

"The experience of the druggist in the treatment of the sick is obtained after this manner: a poverty-stricken female takes her child to his shop, says it has a cough, is very restless, cries all night, drinks a great deal, but eats nothing, and is wasting away. He looks at it across the counter, and, as a matter of form, feels its pulse; he prescribes, the medicine is compounded, the case is dismissed, and it is two to one that he sees his patient again—may-be he hears of his death. Now, this is just the kind of experience the *prescribing* druggist is in possession of; but the principles and practice of medicine are not learnt, and cannot be learnt in this way. Mr. Tinker may be, and is, respectable in his calling, and so are the druggists of Liverpool as a body respectable, perhaps as much so as are those in the trade in any other town of the United Kingdom.

"But who meddles with the tender fabric of the infant? The well-educated and most intelligent physician feels himself embarrassed, and prescribes in doubt; nay, I have known an individual of this class declare, from conscientious motives, his great reluctance to treat the complaints of small children. He felt his inability to do them justice. Who, then, is to meddle with the tender fabric of the infant? The druggist!"

Another correspondent of the Liverpool newspaper gives the following as the formula of the medicine given to the child:—

Liquor of ammonia, acetated, $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce;
Spirit of nitre, 1 drachm;
Liquor of tartarised antimony, $\frac{1}{2}$ drachm;
Simple syrup, 2 drachms;
Water, 1 ounce. Two teaspoonfuls every three hours.

ON LUNATIC ASYLUMS AND ESTABLISHMENTS FOR INVALIDS

IN THE
North of Germany and in St. Petersburg.

BY M. LEURET.

At a time when the condition and treatment of lunatics are attracting more than an ordinary degree of attention, the following remarks, from the pen of a talented French writer, cannot fail to prove interesting. We abridge them from the last number of the "*Annales d'Hygiène Publique*."

Before leaving France, on a tour of inspection through the North of Germany and Russia, I paid a visit to the hospital of Valenciennes. The aged, infirm, foundlings, and lunatics, are here congregated together in the same building; the latter, even when

docile, are incarcerated in cells about eight feet square. There is no window in this prison, and the only air admitted enters through a hole in the door. I saw two idiots confined in these cells, with scarcely room to turn about in them. Close to the prison of the idiot my guide pointed out another cell of similar dimensions. On looking through the iron grating I distinguished, though with some difficulty, the form of a female; she was in a sitting posture, and immovable. I concluded that she was insane, and knowing that the confidence of insane persons is readily gained by a few kind words, I spoke to her, in a soothing tone, a few words of comfort. The girl answered, but with a trembling voice. The poor child was a *deserter*. This term, it appears, is applied to foundlings, who leave, without permission, the establishments of the persons to whom they have been bound apprentice. The girl, whom I saw, had been confined for two months, and was to remain in prison for four months longer, without amusement or occupation; on bread and water. Three boys, 13, 14, and 18 years of age, were also confined in the hospital for a similar fault. The child of 14 years alone enjoyed the light, which traversed an immense window, in which seven panes of glass were broken. Thus exposed to the cold and moist night-air, the prisoner lay on a handful of straw, covered with a remnant of a sheet. The boy's crime was *desertion*, provoked, as he said, by his master beating him.

Having witnessed such a scene as this I left my native country without regret, and was ready to endure the spectacle of Russian despotism.

LIEGE.

Liege was the first city at which I stopped on entering Belgium; it possesses two hospitals, or rather *prisons*, for the reception of lunatics. The building appropriated to males was erected 325 years ago, and remains unchanged since the day of its foundation. Each wing of the building is three stories high, and all the outlets are carefully *grated*. The patients, 70 to 80 in number, congregate, indiscriminately, in a court 40 feet by 30; the sick-room is placed on the ground-floor, and contains four beds; the hospital is directed and the patients *treated* by six monks of the order of St. Augustine, assisted by five servants. Under such a system of things it were vain to expect any rational treatment of the insane,—none existed.

