

## A Visit to a Convict Lunatic Asylum.

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THE question, What constitutes insanity, is one of the most troublesome in the whole scope of our jurisprudence, civil and criminal. The doctors seem to fare especially ill in these disputes, whether rightfully or wrongfully; and certainly the contradictions and obscurities to be found in their opinions account for many of the uncomplimentary remarks they are destined to hear for their part in the matter. Still there does seem to be a great deal of prejudice against the doctors whenever they appear in lunacy cases. In civil cases a general impression exists that medical men are bent on placing under restraint every individual on whose sanity they are called to decide; while in criminal cases, the end of their ambition is to obtain the acquittal of every murderer, garotter, or miscreant of any kind on the plea of insanity. In the latter cases, especially, I have long since been inclined to believe the doctors have suffered gross injustice, and a recent visit I made to a celebrated private convict lunatic asylum has confirmed the opinion.

One fine evening in the autumn of last year, while strolling on the Fisherton Road, near Salisbury, I was overtaken by a medical friend who was going to spend an evening in the Convict Lunatic Asylum, and who invited me to accompany him. I inquired whether it would not appear improper in me to visit such an establishment without a better excuse than curiosity.

"Not in your case," replied my friend; "the proprietors will be pleased to see you, taking, as you do, an interest in the question of criminal insanity. They will be particularly pleased when they hear you are a member of the bar, as they will look upon you in the light of a conscientious adversary, who will form his opinion honestly, from the proofs placed before him. Understand me, it is no show-place we are going to, but I will guarantee you a cordial reception."

"But is it not too late to call to-night?"

"On the contrary, this is their ball night."

"But I am not in evening dress."

"Nor am I, but that does not matter, as it is only a ball for the patients."

"For the convict lunatics?" I inquired, somewhat puzzled.

"Yes, for the convict lunatics. Once a week the doctor gives them a ball. It is the greatest treat the poor creatures have."

"But is it not a rather dangerous thing to allow a number of convict lunatics to assemble together? They certainly might do immense mischief if any sudden impulse seized them."

My friend laughed. "So far from there being any danger of a disturbance, I am persuaded you will admit you never saw a more well-behaved or orderly assembly in your life. This," said he, pointing to a neat little cottage, "is the commencement of the asylum."

"But that house appears very small," I remarked.

"That is only the commencement of the buildings, for there are many. In fact, the Fisherton Asylum is like a village. It comprises many houses, some very large, and almost all larger than the one I pointed to. They are separated by high walls, so that the patients may be divided according to their cases and the accommodation they require; for there are others than convicts here, remember, though of course separated from them. They are, however, allowed to attend the balls if they are so disposed, and if they are sufficiently recovered to be allowed to be present."

As he said this we arrived at the entrance gates of a very handsome house, without a single attribute of the lunatic asylum in its appearance. It more resembled a remarkably handsome villa than anything else, and the beautifully arranged grounds favoured the illusion. We were ushered into a parlour, where we remained while the principal—Dr. Lush—was sent for. In a few minutes he arrived, and received us with great cordiality.

"I suppose," he said, "you have come to see our ball. It is certainly curious for strangers, though we do not much like their presence; but as you are a friend of X we shall have pleasure in admitting you."

"My friend," said X, "is a barrister."

"I am very pleased to hear it. I wish gentlemen of that profession would visit us a little oftener than they do."

So saying, he led the way, and we followed him. He led us through the house and some gardens at the back. At first sight there did not appear the slightest restraint in any part of the establishment, but presently we noticed that every door was locked immediately we had passed through it; with that exception, there was nothing to mark it from any private gentleman's house. At last we arrived at a building one story high and somewhat lofty. The doctor opened the door with his patent key, and we found ourselves in the ball-room. It was, perhaps, sixty or seventy feet long, and proportionately broad. It was so lofty that the orchestra, which extended from one side of the building to the other, was built some ten feet from the floor. In it was a band composed of a dozen musicians in uniform. The room was lighted by gas, and was also very commodious. At the opposite end of the room was a piano; and we afterwards found the evening's amusements were alternately a dance and a song.

