

way of putting the case. Insanity is an affliction of our common humanity; it finds its victims in all ranks; and when it strikes the man of high position it brings him down to the same level as it does the beggar.

Indifference towards the comforts of the insane can hardly exist in any, unless those who never apprehend that they may themselves yet stand in need of them. In the opinion of such persons it may be that any sort of lodgment, however crammed and comfortless; any sort of classification, however defective or disgusting; any sort of air to breathe, however fetid and pestilent, is good enough for the pauper mass; and that anything wearing the aspect of superior comfort, or domestic elegance, is but a waste of public money.

And yet I have seen persons, who very probably once held these views, manifest far other feelings, when, by an unexpected stroke of fate, they have been constrained to seek for asylum residence for some near and dear relative. Though they might, many times before, have observed that the patients of this asylum sleep to the extent of seven-eighths in large associate dormitories; and that our rooms intended for only one bed each have always two, unless when the occupants, from violent or other bad tendencies, are unfit for association (and this class is always more numerous than can be properly provided for); yet they invariably expect that their insane friend is to have a room to himself, with all the conveniences and comforts of home. When they are told that every one-bedded room is already taken up, they think nothing is more easy, or more proper, than that some one should be ejected, and a vacancy thus created for their especial gratification. But the carrying into effect of their requirement might be a perilous experiment. The patient to be ejected may be totally unfit to be lodged in company with any other, and he has been lodged alone, exactly because of his dangerous tendencies.

In the last annual report of your Board to His Excellency the Governor General, the opinion is expressed, "that in case of extreme necessity, seeing the present want of accommodation, the Toronto Asylum average might, without fear of evil consequence, be increased to 400."

The by-laws of the Asylum, by which it is my duty to be guided, provide (*vide* cap. 1, clause 2) that "The Medical Superintendent may, from time to time, with the approval of the Commissioners, or a majority of them, declare the aggregate number of patients which shall at such time or times be admitted into the asylum, and may refuse admission to any person or persons over and above such number."

This by-law was enacted at a time when the number of patients