

on the pathology and treatment of disease, like the admirable papers of Dr. Boyd and Dr. Arlidge; communications on matters of asylum utility; and a third class, which forms a new and peculiar feature in this *Journal*, namely, descriptive accounts of public asylums and hospitals. The descriptions of the Kent, the Lincolnshire, and the Cotton Hill Asylums are of a kind to prove both interesting and instructive to all persons on whom the construction, the arrangement, and the management of such institutions may devolve. We hope that these descriptions will, from time to time, be continued, and that they will embrace, not only modern institutions, in which the buildings are nearly all that could be desired; but that they will also include many of the older asylums, in which grave architectural and local imperfections have been, to a great extent, obviated by the skillful arrangements of the superintendents. It will scarcely be denied, by any one conversant with such matters, that at the present time some of the most comfortable asylums are among the least commodious; a fact arising, in some degree, from the greater age of the more imperfect buildings, and the consequent accumulation in them of fittings and furniture; and for the rest, in the necessity which was imposed on their superintendents to supply the shortcomings of the architect by the more liberal employment of the upholsterer. Certainly the asylums, from which the greatest amount of instruction is to be derived, are those in which the greatest number of difficulties have been overcome.

Another class of contents are the lectures of eminent mental physicians, of which our present number contains an example.

A fourth class are reviews of books on insanity, and its allied subjects. These are necessarily brief, partaking more of the nature of notices than of stated reviews; and the pressure of other matter makes us willing to leave this department to other journals for whose pages elaborate reviews are more suited.

A class of contents to which we attach much importance, and which we hope to see developed, is one for which it is difficult to find a name. We mean the multifarious little matters of practical utility, ranging from pins and needles upwards. The *utilioria*, by which the ship is kept neat, and cleanly, and comfortable. Little matters, but of great importance to the well-being and economy of a large institution, and, not unfrequently also, to the health and the safety of the patients.

We have inserted notices of legal proceedings affecting asylum management; such as convictions for the ill-treatment of lunatics, and other similar matters. But we have hitherto abstained from reporting medico-legal trials, feeling that the intricate questions involved would require more space for their satisfactory discussion than we could afford to spare.

*Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Meeting of the Association of Medical Superintendents of American Asylums for the Insane.*

We condense, from the July number of the *American Journal of Insanity*, the following account of the above meeting. In the American journal, although the dis-

cussions are reported very briefly and the papers read are only named, the account of the business of the meeting occupies twenty pages.

The meeting took place at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, on the 9th of May last. It was attended by twenty-one medical officers of public asylums, and by one of a private asylum. Dr. Bell, of the Mc'Lean Asylum, Mass., was President. The business was commenced by Dr. Buttolph's resignation of the office of secretary being accepted, and by Dr. Nichols being appointed to that office, *pro tem.*; a Committee being appointed to nominate a permanent successor.

The decease of Drs. Bullock and Stewart, two members of the Association, since the last meeting, was then announced, and two members were appointed "to prepare memoirs of the deceased to be recorded in the journal of proceedings," and resolutions expressive of condolence with their friends. Measures which appear to us not less unusual than they are graceful and deserving of imitation. We know not how it is to be accounted for, but the fact is evident that our brethren on the other side of the Atlantic, engaged in the same specialty as ourselves, are animated by more cordial sympathies, by a stronger *esprit de corps* than we have.

A paper by Dr. Harlow was then read, on the heating apparatus of the Main Asylum, and on the relative merits of steam and hot water for this purpose. This paper gave rise to a lively discussion, which occupied the remainder of the morning, and was continued at the evening session. It terminated in the appointment of a committee to investigate the subject and report to the next meeting.

*Dr. Kirkbride* then read a paper "On the importance of precision and accuracy in the use of terms for insanity, and instructions for its treatment." He objected strongly to calling a sick man *moon-struck*, or, in other words, a *lunatic*. He also objected to the terms *asylum* and *retreat*, *keeper* and *cell*.

