

missioners, but with the door shut and latched, the shutters closed and locked, and no light, very little fresh air enters, and the atmosphere soon becomes foul. The author writes: "The stench at times is so great that I have been unable to remain in the room for more than a few minutes. Let the reader imagine, if he can, the existence of an inmate of one of these rooms, in almost pitch darkness night and day, clad only in a canvas shirt, lying on a thinly stuffed and noisome coir mattress spread on the floor, and covered with two or three dirty canvas rugs, with a permanent draught blowing under the door (this is anything but fresh air), and if in winter time, with the temperature possibly several degrees below freezing point; for most of the cells are not heated. . . . Imagine such an one, haunted by 'visions,' unable to sleep, and not seldom in bodily pain from some injury or internal trouble, the atmosphere reeking from the contents of the rubber chamber utensil, or from the excrement which he has smeared upon the walls and floor of the cells, and even upon his own person—for this is by no means uncommon in maniacal and demented cases. Can the reader be surprised that the place often gives its occupant the horrors, and that he does his best to escape from it? . . . Where single rooms are in use, they should at least be warmed and properly lighted and ventilated, and have some similitude to the habitations of human beings instead of resembling rather the lair of wild beasts."

THE COMMISSIONERS.

"I shall be asked, of course," says Dr. Lomax, "what the Board of Control was doing to allow the existence of such a state of things. The Commissioners visit the asylums in the United Kingdom every year, and their sole duty is to inspect and report. I always smile when I think of the official visits of these gentlemen, which I was privileged to witness, as I always smile, though somewhat cynically, when I read their 'Asylum Reports.' Although these visits are supposed to be surprise visits, owing to some mysterious telepathy that exists between asylums, they seldom are. The inspection lasted a day and a half, and on the surface was fairly thorough. . . . One courageous Commissioner, I forget which, even tasted the soup served to the male patients, and remarked, with rather a wry face, that it was 'Very good; very good indeed!' 'Have some more, old cock,' ejaculated *sotto voce*, a jocular lunatic hard by."

GLASS BREAKING.

Whatever the necessity for isolation as a precautionary measure Dr. Lomax insists that "for punitive purposes it should be sternly prohibited, even when offences are committed. Such a habit as 'glass breaking' for instance, is, in most cases a disease; it is often a phase of 'claustrophobia' or fear of shut-in places, and is really an involuntary reaction against confinement in all its forms, which all lunatics, and

prisoners of every kind are liable to; and to 'punish' such a nervous reaction by still closer confinement is not only inhumane, it is illogical."

PUNISHMENT AND DISCIPLINE.

Dr. Lomax is of opinion that few of those in actual charge of lunatics realize the essential difference between punishment and discipline. "The first thing an attendant, male or female, thinks of when a patient 'breaks out' as it is called, is to 'punish' him, and some medical officers even will support this view. Yet in very many cases it is not the patient but his malady that is responsible. In such cases it is as rational to punish a mental patient for refractory behaviour as it would be to punish a typhoid fever case for a rise of temperature.

THE ESSENCE OF INSANITY.

"A knowledge of right and wrong is not the same thing as the power to put it into practice. When insane people do what they know to be wrong, they mostly do it not because they are deficient in knowledge, but because they are deficient in self control. Lack of self control is the very essence of insanity. Such patients act upon an uncontrollable impulse, and can't help what they do. But it is as difficult to get attendants to see this as it is to get some Judges. Because sane persons have the power of self control when they are annoyed or injured, such persons are apt to assume that lunatics must have it. But this is just what most lunatics lack. The very definition of a lunatic, at law, is one 'who is not responsible for his actions.' If he were responsible, and his actions were punishable, he would not be in an asylum, but in jail."

Glass breaking is one of the most heinous offences in the eyes of an attendant. "Why? Because it is a means by which a patient may do himself serious injury, or even commit suicide? Partly, no doubt, but chiefly because an attendant for this very reason is likely to be charged with neglect, and get himself into trouble. It is *the injury to themselves* that most attendants are thinking of, much more than the possible injury to the patient. For patients may not only commit suicide by this means, they may even escape, and in either case the attendants are likely to get into serious trouble. That is what in their eyes constitutes the heinousness of the offence."

MEDICINAL RESTRAINT.

"'Medicinal' or 'chemical' restraint is restraint by means of drugs, which are chiefly sedatives, like morphia, opium, hyoscine, bromide, &c. Hypnotics, like chloral, sulphonal, and paraldehyde, and the more powerful purgatives like castor oil. It goes without saying," says Dr. Lomax, "that drugs of this nature have to be constantly employed in asylums, but it should also go without question that their employment should be conducted with the greatest care. The indiscriminate and thoughtless use of powerful drugs is one of the greatest evils in modern asylum

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