

Sir Bennet could say, in the Lower House, referring to this, "If ever an institution was a disgrace to England, it is Bedlam."

Then came Pinel who was made head of the insane service at Bicêtre in 1793. He caused the chains of the insane to fall off. He had by his initiative and perseverance realized what others had vainly hoped, the rehabilitation of the insane and their restoration to the dignity of the sick. "To keep", said he, "in an habitual state of seclusion and restraint the violent insane, to deliver them helplessly to the brutality of servants and custodians under the pretence of the dangers they make us run, to drive them, in a word, with an iron-rod, as if to accelerate the end of an existence deemed deplorably wretched, is no doubt a most commodious method of supervision but no less worthy of centuries of ignorance and barbarity." But Pinel was more than a reformer. He was a man of science and his "Treaty of Mania" is justly celebrated. Cuvier could say of it in the Institute of France, that "his booklet was not only a medical book, but a capital work on philosophy."

In France, Esquirol, the successor of Pinel, had as great an influence on mental medicine as Pinel had on the moral condition and treatment of the insane. He was a philanthropist, a reformer, a scientist and a master.

Under the direction of the disciples of Pinel, psychiatry has made in all countries great progress. The characteristic of the actual movement in the field of labour and disquisitions is a tendency to apply to psychiatry the scientific data and methods of modern general pathology. Psychiatry has ceased to be simply a chapter of philosophy. It is now, and will be more and more, a branch of medical science or rather of biology. The insane are now treated with charity and science in all well organized hospitals, especially wherever the superintendent brings to his position deep sentiments of the dignity of man and the principles of an enlightened philanthropy.

However, although we state with pleasure all these betterments in the condition of mentally abnormal patients, we should not conclude that the organization is complete. To treat well the insane is very good, but do you not think that something should be done to prevent the overcrowding of such institutions. The most complex problems are before us. So many causes contribute to enlarge the number of lunatics that if we do not find immediately the means of damming the ascending tide of alcoholism, syphilis and other evils, the nation may be overflowed and sink into the waves of insanity.

Here the beneficial intervention of the Mental Hygiene Society is obvious. This organization will help a great deal in the realization of this. Is this plan likely to be realized? Can we keep men away from insanity? I do believe it to be possible to a certain extent if all medical men and