*Dr. Stribling* thought the term, *hospital* for the insane, very objectionable; as, in his State, a hospital "was regarded as a resort for paupers, the outcast, and friendless; and nothing would be more revolting to the feelings of a Virginian than to be taken to an institution with such a name." *Dr. Brown* remarked, that many of our institutions for the insane had rooms no better than prison *cells*, and he believed it best to call things by their right names. He thought the practice of calling institutions by the name of their principal benefactors, as in the case of the Mc'Lean and Butler Hospital, or by some pleasant local name, as in the case of the Bloomingdale Asylum, convenient and unobjectionable. *Dr. Tyler* said, the citizens of New Hampshire, besides employing the usual variety of synonyms to designate the institution under his charge, styled it an *Insanery*.

This discussion will remind our readers of similar ones which have taken place in this country. We cannot but think that, in relation to the employment of words so rooted in the language as *asylum* and *lunatic*, objections are futile, if not frivolous. The term *asylum* is a sacred one, signifying a sanctuary, a refuge from the spoiler; and we trust that our great

public institutions for the insane are truly worthy of it. The term *hospital*, according to its primary use, ought to be restricted to charitable institutions, which county asylums and private asylums are not. A hospital no more signifies a place for the cure of disease than an asylum does. There are the Greenwich and Chelsea Hospitals, for instance. Dr. Tyler's amusing Yankeeism, *Insanery*, is a very good word; and we recommend those who don't like asylum, to adopt it. It is expressive, implies nothing untrue; and, as it closely resembles our own common and excellent term infirmary, it comes nearest of any to the designation of a place of cure. We have said thus much on the subject of this logomachy, because we have been well rated for designating this publication by a name, which an early resolution of the Association condemned and doomed to be put down. But, in an old country, an old word takes a mighty deal of putting down. We apprehend that the oldest human traces in this world of ours are words. Notwithstanding the discoveries in the gas works at New Orleans, we do not doubt that the first man was verily called Adam, and that, whatever may be the Talmudic name of his first wife, the mother of the human race was called Eva. What, excepting geological antiquity, can compare with *this*?

As for the word *lunatic*, its etymology is, doubtless, based upon an old and somewhat foolish notion of our forefathers; but, if we are to discontinue the use of all words against which this objection can be made, new languages will have to be constructed, for all existing ones will become too much impoverished either for common or scientific use. What would be thought of members of the Medico-Chirurgical or the Royal Societies, if they gravely proposed to discontinue the use of the word artery, because it was founded upon the erroneous belief that these vessels contained air; or that of the word spirit, because it originated in the notion that the soul of a man was identical with his breath. Such propositions would, doubtless, be laughed at, as useless and puerile. Even the word keeper is not in itself an opprobrious one. The Lord Keeper of Scotland, for instance. It was even appropriate, as applied to the keepers of the insane in past years, because they sedulously kept away from their duties. But, since their conduct has rendered the term infamous, it may well, under present circumstances, be objected to and avoided.

On the second day the members of the Association, accompanied by the Secretary of the Interior, occupied the forenoon in a visit to the National Hospital for the insane in process of erection, and met at five, P.M., for the transaction of business. A committee was appointed to recommend a time and place for the next meeting of the Association.

Dr. Ray read a paper on "The effect of etherization on the nervous system in the treatment of disease." In the discussion on this paper, nine of the Members stated that they had used ether and chloroform in the treatment of insanity. On the whole, their opinions of these agents do not appear to have been very favourable. Dr. Stribling thought that, "superintendents were unwilling to use an agent so powerful and dangerous, and of unestablished if not doubtful utility, feeling that they had rather fail to cure a dozen than to kill one."

Dr. Bell read a paper on "spiritual manifestations." The Business Committee announced invitations to the Association, to visit several public institutions, which were accepted. The forenoon of the third day of the meeting being set apart for that purpose, and also to visit the Presidential Mansion, to pay their respects to the Chief Magistrate of the country.

