

absurd proceedings thus gravely dealt with constituted a contempt of court of a far more serious character than that for which the unfortunate lady was at last committed to prison. Finally, this lady, suffering from insanity and utterly irresponsible, was imprisoned for an obviously insane act, and for a whole year lay untreated in prison before her insanity was brought to a test.

A magistrate, if informed that an insane person exists in his district, is enjoined by the law to take steps for ensuring proper treatment.

Is it not even more clearly the duty of judges, if not moved by pity or feelings of humanity, at least to protect their courts from being occupied by insane persons, who furnish amusing paragraphs to the evening papers, or supply pitiful prey for legal scavenger sharks? If such a duty on the part of our judges becomes recognised as a result of this case, this unhappy lady and her friends will not have suffered in vain; but that such will be the result is, we fear, utopian.

Justice and mercy have met at last; but all this suffering and scandal might have been avoided ten years ago by a union between common sense and law.

---

*The Bangour Asylum.*

Dr. Clouston, in a letter to the 'Scotsman' (May 5th), strenuously urges on the Edinburgh Parish Council the desirability of making a receiving hospital near the town, as a part of their scheme for providing for the treatment of the insane.

He advises that the incipient insane should be treated in the Royal Infirmary (as recently proposed), the acute insane in this hospital, and the prolonged and chronic cases at Bangour.

The hospital, he suggests, should not be built on the palatial system, but on one that would not involve a cost of more than £200 per bed, and should be named in such a manner that the patients should not consider they had been in an asylum.

These suggestions, if carried out thoroughly in conjunction with hospital out-patient departments, would constitute a very considerable advance in the systematic treatment of mental

disease, and would yield to Edinburgh the honour of being the pioneer in this country of the reception hospital system, which has worked so satisfactorily in Australia and in Copenhagen. An account of the latter from the pen of Dr. Pontoppidon appears in this number. The London County Council nearly adopted this system, but has unfortunately relapsed to improved workhouse infirmary wards, officered by infirmary superintendents.

The prediction may be safely hazarded that if this system is established Edinburgh will not be rewarded by honour only, but will soon show statistically that benefit has resulted to both population and purse.

Incidentally, too, it would tend to reduce the outlay on architectural display to which insane benevolence has so largely tended of late, and Bangour might still be built at something approaching the cost of Alt Scherbitz.

In Scotland, as in England, it seems difficult to persuade the benevolent builders of asylums and their architects that insanity is not treated by palaces, but by physicians; not by bricks, but by brains.

---

*The Association of Asylum Workers.*

The annual meeting of this association, held on May 22nd, under the presidency of Sir James Crichton-Browne, gave ample evidence of the great progress this association is making, and of the useful work performed by it.

The increase of membership from 2868 in 1900 to 4116 in 1901 is indicative of the rapid spread of its influence, while a striking proof of its usefulness was given in the distribution of medals for long and meritorious service.

Gold medals were given to Mr. W. Hope, inspector of Colney Hatch Asylum (thirty-six and a half years' service), and to Miss M. Riches, head nurse at Heigham Hall, Norwich (thirty-five and a half years' service). Two silver and twenty-eight bronze medals were also awarded. The importance of the encouragement to faithful service thus given is too obvious to need comment.

The President gave an interesting, instructive, and stimu-