The female hospital was as badly conducted as the male one. The directress seldom or never visited the establishment, and the patients were entirely delivered up to the care of the attendants. The number of patients amounted to 72, of whom from 12 to 15 were epileptic.

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

From Liege I travelled to Aix-la-Chapelle. The lunatic asylum of this town is much too small; the ground-floor is occupied by a series of stinking, filthy cells, into which the less tractable patients are thrown; the sick are likewise compelled to inhabit these cells, lest they might contaminate the ordinary rooms, which are already sufficiently foul and ill-aired. The second floor contains a ward with fourteen crowded beds for the women, and a refectory; the third floor a similar ward, and eating-room for the men. The furniture of each cell is composed of a garde-robe and a palliasse, which is thrown upon the ground. The patients confined to bed are allowed the use of sheets, and, instead of a quilt, a feather coverlet. Such is the treatment of the insane at Aix-la-Chapelle. The physician of the hospital is one of the most learned in Germany, but his efforts are neutralised by want of co-operation on the part of the Government.

On my way to Hambourg I passed through Dusseldorf. In the neighbourhood of this latter town there is an asylum, which is carefully closed against visitors and strangers. Although the directors had refused me permission to examine the establishment, I presented myself at the gate, in the hope of finding the keeper more tractable; I was disappointed, but the attempt was not altogether fruitless. As I passed along the court-yard to the keeper's rooms, measuring my steps slowly, with the pace of one who is certain of a rebuff, I discovered a long corridor, upon which opened a number of dark and damp cells. The court itself was small and dirty; men and women were congregated together, and the *latrines* (water-closets) were common to both sexes.

I also visited the principal church of Dusseldorf, where the sexton showed me everything worthy of notice, and, amongst other curiosities, a choice collection of embalmed princes. The Duke of Volufiank-Wilhem, who died some two centuries ago, enveloped in his ducal mantle, and with a monk's hood on his head. Two of his daughters, once high and mighty princesses now diminutive mummies, three feet long, weighing about a pound, dessicated, fragile, and rusty. Another Duke, denominated John William, who used to carve out little saintly images from ivory, to distract his mind from state affairs. A few halfpence bestowed on the worthy sexton enable you to turn over and examine at your ease the relicts of these mighty potentates. How considerate of them to have had their bodies embalmed! Without this spectacle the traveller would in vain seek anything worthy of notice in the town of Dusseldorf.

HAMBOURG.

At Hambourg it was my good fortune to witness the realisation of an idea which has

hitherto remained barren, viz., the restoration of young criminals to virtue and to society. The plan of education which has been crowned with so cheering a result emanated from Dr. Julius, the Howard of Germany. The necessary funds are furnished by the leading inhabitants of the town. About three miles from Hambourg, in a small village named Horn, may be seen a group of cottages, similar in appearance to those of the surrounding peasantry. In the centre is the principal establishment, of the most simple construction: to the right and left, ranges of cottages. The interior of each cottage is divided by modest partitions of wood; ladders supply the place of stair-cases; the furniture consists of bedsteads of unhewn wood, with a few articles of primary necessity. The house itself is enclosed in a well-cultivated garden, and the whole surrounded with a thick-set hedge which any child could traverse at pleasure. Young criminals, male and female, are received into this establishment from Hambourg and its vicinity; the only bonds which retain them are affection for their director, and the change, both moral and physical, which has taken place in their condition of life. Professed thieves, young debauchés, criminals of every description are, nearly without exception, restored to society in a short space of time. This wonderful regeneration is effected by the paternal care and assiduity of the director, Mr. Wichern. The moment a fresh inmate arrives he takes him into his own house, and keeps him constantly by his side for eight or ten days. The child is then placed in what is called "a family" or congregation of twelve children, under the direction of a steady man, who is capable of teaching them to read and write, and who has exercised some mechanical profession. Each family eats at a common table and sleeps in the same room. Children are received up to the age of twenty years; as soon as their reformation is supposed to be complete, they receive encouragement and assistance to enable them to establish themselves in the trade which they may have learned. It may be expected that I should explain the means of correction which are used in the Hambourg Asylum. None exist. Whatever may have been the faults or crimes of the children, when once admitted within the walls of the Asylum they are never punished; a word of reproach is never heard. Confidence in the good intentions of their director, hope, contentment, occupation, these act sufficiently on the minds of the young criminals, and it is seldom that any of the children think of leaving a refuge in which their days are passed so happily. Having witnessed in the Asylum at Hambourg the effects of love and charity, I was desirous of seeing the localities which furnish the young criminals. Parent-Duchâtelet had given us a vivid description of