On the third day of meeting, the President "called the attention of the Members to a modification of the crib or covered bedstead, planned by Dr. Gray, of the hospital for the insane at Utica, intended for the confinement of restless patients at night." This seems to have been the identical bedstead not long ago introduced at Bethlem. How strange it is that discoveries so often suggest themselves to different persons at the same time. Leverier's planet, and sun painting are instances of this; Leucocythemia is another. And the ingenious adaptation of a large box with a ventilating lid to the uses of a bedstead for irritable and restless lunatics having taken place about the same time at the hospitals for the insane at Utica and Bethlem, is a new proof of this frequent and remarkable coincidence of scientific discovery. We refrain from expressing our opinion as to the probable comfort of these shut-down cribs or hutches, but should either one of the inventors unfortunately be troubled with feverish and restless nights, we trust that he will just for once try his own invention, and report upon it. Could Perillus have reported on the sensations experienced in the interior of his bull, he might have cowed the genius of posterity, by showing the perilous nature of invention; and when the Doctors have reported their personal experiences of the covered-in bedstead for restless patients, we shall be better able than at present to decide whether its use is consistent with the humane treatment of the insane.

Dr. E. Jarvis read a paper "On the tendency of the unbalanced mind to produce insanity," for which he received great compliments. The President regretted that gentlemen had not prepared more essays; there had been a falling off in this respect for many years. It was suggested by Dr. Kirlbride, that they should prepare their papers immediately on their return home, and it was agreed that the President should assign to each Member a subject for an essay.

Dr. Curwen read a paper "On certain classes of cases of mental derangement," in which he deprecated the still too frequent practice of bleeding in acute mania, and deplored the inadequacy of ordinary stimulants to restore the energies of a system prostrated by depletion and hurrying down to death or incurable dementia. Several speakers deplored the consequences of bleeding, &c., practised upon patients before admission; an expression of feeling to which we are sure the superintendents in this country will most heartily respond. Dr. Stribling thought that Rush's teaching fifty years ago "had been the cause of much mischief in the treatment of the insane." He spoke highly of the benefit he had derived from the free application of morphia to blistered surfaces. Dr. Waddell stated that, "in high maniacal excitement his plan was to administer tartar emetic in doses of from six to eight or ten grains, which operated best as an emetic and cathartic. Before a reaction takes place

applications of cold water are made to the head, and at evening an anodyne is given. These doses produce for a short time great prostration, but this soon passes away, leaving the patient generally in a quiet and comfortable situation."

*Dr. Walker* said, "he had ascertained that in several of the cases which had come under his observation in which free blood-letting had been resorted to, the lancet was employed by Irish surgeons, such as came to this country in emigrant ships, volunteering their services to pay their passage, and not by Americans, by whom the practice had been abandoned. He found brandy and morphia the best combination in such cases." We suspect that *Dr. Walker* belongs to the Know-nothing Society, and is not partial to the Irish; for whatever may be the attainments of medical men in the new world, we can assure him that there is no school in the old world which turns out medical men more thoroughly and practically educated than the capital city of Ireland, and we cannot but believe that he has drawn his conclusion from a small number of exceptional instances.

On the subject of stimulants several of the Members complained of the difficulty they experienced in procuring old and pure liquors, to keep up the strength of their patients. Liquors of a deleterious quality were largely manufactured at New York. *Dr. Bell* would recommend it to the authorities of the different institutions for the reception of the diseased to make a selection of the best wines, brandies, &c., and to store them away for a period of thirty, forty, or fifty years, so that the patients might have them pure and unadulterated!"

*Dr. Nichols* made some observations on the pathology of insanity, and predicted "that we were on the eve of the demonstrable discovery, that all insanity is proximately owing to a derangement of the functional activity of the cerebral organ, as the generator of what we are accustomed to call nerve power or nervous fluid."

