

the care of a special nurse. The door of every single room was found open. During the visit to the sick rooms and observation dormitories only one patient was found restless and talkative. The advantages of this large amount of night supervision were strikingly obvious.

"The visit left a very pleasing impression of the earnestness and ability shown in the administration of the Asylum. The patients were with few exceptions quiet and orderly in conduct, and any complaints that were made were found to be the outcome of delusions. The few females who were excited were under the charge of nurses in single rooms, which are furnished as sitting rooms. In this way they are prevented from disturbing the other inmates, and their own excitement more speedily subsides under this separate treatment. The behaviour of the men was remarkably free from noisiness and irritability. The clothing of both sexes was most satisfactory as to quality and neatness. The dinners seen during the visit were abundant and palatable meals, of which appreciation was freely expressed by the more intelligent patients. The dietary has been scientifically examined, and its proteid and energy values have been found to meet the requirements of the standards. The healthy outdoor employment of the male patients is limited by the inadequate amount of land possessed by the Asylum.

"All sections of the Asylum were found in excellent order, the day-rooms presented a cheerful and comfortable appearance, and the dormitories were fresh and clean. The hospital wards especially attracted attention on account of their ample equipment for the comfort and efficient nursing of those suffering from physical disease or acute mental maladies."

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT.

Most interesting also is the report by Dr. Robertson to the members of the Stirling District Lunacy Board, as the following extracts will show:—

"Mention may be made of those special methods of caring for the insane which have been introduced into this Asylum. They have been described as 'Hospital Methods,' because they bring the treatment of the insane more into line with the methods employed in hospitals for the treatment of bodily disorders, but they are characterised not only by the extended employment of women and of hospital nurses, but by the abolition, as absolute as is possible, of those features of restraint and solitary confinement which are still employed in asylums, features which are more associated with the prison life from which our asylum system originally sprang than with modern hospitals for the treatment of disease—the ideal to which we now aspire. As the term just employed has been objected to, perhaps it may be less open to criticism to refer to these measures as 'Rational Methods,' instead of as 'Hospital Methods,' and they may be regarded as a further development of that humane treatment of the insane inaugurated more than a century ago."

FEMALE NURSES IN THE MALE WARDS.

"The extended employment of women and the appointment of a hospital nurse as Matron on the male side are the features which have, perhaps, attracted the greatest amount of attention, and it may be recorded that these were not introduced in imita-

tion of any system employed abroad, or to give effect to abstract theories, but were the natural and inevitable development of the practice of employing one or two women by day in the male sick wards of our asylums. In response to criticisms to the effect that women are 'out of place' as nurses on the male side of an asylum, and that they would be terrified if placed among insane men, I shall record two interesting observations that have recently come under my own personal notice. I have already said that our asylum system has been evolved from that of the prison, and that, consequently, it seems out of place to conservative-minded people to have women caring for insane men, seeing that men have, till recently, always done so. In Amsterdam, on the other hand, the insane wards of the Wilhelmina Gasthuis were developed out of the old Leper House as leprosy gradually died out; and as the lepers were attended to by religious women, these women naturally attended to the insane men who took the place formerly occupied by the lepers. It has thus never been necessary there to introduce women nurses in the male wards. They have always existed as such—*ab initio*—and men have been introduced in subordinate positions to female nurses, and trained as nurses and attendants. The *a priori* argument, therefore, of being 'out of place' or not is of no practical value, the real test being—do they, when the experiment is made, care for the insane men under their charge as well, or better? and I have no hesitation in saying that, with the limitations and precautions adopted here, they do it better. In the second place, after the terrible catastrophe by fire at Colney Hatch, I wished to abolish, if possible, the practice of 'check-locking' doors, so that in the event of a fire no life should be lost through inability to open a door. I gave instructions, therefore, that in future the doors in our hospital should no longer be check-locked at night. All the nurses, including those on the male side, at once protested, and said that this arrangement made them nervous, as now any person with an ordinary asylum key could obtain entrance. They have now got over their nervous fears, but the situation, while it lasted, was a most luminous though paradoxical one. These women were quite unconcerned, nay, content and pleased, at being locked up all night in the hospital block with insane men under their charge, but they became quite nervous and afraid at the mere possibility of sane men finding their way into the hospital. It can be said with truth that thousands of working women in the country are subjected to greater rudeness and to greater violence every Saturday night from the temporary mania of their sane but drunken 'menkind' than all the women likely to be employed on the male side of asylums will ever be exposed to in the course of a generation, and that, too, without the power of at once summoning aid, as is arranged for in asylums in the event of an emergency arising.

"It is recorded that ten years elapsed before official approval was accorded to Dr. Connolly's practice of non-restraint in the treatment of the insane, and many more years elapsed before this great reform was adopted by conservative physicians bound to old asylum traditions. We live under happier auspices, for after a probationary period of less than three years has the seal of official approval been placed on the developments mentioned above, and an impetus has also been given to the more extended employment

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