

commitment. (2) Constant interference during treatment. (3) Too early removal.

Thus far we find distrust of the hospital for the insane, and avoidance of its treatment, so far as possible, by both the physician and the friends of the patient. This is in striking contrast to the method of regarding general hospitals, and naturally gives rise to the question as to its origin, and reason for existing. The solution of this question brings us to the consideration of the limitations which arise from the nature of the hospital itself.

When a man becomes insane the law provides that, if unable to provide a proper place for his own treatment, he may be incarcerated in an institution provided by the State for the purpose, presumably for his own good, as well as for the welfare and safety of the community. Consent or unwillingness on the part of the patient is unnecessary, and in the majority of cases force or deception is used in conducting the subject of insanity to a hospital for the insane. The forcible subjection of the individual to the treatment to be pursued, clearly carries with it a moral obligation on the part of the State, to place him under the most advantageous surroundings, that is those most favorable to recovery. Are we fulfilling this moral obligation? In forcibly incarcerating them in State hospitals for the insane under the present system of organization and administration, are we giving the curable insane the best chance for mental restoration? To these questions I must again give a negative reply. In my opinion the system of treatment provided by the State is illogical, unscientific, and unfavorable to restoration. A justification of this statement can be reached, only by considering the following objections to the present system :

(1) The size and scope of the present institutions. Large hospitals are constructed with a capacity for from a few hundred to several thousand patients, and serve as asylums for the chronic cases and hospitals for the acute insane. These buildings are divided into wards to accommodate from thirty to sixty patients each, the classification necessarily being based upon the mental and physical condition of the case, and at best is a crude one. The disturbed wards contain those cases who are excited, the recent cases of acute mania and agitated melancholia, cases of circular insanity during the maniacal period, and

those with dangerous homicidal and destructive tendencies ; the quiet wards of the better class contain those patients who are quiet and of cleanly habits, and those of the higher grades of intellectual capacity, the better class of chronic cases of melancholia and mania, the least deteriorated of the demented, the least disturbed of the acute cases, the paranoiacs during the earlier periods of their residence, and finally the convalescents ; the acute stuporous cases must be placed among those of similar habits, but of a hopeless character, the advanced cases of parietic dementia, cases of defective development, the inoffensive idiots and the low grade imbeciles, the advanced cases of terminal and quiet epileptic dementia, and so on until all are placed somewhere. These are necessarily grouped together, by this or any other classification which may be adopted, all grades of intellectual development, social condition, moral perception, and mental alienation. The most objectionable classes of humanity, the criminal, the moral imbecile and epileptic, with their moral obliquity, the alcoholic, and paranoiac, demented of all forms, chronic cases of emotional insanity, and finally the acute curable insane. The hitherto intelligent, thoughtful and industrious man must be associated with the ignorant, the morally bad, and the criminal classes, whom his very nature would lead him to avoid during his mental health ; the woman of refined and delicate nature, carefully protected from contamination during her girlhood, now in her period of mental distress, is brought forcibly in contact with those whose training and condition have been the reverse of her own, and the very contact with whom must be revolting to her pure nature ; the young of both sexes are associated with those who poison their affected minds with impure language and revolting habits, foreign to their hitherto spotless characters ; all of these, whose only crime against the commonwealth, is lack of wealth, are forced into daily intimacy with large numbers of insane cases, in different stages of their disease, who cannot but exert the most unfavorable influence upon their mental condition. Hygiene, says a prominent work on mental disease, is the removal of the patient from the irritating influences of home surroundings to the hospital, where the diversion of new surroundings will turn the mind into more healthful channels. Hygiene, indeed ! Are these