

is founded on personal experience, and goes to prove that judicious kindness, cheerful apartments, with innocent recreation, go far in restoring the deranged to reason. This work should be in the hands of all having charge of persons so afflicted. It contains much practical information and many valuable suggestions. We make below some extracts from its pages in reference to the treatment of the insane, their employments and amusements. At page 10 the writer says :

‘Every asylum ought to be provided with a library or collection of books. The principal portion of these should be, perhaps, travels, biography, history and the many miscellaneous works which form the charming, polite literature of the English language. In consonance with the character of the asylum, as to the number of patients therein, who are acquainted with foreign languages, or who have been cultivators of the sciences, should be the amount of provision in this respect. And indeed in the library of every asylum, some few works of the kind are requisite. It being understood also that when a patient is received, as to whose peculiar pursuit or department of study there are no books in the library of such an institution, as great care should be exercised in the procuration of such, as we would employ in purchasing an additional medicament to meet some rare physical symptom.’

Again at page 12, 13 and 15, he remarks in continuation :

‘Dr. Thurnam observes with regard to the York retreat in England : ‘A reading room with a select library, consisting of books of travels, natural history, biography, history and moral and religious works, has been provided for the men, the most orderly of whom have access to it under certain regulations as to conduct and behaviour. The books in this collection are also allowed to circulate among the women, and patients of more extensive acquirements and literary tastes have the opportunity of procuring the works of nearly all the standard authors from two excellent subscription libraries in the city.’ The last mentioned idea has also been adopted elsewhere in Great Britain, and doubtless, when practicable, answers a good purpose in certain cases, particularly where we meet with some ‘helluo librorum’ who will read through a comparatively small collection of books in a short time.

Dr. Ayl remarks respecting the Ohio asylum : ‘The rules which govern the library are amongst the best in our whole system, and we know of no more gratifying exhibition in the institution than the orderly and interesting appearance of the different classes upon a Sabbath morning as parties from gallery after gallery arrive and depart with books of their own selection.’ The same physician elsewhere conveys the following significant hint to the friends of patients who send them newspapers : ‘Avoid all papers that are filled with horrible suicides and murders. There certainly cannot be a greater mistake than to select articles of this character, and mark them with a pencil in order to attract their notice.’ At the Western asylum of Virginia, in order to guard against impressions of this character systematically, it is the business of one of the officers to look carefully over the newspapers before they fall into the hands of the patients.

The effect of a mistaken conscientiousness in endeavoring to interdict and abolish all means of recreation and amusement, only tends to disease of body and mind ; and in order to restore the mental health of the insane, we discover by experience that the well established necessity of such measures for the