*Dr. Brown* stated that, "Dr. Burnett, one of the most accomplished microscopists in America, had made examinations of the brain of persons who had died in a state of chronic insanity, but had been unable to discover any change of structure whatever, or any sign to indicate that it did not belong to an individual whose mind was not affected." *Dr. B.* desired to know the experience of the Members in the use of the prolonged warm baths recommended by the French, who retain their patients by mechanical fixtures in warm baths for periods varying from six to eighteen hours. *Dr. Kirkbride* thought that such baths would prove very quieting, so much so indeed, that the patient never afterwards would be a source of trouble to either physicians or attendants. In his own treatment he had used the bath one or two hours at a time with benefit, taking great care that the temperature of the water should not exceed 98°. With reference to bleeding in the treatment of insanity, *Dr. Kirkbride* remarked, that of the 2,700 patients who had been under his care during the last thirteen years, he had not used the lancet in a single instance with reference to the state of mind.

On the fourth day resolutions were adopted, ex-

pressing the thanks of the Association to various persons who had promoted the purposes of the Meeting, and to whom the Members were indebted for attentions and courtesies; to the President of the United States for his courtesy and kind attentions; to the Secretary of the Interior, &c.

The President paid a high compliment to the *Journal of Insanity*, as a periodical honourable to the specialty, and deserving the patronage of medical men throughout the country. *Dr. Kirkbride* submitted the following resolution, which was adopted, "Resolved: that this Association, fully appreciating the important service rendered the profession and the insane in the United States, by the *American Journal of Insanity*, do most cordially recommend that periodical to the patronage of the members of the medical profession and others interested in the subject, and trust that those who have heretofore kept up its publication with such commendable liberality, will secure its permanent continuance, and that our Members be earnestly urged to contribute freely to its columns.

*Dr. Worthington*, on behalf of the Committee relating to the payment of the expenses of the members of the Association in attending the Annual Meetings, offered the following preamble and resolution, which were read and adopted.

"Whereas, the meetings of this Association have been attended since its commencement by nearly all the superintendents of our institutions for the insane, and whereas, there is a want of uniformity among the different institutions, in regard to the payment of expenses incurred by the superintendents in attending these meetings, from which the institutions represented have derived important benefits:

"Therefore resolved, As the sense of this Association, that the travelling and all necessary expenses of the superintendents in attending its meetings ought to be paid by the institutions which they represent."

On motion of *Dr. Kirkbride*, the Association then adjourned to meet in the city of Boston, on the 4th of May, 1855, at 10 A.M.

In concluding this account of the meeting of the American Association of Asylum Superintendents, a comparison between its energetic usefulness and the torpid existence which has until recently been characteristic of the corresponding Association in this country, forces itself upon our observation. This comparison cannot be drawn by any English superintendent, animated by one spark of patriotism, without exciting feelings, which we will not designate by the ugly names of shame and envy, but which must necessarily be more allied to them than otherwise. The English Association is older than the American one; its list of members is far more copious; and yet, until lately, its existence has scarcely served a more useful purpose than to point a moral. What the American Association is, the above account will imperfectly shew. What the English Association has been we are almost ashamed to confess. Let us not, however, look back with unavailing regret on the time which is irretrievably gone; but let us take good heart from the noble example set us by our brethren in the new country, and endeavour to

emulate them, in making our Association an active earnest reality; a bond of union between men engaged in the same arduous and embarrassing pursuit; a source of friendly intercommunication, of practical knowledge, and of scientific enlightenment. Some incidents in the above account, too obvious to need specification, forcibly point to the honor and the power which an united action affords to a body of practical and scientific men; but, without which, they may readily remain subject to misapprehension, to neglect, and to the oppression of many petty influences derogatory to their position and damaging to their usefulness.

*Alleged Evasion of Justice, by the Reception of a Criminal into an Asylum.*

Towards the close of the late Parliamentary Session Lord Dudley Stuart piqued the curiosity of all persons interested in asylum matters by enquiring of the Secretary for the Home Department, whether he could afford information respecting an evasion of justice by the admission of a criminal into the Norwich Lunatic Asylum. Lord Palmerston replied that the fullest investigation should be made. We have hitherto refrained from referring to the circumstances thus alluded to, because only partial information has until recently been attainable, and even that has been obscured by the expression of much personal feeling. A long and earnest discussion at the Norwich City Sessions on the 24th ult., puts us in possession of all the details, and of the minutes of the Visiting Justices, before whom a full and careful investigation took place. Reduced to their briefest expression, the circumstances appear to be as follow.

