

round on the dial again, to the critical point, the pendulum begins to oscillate fitfully, and the whole machinery of mind works jarringly, and with angry friction.

Well do many many of these sufferers understand their own approaching trials; and well do they know where is to be found their best refuge. "Take me back to the asylum," is the entreaty of nine-tenths of them:—and is not this verdict of the afflicted the highest testimonial which could possibly be given to the management of modern insane institutions? No fact is better known to us than that of the prompt docility, and instantaneous confidence, evinced by returning patients, the moment they enter their former quarters.

In my report for 1859, I took occasion to observe, that the proportion of recurrent cases of insanity in this country fell very much below the estimate of an eminent English writer, Dr. Tuke; and the statistics of this asylum, since that date, have fully supported my views. Dr. Tuke asserted that only two persons, out of every five discharged, remain permanently sane.

The total discharges from this asylum, in the last three years, have been 244, and the total re-admissions, 78. The intervening periods of mental health, between the last discharge of the above 78 and their re-admission, varied from a few days or weeks to many years; 53 were instances of 2nd admission; 12 of 3rd; 6 of 4th; 5 of 5th and 2 of 6th. Of the 78 re-admitted, one died, 33 were again discharged; and 44 at present remain.

But even this proportion of re-admissions is considerably larger than it would have been, had all discharges been made with my advice. Nineteen were of patients taken home by their friends contrary to my advice; some of them, indeed, in defiance of my entreaties. In general the wayward relatives paid dearly for their temerity, and presented themselves in more respectful attitude, and with smoother words, when they came to solicit re-admission. It is always salutary for such people, and greatly contributive to our future comfort, that they should have a liberal dose of the befitting medicine. They discover that our task has not been quite so easy as they had supposed; and that the patients do not appreciate their skill so highly as they had hoped they would.

Properly connected with the preceding asylum annoyance, is another of even greater administrative importance, and of general prevalence, if we may judge from numerous and earnest remonstrances against it by asylum superintendents, in their annual reports:—I mean the visitation of patients by their friends.