for she has to be buoyant when hope can scarcely be entertained, and if her own mind is right it helps to correct what is wrong in others and to mollify what is hard in her special surroundings. She has to dignify labour of whatever kind in order to educate and encourage those around her. She has to realise the maxim that sowing corn or writing epics is work which can be equally elevating, that the faculty of effort is necessary for both, and that to master things is to insist on oneself, and thus to be true to the best of our individual self.

Of the pleasures intermediate in tone between the bodily and mental are those afforded by gardening. Our men know the mental value of this diversion, for it teaches patience, quickens curiosity, it induces hope and tender ways, it affords pleasure to others, and it has the charm that something has been accomplished by oneself which is beautiful and varied, and thus is twice blessed. I have seen effects which delight the eye and scent the air from a few seeds sown in window-boxes or flower-pots, and the delicate appreciation of colour together with its artistic arrangement, and for which ladies are famous, prove that women are *par excellence* adapted for gardening effects. Of the two cults which in recent years have received more attention than any other, *viz.*, the care of

children and of gardens, I believe their advancement to be due to the fact that they have been the objects of serious study on the part of capable women. Even one species, such as the *Linum* or the *Geum* or the *Salvias*, or *Saxifrages*, in its many varieties, can be made a study of by any ordinary person, and even where there is no full scope for gardening, Nature herself, in her own time and way, profusely scatters plants which can become the museum of the collector; the name, date and *habitat* of the collected specimen reminding the nurse of many happy associations, at the same time giving point and object for her rambles, and cultivating her powers of observation and her aptitude for describing and reporting. Probably, of all the pleasures which can refresh the mind, there is none more invigorating and strengthening than reading, which to the mind is what physical exercise is to the body, *viz.*, the best preservative of its strength and efficiency. It is the most soothing remedy for many of the ills of the body, and the position of librarian to a mental hospital or an asylum is one of the most pleasure-yielding posts, *i.e.*, if there is adequate literature to circulate, as there should be. I think that reading aloud should be cultivated by nurses, and their usefulness and value might be further enhanced if they were to take lessons in elocution from competent teachers. I believe that many mental patients would be soothed by good and clear reading aloud to them. I know its value with children.

It is chiefly through books that most of us have enjoyed intercourse with great minds, by whose intellectual companionship we are at the same time entertained and elevated. It is consoling to know that no matter how poor a person may be, there is the knowledge that the best characters never refuse to cross his threshold. In this way some of the most charming lives that have adorned literature are drawn into our own circle, in which we find ideals to love and idols to worship. I think that good reading, which may equally be the diversion of young and old, rich and poor, ill and well, forms the best counteracting agency to unworthy temptation.

With the number of foreigners in our great cities and their asylums many of our nurses have the opportunity for learning a foreign language, and such an interest may be the means of kindling a sympathy between herself and the patient when other means have failed. In these days of short cuts to attain-

ments text-books are cheap, and a little progress every day may mean much progress in a year!

There is a great consolation to the tired and too often despondent mind of the mental nurse in the reading of poetry, which is really musical thought, and it is curious that the great Darwin expressed regret that he had not devoted more time to poetry as an intellectual diversion, showing that he desired to relax his logical attentions by an exercise of the imaginative faculty, and in the words of our President, to familiarise himself with "the language of the heart rather than that of the head." It is gratifying for me personally to know that one of my own staff, possessed of the true poetic spirit, delights the readers of the *Asylum News*, and that he is no less distinguished as a kind, orderly, and conscientious mental nurse.

I am convinced that the Executive Committee acted most judiciously when they introduced prizes for the study of literature in our own reading circle among our nurses. My own experience of introducing a circle of the Home Reading Union convinced me not only that it was possible to obtain pleasureable intellectual diversion from reading upon a definite syllabus, but that a taste for wholesome reading could thereby be initiated and cultivated. During one winter at Claybury we read out of penny copies, John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, "The Merchant of Venice," "Hamlet," and Wordsworth's poetry, and on each occasion the discussion which followed showed how much meditation and study had been given to this diversion.

The influence of music was well exemplified by the Society of St. Cecilia, which based its efforts upon the purifying influence of music on our emotional nature. In the Berlin Charité Hospital concerts are given on every Sunday afternoon from 5 to 6.30 for the benefit of the patients. Witness the ethical results of music in the missions of Sankey and Moody, of Torrey and Alexander, of the Salvation Army, and of the Church Army with Prebendary Carlile at its head. Music charms away care and anger and terror; it delights the ear, soothes the tired nerves, composes the thoughts, dispels morbid ideas and recreates the mind. It might be worth while applying the experimental method for the determination of the effects of music on the circulation and on the nervous system,

and thus indirectly on other functions of the body, in a more serious and systematic way than has hitherto been done. Some of my hearers may not be aware that Elgar, now numbered among the Immortals, was formerly interested in the band of the Worcester Asylum, and at one time conducted it. However, it is not often that we get an Elgar to guide our musical staff, but the services of those who *are* talented always command a ready appreciation, and one of our own nurses at Claybury was afforded such facilities for the cultivation of her talents that she entered the lists of competition and successfully carried away some of the best prizes in our immediate neighbourhood. The pleasure she afforded to others has left happy reminiscences of her devotion to an art which can be the handmaiden to duty, and which she now exercises in a higher and a wider sphere at another place.

