

has conferred." The proposal is reasonable, for one cannot see why Scotch asylum officials should be in a worse position than English and Irish.

CRICHTON ROYAL INSTITUTION.—"The recreations and amusement lists for the year (1875) afford the usual numbers and variety. The number of parties specially arranged for the patients amount to two hundred and forty-nine. . . . Ordinary in-door and out-door amusements generally, but not specially arranged, as bowling, croquet, &c., are not included in the above numbers." We like to see a man push his ideas to their utmost limits in practice, though some might ask, "Is all this amusement rational, wholesome treatment for the mind diseased?" There is probably great truth in what has been said by a well-known authority, that the ultimate result of constant amusement is to enfeeble and deprave the mind of both officers and patients. A patient is placed in an asylum not only to recover from a present malady, but to be subjected to mental discipline and hygiene, so that he may be the better able to face those difficulties which he will encounter on his return to the outside world. Such an incessant whirl of gaieties, a London season in the North, must be dreadful to quiet, sedate, contemplative people, if any such now live at Dumfries. But, of course, it must be remembered that most of the patients are of the private class, and cannot be got to work. Dr. Gilchrist says—"It has been our ambition to provide some special recreation for each day or evening in the year, a high standard which has not yet been reached." In Sabbath-observing Scotland some ingenuity will be necessary to invent a suitable amusement for Sundays.

PART IV.—NOTES AND NEWS.

CURE OF INSANITY BY STRANGULATION.

Dr. DE WOLF relates the following case in the Report of the Nova Scotia Hospital for the Insane for 1875:—

"Another unexpected and far more sudden recovery occurred here many years ago, which has never been reported. The case is by no means devoid of interest, the more especially as the restoration has proved permanent.

"——, No. 296, æt. 25, single, was admitted 7th May, 1864. She had been for a short time engaged in school-teaching, and was six weeks insane. She manifested determined suicidal propensities, and had refused food for several days prior to admission.

"The immediate cause of her insanity was a failure on her part to master the science of algebra, which, without sufficient thought, she had promised to teach one of her scholars. Night after night she pondered over the works on algebra within her reach, but all to no purpose. Loss of sleep, intense disappointment, and chagrin at being unable to fulfil her promise, soon preyed upon her mind to such an extent as to compel her to abandon her school, and shortly after resulted in an outbreak of melancholia.

"Her suicidal propensities were traceable to hereditary predisposition—even the mode was similar. Her first attempt, which was made at home, was by hanging; a process which her mother had carried out effectually two years before. The fine brass wire used for this purpose left a deep dark indentation, which remained visible for more than two months after admission.

"Not only did she refuse ordinary food, but she eagerly caught up and swallowed cinders, buttons, and small stones; and finding these did not destroy life, she secretly stuffed the throat with a bunch of horse-hair and flannel, equal to a good-sized hen's egg.

"In this condition she was admitted. The obstruction was apparent, and she was at once removed by tickling the fauces, and thus bringing on an effort at vomiting. Finding that even after this the blandest liquids were immediately rejected, the stomach tube was used, when a coin or similar substance was pushed forward, and she was enabled to swallow whatever food was given to her. She would take no nourishment voluntarily, and offered no great resistance when it was administered. She kept up a constant moaning day after day, and her unceasing cry was that she was eternally lost. In failing to keep her promise to her pupil, she supposed she had committed 'the unpardonable sin.'

"Occupying a dormitory with five others, in the fourth storey of the building, and watching an opportunity one night soon after admission, she raised the window-sash six inches—it was checked to that height, but could be strained to a quarter of an inch more on one side—she forced herself through this narrow opening, taking with her a blanket, with a knot in one corner. Resting her feet upon the granite belt-course, and closing the window so as to leave the knot inside, she made a spring, and landed on all fours about six feet from the building. Rebounding, she fell on her back, and was immediately picked up by the watchman, who was within sight at the time.

"The injury resulting from this heroic leap was comparatively very slight, and was limited to a sprained ankle and a bruised back, with scratches on the hands and feet, caused by the hard ground where she landed in falling. These were soon healed, and she went about as before, moaning and lamenting incessantly. The shock of the fall had failed to restore her mental equilibrium, or to change the character of her delusions.

"From this period she was under close surveillance day and night, and so resolute were her attempts to thrust buttons and pieces of glass down her throat, that hers was made an exceptional case, and the occasional use of a thin cotton camisole was sanctioned, the long sleeves of which terminated in a point, and were secured behind her back, her arms being crossed over her chest.

"Late in the autumn of 1864, a marriage took place between two of the attendants, and the ceremony was celebrated in the ward in which the patient was domiciled. From this the bridal party and guests adjourned to one of the upper wards to engage in the customary festivities. The attendant in charge, depending on the camisole as security, ventured to leave her duty at 8.45 p.m., to join in the merry-making. Precisely at 9 o'clock the watchwoman came to take charge, and found the patient suspended by the neck, with a sheet which she had fastened to the window-guard; although one hand only had been released from the camisole by gnawing through the cotton.

"The night-watch, with the most commendable presence of mind, gently raised the body in her arms, and untied the knot. She then quietly summoned assistance, and the senior attendants, with the superintendent, were immediately at work endeavouring to restore animation. Artificial respiration was kept up persistently, and at last a faint gasp was heard, showing that life was not wholly extinct. Vigorous means were now resorted to to restore the circulation, and these were not abated for a period of nine hours. At six the following morning it was considered the immediate danger was over. The tongue, however, was still protruded, the face deeply suffused, and convulsions recurred at

uncertain intervals. This continued for forty-eight hours, the patient apparently vibrating between life and death, when suddenly her countenance assumed its natural aspect; her eyes opened, and she recognised us all; she awoke as it were from a dream, and her reason was perfectly restored. She had no relapse from that day to this."

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Appointments.

ADAM, W. J., M.B. and C.M., has been appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Somerset County Lunatic Asylum, vice Dutt, resigned.

BARRON, J., M.A., M.B., C.M., has been appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Berks County Lunatic Asylum, Moulsoford, vice Harvey, resigned.

DANIEL, J., L.R.C.P.Ed., L.R.C.S.Ed., has been appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Derbyshire Lunatic Asylum, Mickleover, vice Daly, resigned.

JACOB, D., L.R.C.P and L.R.C.S.Ed., has been appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Derby County Lunatic Asylum.

LAWSON, R., M.B., C.M., has been appointed Senior Assistant Medical Officer to the Third Middlesex Asylum, Banstead Downs, Surrey.

LEVINGE, E. G., A.B., M.B., L.R.C.S.I., has been appointed Assistant Medical Superintendent of the Bristol Lunatic Asylum, vice De Denne, resigned.

MACMUNN, J., L.R.C.S.I., L.K.Q.C.P.I., and L.M., has been appointed Assistant to the Resident Medical Superintendent of the Sligo District Lunatic Asylum.

PLAXTON, J. W., M.R.C.S.E., L.S.A.L., has been appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the West Riding Lunatic Asylum, Wakefield, vice Lawson, appointed Assistant Medical Officer to the Middlesex Lunatic Asylum, Banstead.

RUSSELL, A.P., M.B., C.M., has been appointed Assistant-Physician to the Crichton Royal Institution, Dumfries, vice Murchison, appointed an Assistant Medical Officer to the Middlesex Lunatic Asylum, Banstead Downs.