those of Paris. It became a matter of interest to view the retreats of vice at Hambourg. I accordingly visited them all, and everywhere found the same hideous aspect. Instead of pleasure, drunkenness; instead of love, purchased caresses. The women of the town are subject, at Hambourg, to the same strict surveillance as at Paris. There is a curious coincidence between the relative numbers in both cities. At Paris, according to the calculations of Parent-Duchâtelet, there is one prostitute for every 206 inhabitants; at Hambourg one for every 205. I examined the book in which the women of the town are compelled to inscribe their names. It was covered with crosses, instead of signatures. Hence want of instruction and immorality are here intimately connected; a fact already demonstrated by the researches of Duchâtelet in France.

(To be continued.)

THE LANCET.

London, Saturday, December 15, 1838.

ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

WE mentioned last week, on the authority of the President of the French Institute, the circumstance of a quack having effected the ruin of a young and artless female through the "mighty magic" of animal magnetism. Since then we have been informed that the seducer is in London, where, under the pretence of disseminating the knowledge of a new science, he is, probably, engaged in seeking fresh food for his libidinous propensities. Another example occurs to our memory: the Hospital St. Louis, in Paris, was once the scene of mesmeric absurdities, as is now an analogous institution in London. The chief actors were two young females, not quite so well trained, but fully as precocious, as the Misses OKEY. The apothecary of the hospital was a man of strong passions, unscrupulous, and without moral principle. The result may be easily imagined. The Parisian OKEYS were thrown into a state of real, or pretended, sleep, and the hospital was disgraced by a series of orgies which only occur amongst licentious enthusiasts. The question of mesmerism and its effects, is one which, in a moral point of view, admits of no

debate. We speak advisedly, and we address ourselves more particularly to the heads of families,—to those unto whom the care of young females is entrusted. Were we to admit for an instant, the alleged effects of mesmerism; were we to grant that a few passes of the hand can veil the eyes in profound sleep, and deprive an individual of consciousness, who could shut his eyes against the dreadful consequences to society of the existence of such an agent? Mesmerism, according to its advocates, acts most intensely on nervous and impressionable females. What father of a family, then, would admit even the shadow of a mesmeriser within his threshold? Who would expose his wife, or his sister, his daughter, or his orphan ward, to the contact of an animal magnetiser? If the *volition* of an ill-intentioned person be sufficient to prostrate his victim at his feet, should we not shun such pretenders more than lepers, or the uncleanest of the unclean? Assuredly the powers claimed by the deluded and vicious followers of MESMER will eventually prove their own ruin. In endeavouring to raise themselves above ordinary mortals, they lay claim to attributes and powers which must place them, for ever, beyond the pale of civilised society.

Should any persons doubt that in this country mesmerism has been pursued with the infamous purposes which we have indicated, we assure them that a physician in London, a man of high character and standing in his profession, was applied to, some time since, by several Russian officers of rank and fortune, temporarily residing in this country, for instruction in the art of putting persons to sleep, by mesmeric processes, with the express view, as it ultimately appeared, of exercising their newly-acquired knowledge in their own country, on unsuspecting females who might fall within their power. The "knowledge" was refused on discovery of its object, but what shall we say to a continuance of instruction in this scandalous "science" in the *private wards of one of our public hospitals*, where wealthy and, perhaps, libidinous