

THE FUNCTIONS OF A PSYCHOPATHIC HOSPITAL.

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IF one should fare forth into the world, like Charles Dickens, to determine the state of civilization by the technique of looking into all manner of institutions for the care of dependents, delinquents and defectives, one would discover in various parts of the world, e.g., America, spots of great enlightenment in the midst of a rather general greyness or obscurity. Nothing is more encouraging, should we limit our attention to a few foci in the American world, than the situation with respect to the mental group of defectives. The theory of professional institutions has yet to be written; but amongst professional institutions probably none exceed in idealism of plan and skill of management, facing the uttermost extremes of difficulty, institutions for the insane and allied groups.

In an extensive research we would find perhaps nine kinds of institutions for—I was about to say the *insanity group*, when I recollected myself and instead wrote down—the *mental hygiene group* of wards and patients.

We should find (1) institutions of what used to be called the *nursing asylum* sort, run on the plane of economy and on an easy, almshouse-like basis—institutions not unlike those which the first decades of the nineteenth century set up in place of the terrors of the time before Pinell, Conolly and the rest. However, we should find that most of these nursing asylums would disdain the name and would regard themselves as a kind of mental hospital for cases transferred from more active institutions.

Next we should find (2) institutions of the *district*, state or provincial *hospital* type such as were first constructed in numbers in the thirties of the nineteenth century and which still remain as the *sine qua non* and (unfortunately) the end and aim and final accomplishment of many states and provinces. Of course, the idea of cure exists, at least in theory, in these district hospitals, yet