

man wore a straw hat with no ribbon, another a thick coat over three waistcoats. As far as I could see, however, clean faces and necks were universal. The general condition, facial expression, and deportment of the inmates differed but little from those seen in our imbecile asylums and workhouses, and suggested indifference and content in about the usual proportions. The paucity of senile ophthalmia cases was noteworthy. The attendants, whose caps bore the letters A.P. (assistance publique), seemed to be kind and considerate. They wear badges of rank on the arm. The children of the married staff were playing about the courts, dogs strolled here and there, and there were two tobacco stores at the inmates' disposal; altogether the social failure of Paris must feel that his surroundings have been made as homelike as possible in the Bicêtre.

M. Bourneville's deputy proved to be a most courteous and considerate gentleman, who spared no pains in showing me the children's department, which was my objective. We passed through the second court, with the chapel on its south side, and, turning to the left in the third, reached the series of modern blocks devoted to imbeciles under eighteen. The circular stone prison, with its deep surrounding ditch, reminiscent of an ancient donjon-keep, at the back of the third court, was in former days the acute hospital, but the supply of attendants was never sufficient for treating this class of case, and after the building had twice been set on fire by patients it was devoted to other uses.

The children's blocks, a series in yellow brick with narrow intervening flower-gardens, accommodate several hundred boys. The first ward we inspected was the infirmary, a somewhat gloomy apartment on the ground floor, bare and comfortless in appearance, with loosely-set wood parquet paving and dingy white curtains. The nursing did not impress me as being up to the highest standard. Passing to a ward for wet and dirty cases, we found the children sitting out on a spacious shaded verandah, each kept by day permanently on a commode chair padded and covered with American cloth. The next department—the cells,—a separate outbuilding fronted by a small gravelled enclosure, consists of a row of seven or eight single rooms, some of them padded. These are used for children with attacks of acute mania, and also for troublesome and unruly ones as a measure of discipline. Each has a closet-seat in one corner, a window high in the wall, and a roof ventilator; the two latter can be worked from the corridor. The isolation block is a cleanly and well-ordered building, in which apparently effective seclusion of contagious cases is managed by means of glass partitions, roof-high.

As it was holiday-time no school work was in progress, but I was shown the main schoolroom, excellently equipped, with a magic-lantern outfit, and many exhibits of the children's manual work. With the gymnasium I was not much impressed, but here again mid-vacation may have been accountable for the state of affairs. The refectories, with veined marble tables, were clean and attractive, and the food appeared to be excellent and well served. I saw the majority of the imbeciles playing in the paved courtyards; they seemed cheerful and contented, but lacked the ruddy cheeks and plumpness typical of Darent children.

Those who are familiar with the Parisian and with his management of hospitals and municipal institutions generally will recognise many national characteristics in the Bicêtre, and could perhaps concoct *a priori* much of the foregoing brief description. I am content to believe that in order to learn the most valuable lessons the asylum has to teach one should visit it when M. Bourneville's educational method is in full working activity. F.

THE AUXILIARY ASYLUM AT YOUGHAL.

The following appeared in the *British Medical Journal* for October 29th, 1904.

CORK DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM.

"At the last monthly meeting of the Committee of Management the Resident Medical Superintendent again had to report that the monthly admissions were above the average, one being an emigrant from Queenstown. At present there are in the Asylum 1622 and 383 in the Auxiliary at Youghal. The male side has

been relieved by the transfers to Youghal, but it is almost impossible to cope with the increasing numbers on the female side. As regards the superintendence of the Auxiliary Asylum at Youghal, the Rev. Dr. Brown, Bishop of Cloyne, seems determined, if he possibly can, to throw aside all medical superintendence of the Youghal Asylum, though an integral part of the Cork Asylum, and leave the management entirely in the hands of a community of nuns who are to be responsible to the Committee, the chaplain of the Auxiliary Asylum to come to Cork to represent the matron and lay all matters of business and small accounts before the Committee. It may be remembered that some time ago in opposition to the desire of the medical profession in Cork, the Committee appointed a visiting medical man to the Youghal institution, where 383 patients are housed, and now Bishop Brown wishes further to set aside the superintendence of the Resident Medical Superintendent at Cork. In speaking at the meeting his lordship defines the duties of the Cork Medical Superintendent as those of merely admitting or removing patients, and goes on to say 'it was not essential that the manager of a lunatic asylum should be a doctor, but the fact of his being a doctor was no disqualification.' Fortunately the Lord Lieutenant is not of the same opinion as the Bishop, for he states in a letter which accompanied receipt of rules:

"The Resident Medical Superintendent of the Cork District Asylum is charged with the superintendence and regulation of this auxiliary asylum, it being a department of the Cork Asylum, and there is no power to transfer or to impose on any of the officers duties which appertain to the Resident Medical Superintendent, and which he is legally bound to discharge.'

"To meet this difficulty the Bishop proposed the following resolution:

"That whereas the Lord-Lieutenant by letter dated March 22nd, 1901, sanctioned the arrangement that the Manager of the Youghal Auxiliary Asylum need not be a medical practitioner, we insist on our right to continue that system (according to the resolution unanimously adopted for this purpose), by which the matron is made responsible for the discipline and domestic management of the Auxiliary Asylum, without supervision from the Superintendent of the Cork District Asylum or other medical officer.'

"And to make his resolution doubly sure his lordship proposed a second one:

"That we further request the Lord Lieutenant to alter the rules and regulations of the Committee of the Cork District Lunatic Asylum so as to give effect to the above resolution by introducing the following rule:—That the matron of the Youghal Auxiliary Asylum is to be responsible to the Committee of Management for the discipline and domestic management of the Auxiliary Asylum, and to modify any existing regulation as far as may be necessary.'

CHRISTMAS EVE FESTIVITIES.

From our contemporary the *Dublin Daily Express* of December 27th, 1904, we quote the following tit-bit:

"Mr. J. Fitzgerald, solicitor, coroner, held an inquest at Sligo District Lunatic Asylum yesterday morning touching the death of an inmate of that institution named Michael Ward, which took place under peculiar circumstances at a late hour on Saturday night last.

"From the evidence adduced it appeared that the deceased was an ex-school teacher, aged about 60 years, and a native of Doonara, co. Leitrim. He was committed to the asylum as a dangerous lunatic in December, 1890, but owing to his good conduct within recent times he was employed as a "liberty" patient to do messages. On Saturday evening last he went into Sligo, and returned to the institution about 8.30. Night Attendants Cullen and Kelly both saw him when he returned at that time, but neither saw anything unusual in his demeanour. However, about a quarter to twelve that night Attendant Kelly informed Cullen that Ward was lying on the hospital floor, and was dying. Both Kelly and Cullen went into the hospital, but it was alleged that, although they found the deceased as above stated, they did not send for the doctor, who was then in the institution,