

ing on the female side. This was to me even more painful, for when, after seeing the women who were crowded together in the gallery, on benches, and in fixed chairs, many of whom were restrained by various mechanical appliances, we went into the narrow passage between the pens and the outer wall, the frantic yells of the patients and the banging against the doors, constituted a veritable pandemonium. The effect was heightened when the *guichets* in the doors were unbuttoned, and the heads of the inmates were protruded in a row, like so many beasts, as far as they could reach. Into this human menagerie, what ray of hope can ever enter? In one of the wards of the asylum I observed on the walls a card, on which were inscribed words to the effect that in Divine Providence alone were men to place their hopes. The words seemed to me like a cruel irony. I should, indeed, regard the Angel of Death as the most merciful visitant these wretched beings could possibly welcome. The bolts and padlocks were removed in a few instances, and some of the women were seen to be confined by leathern muffs, solitary confinement not being sufficient. One of the best arguments in favour of restraint by camisole or muff is that the patient can walk about and need not be shut up in a room, but we see here, as is so often seen, that unnecessary mechanical restraint does not prevent recourse being had to seclusion. A cell, darkness, partial or total, a stifling atmosphere, utter absence of any humanizing influence, absolute want of treatment, are but too often the attendants upon camisoles, instead of being dispensed with by their employment. When such a condition of things as that now described is witnessed, one cannot help appreciating, more than one has ever done before, the blessed reform in the treatment of the insane which was commenced in England and France in 1792, and the subsequent labours of Hill, Charlesworth and Conolly. But it is amazing to reflect that although the superiority of the humane mode of treating the insane, inaugurated nearly a century ago, has been again and again demonstrated, and has been widely adopted throughout the civilized world, a colony of England, so remarkable for its progress and intelligence as Canada, can present such a spectacle as that I have so inadequately described as existing, in the year of grace 1884, in the Montreal Asylum.

Before leaving the asylum, I visited the basement, and found some seventy men and as many women in dark, low rooms. Their condition was very similar to that already described as existing in the top-most ward. A good many were restrained in one way or another, for what reason it was difficult to understand. Many were weak-minded, as well as supposed to be excitable. The patients sat on benches by the wall, the rooms being bare and dismal. A large number of beds were crowded together in a part of the basement contiguous to the room in which the patients were congregated, while there were single cells or pens in which patients were secluded, to whom I spoke through the door. The herding together of these patients is pitiful