The great philosopher, Carlyle, described music as "the inarticulate speech which lets us for a moment gaze into the Infinite."

Painting and pictures are also well known as branches of æsthetic art, and they have their due place in the relief of mental fatigue and as antidotes to the monotony of routine, which cannot but be the inevitable lot of the asylum nurse. Sir Joshua Reynolds said that a room hung with pictures was a room hung with thoughts, and we as mental physicians practise this precept, for do we not make a great point of decorating the walls of our mental hospitals with these consolers to the lonely and the brain-weary? How often do we see the sick in mind gaze into illustrations in books, or prints upon the walls, and in this way obtain representations of healthy ideas which help to direct their thoughts once more into normal channels? In this connection, the value of pictures cannot but find a ready response in our President's heart, for some of my own earliest appreciation of pictures was due in a great measure to the influence of the artistic mind of our President's father, whose academy pictures from his own brush will always be to me a happy recollection.

I may be permitted to state that our President himself has not neglected this side of his versatile genius, and I expect that he still appreciates the pleasure afforded by this diversion in a busy life.

How many of us have put in a spare half-hour at the National

Gallery and refreshed our thoughts with the inspiring genius of some great painter until we think we understand and love him—for a great picture is also a great moral lesson? Art is a sweet consoler, and, unlike a book, pictures can be gazed at without sustained effort, for when the eye is fatigued the mind can then relax its attention. At the Claybury Asylum some of our nurses' private rooms demonstrate how much interest can be taken in, and how many happy recollections can be preserved through the love of art. The days of the "kodak" are so obtrusive that I will pass over its ubiquitous transports, merely remarking that I possess many volumes of its productions, and I confess to a lingering attachment for its more or less libellous—often more—representations of men and things, and I would also add of women and children!

There is one other aspect upon which I should like to dwell. It received a dignified allusion from our President in his address last May, and that is the religious influence in the life and work of the mental nurse. Much has been said upon this aspect, and there are those present before whom any remarks of mine may possibly appear to be a presumption, but from the psychological aspect alone there is a consolation in spiritual belief which no other emotion affords.

Religion is a part of man's nature which cannot be banished or repressed, and there is in every breast a longing and a yearning for its comforts. That hopeful look into the future, from which no one has yet lifted the veil, is the foundation of much of our faith and belief. History has preserved many instances of the repression of our hope and faith and creed, but these have emerged from the struggle, and in spite of opposition and conflict are to-day as dominant in the minds of many of our workers as they were in the days when the mediæval Church was the sole custodian of our knowledge and of our ideals.

Religion implies a sacrifice and a service to others, and it tends to subordinate man's will to higher ideals. The self-denial it rouses yields a gratification which can compare with no other. It implies the ordering and the submission of our nature to that of something transcendent, some great Power immanent in Nature itself, and yet which lies behind and directs Nature. I will not dwell upon this aspect further than to state that its influence is to mould character, to place a higher value upon duty, and to stimulate that highest attribute of man's mind, *viz.*,

the spirit of love and reverence. Spiritual agencies kindle emotions of fervour, sympathy, and right-mindedness even among our roughest characters and in the most crowded areas of our large cities, and opportunities for cultivating this side of our nature should be placed before every one of our workers. It is through influences of this kind that what is best and noblest can be elicited and developed.

In conclusion, I may be permitted to state that into whatever sphere a well-trained and sympathetic mental nurse enters, there the standard of life is raised, for she brings enlightenment and encouragement to her patients upon such subjects as cleanliness, self-discipline and self-control; thrift, the home, and the care of the young.

I should be wanting in my duty, as the head of a large institution in which so much of its success depends upon the nurse, if I did not advocate her claims for mental diversion as well as for physical recreation, and plead her cause for a liberal support of the Home of Rest Fund which endeavours to meet both these claims.

(¹) Address delivered before the Asylum Workers' Association, May, 1908.

Observations on the Less Severe Forms, Pathology and Treatment of Mental Disorder in Advanced Life.

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THIS communication is based on a study of cases in Glasgow's Aged People's Home. The Home is for those in reduced circumstances, but above the pauper grade. It has accommodation for 140 men and 86 women. Reference is made to this point to enable a general inference to be drawn as to the proportion and frequency of cases of the more acute though brief forms of mental disturbance among the old; for with one exception they all occurred within a period of two months since the beginning of the present year. However, looking back over the last twenty years, my impression is that the number of cases here recorded is above the average of our previous experience.