Two years ago, the Rev. Mr. H., a clergyman living near Wymondham, was charged before Mr. Cann, a magistrate, with an attempt to violate a girl under twelve years of age. Mr. Cann signed a warrant of committal against Mr. H., but believing that he was insane, he caused his friends to be informed that if "something was done within a certain time, the warrant should not issue to be executed." Mr. Cann, the magistrate's clerk and the son of the magistrate, stated that his father did this "in consequence of the station in life of Mr. H. Probably, had he been a poor man, the case would have been different. The usual course would be to prove the offence first, and afterwards to consider the plea of insanity." This strange admission on the part of a magistrate's clerk has been severely commented upon, amounting as it does to the avowal, that Mr. Cann would administer different laws to the rich and the poor. We think better of Mr. Cann's father than his son does, and we firmly believe, that the course adopted would not have been different had the culprit been a poor man. Had such been the case, the most humane and judicious thing which Mr. Cann, Senr., could have done, would have been to call in the aid of a medical man, and if his opinion coincided with his own, to send the lunatic without delay to the county asylum. Such a course of procedure is in fact the very one recommended by the Commissioners in Lunacy in their recent Report. It would have been well if Mr. Cann,

Senr. had at this stage of the proceedings obtained the assistance of a medical man. Instead of which we find Mr. Nichols, the proprietor of the Heigham Hall Asylum in chase of the needful medical certificates, stating, that if Dr. Hull would give the certificate "it would be hundreds a year in his pocket."

The visitors having considered the statements and documents submitted to them, agreed to the following resolutions:—

"First, That the Rev. Mr. H., by being placed in the asylum under the circumstances appearing on this enquiry, was rescued from the gripe of the law on a criminal charge.

"Second, That the order and medical certificates upon which he was admitted into the asylum were regular, and in the form prescribed in the Act of Parliament in that behalf.

"Third, That in the opinion of the visitors Mr. H. is not a proper person to have been appointed, or to continue to officiate as chaplain to the asylum.

"(Signed,) Samuel Bignold, Mayor; J. H. Barnard, Edward Willott, Horatio Bolingbroke, John Sultzer, Samuel S. Beare, C. M. Gibson, M.R.C.S."

The Rev. Mr. H. was admitted a patient into Heigham Hall Asylum in July 1852; on the following 4th of September he was discharged, and appointed chaplain to the asylum, the duties of which office he has fulfilled until a recent period.

In the animated discussion which took place at the Norwich Sessions on this subject, much stress was laid on the infraction of the law committed in making Mr. H. a boarder at the asylum without his having first been personally examined by two of the Commissioners in Lunacy, and their assent in writing obtained, to his remaining in the house as a boarder; such procedure being enjoined by the statute. It is plain, however, that no concealment of his position from the Commissioners was attempted, as an entry in the Visitors' book was made by Mr. Commissioner Campbell, on the 10th of May, 1853, to this effect: "Divine service is performed in the house by a clergyman resident in the asylum."

Under these circumstances the "infraction of the law," if this irregularity is thought to be deserving of so harsh a name, does not appear in a very heinous light; irregularities, indeed, of a similar nature, arising from hitches in the working of the statutes, are of frequent occurrence; for instance, in the amendment of informal orders of admission, which in strictness are illegal unless they receive the written sanction of the Commissioners, and which nevertheless do not receive them.

The opinion of the Recorder was given in the following terms: "In this case a very peculiar responsibility rests upon me; because, by a special provision of the act of parliament on the subject, the new license cannot be granted unless I sign it. This is a great responsibility, because other gentlemen may, perhaps, feel disposed to act as I act; and I am now obliged to sign this license, and to acknowledge that I am, to a certain extent, authorising a person to keep a lunatic asylum who has violated the law. This is a serious responsibility; but as the magistrates here all say that Dr. Ranking, the new proprietor, is a most respectable