Before the next dance commenced, I scrutinized the company. The men had congregated together on one side of the room, and the women were seated on the other. There was no conversation among them, and from their behaviour they appeared more as if they were in a well-regulated dancing academy than in a ball-room. There was a singular variety in their dress, especially among the men; some being in a costume

that would have done credit to any society, while others appeared exceedingly poor. On inquiry I found there were among them many poor patients who were not criminals, while others who were, and whose friends were wealthy, were enabled to dress better. All the women had evidently made great preparations in their toilet. Many were overloaded with artificial flowers, most of them only paper, and of their own manufacture; these also maintained the same silence as the men. Suddenly, the brass band struck up for a quadrille, and the men chose their partners with great courtesy. As a rule they danced well; but the same gravity of demeanour that characterized them when still, was exhibited when dancing. When the dance was over, they conducted their partners to their seats, and again retired to their own side of the room. Presently, an elderly lady seated herself at the piano to accompany a gentleman in a song—"Jock of Hazeldean"—which was concluded amidst much applause. The old lady, however, apologized to the singer for some mistake she had made in the accompaniment, which he, with great gallantry, declared he had not noticed. "It is very kind on your part to say so, doctor," she said, "but still it was very clumsy on mine."

The band again struck up, and this time it was for a mazurka, which was as well danced as the quadrille. I was considerably puzzled at the whole scene, and I inquired of one of the assistants, what class of patients they were who conducted themselves in so orderly a manner?

"They are of all classes, sir," he replied; "the majority are prisoners for various offences—burglars, thieves, and murderers."

"Murderers! Are there any murderers here?"

"About thirty," he answered, quietly, and without anything like aversion in his tone or manner.

After a moment's silence, spent in a vain endeavour to realize this state of things, I said,—

"Will you have the kindness to point out a person who has committed a murder?"

"Certainly, sir. Do you see that young fellow dancing with the girl at the further end of the room?" pointing to a slim man, in a velveteen coat and trowsers, with a very pretty girl for a partner. "He was formerly a celebrated burglar, who went mad on solitary confinement, and attempted to murder the prison doctor. The girl is here for murdering her sister."

The information filled me with such horror that I almost regretted my visit.

"Are all your patients here?" I inquired.

"Oh, not a fifth part of them. We have not in the room at present more than one hundred and twenty."

"But are you not afraid of a disturbance?"

"Not the least, sir. The band are all trained warders, and there are several in the room as well. Among the women also there are several female warders."

I waited some time longer, and heard two or three songs, and saw as many dances, all conducted with the greatest propriety, and then I proposed leaving—finding myself more shocked than amused at the scene. Doctor Lush, the senior physician, kindly conducted me to the gates.

“You are somewhat surprised at what you have seen?” he said.

“Indeed I am,” I replied; “but do you believe all those people are mad?”

“All,” said he, “and dangerously so. You doubt, perhaps, but it is a fact, nevertheless. You have to-night seen them on their best behaviour. It is wonderful, occasionally, how well they contrive to conceal their insanity. The doctor who sang ‘Jock of Hazeldean’ is a proof.”

“Do you mean to say he is a patient?”

“And a most dangerous one. He was some years since confined in an asylum, when he was ordered to be released, as he was perfectly sane in the opinion of the magistrates. The next week he committed a murder. He suspected that a poor girl, a maid-servant, intended to poison him, and he killed her.”

“And that gentlemanly man is a murderer!”

“He is. He is here for killing that poor girl, and it is strongly suspected he killed another.”

“But is not a ball a singular amusement for such people?”

“Were they sane, it certainly would be so; but remember they are mad, and ought not to be treated as criminals. Dancing is the only amusement they enjoy. Sometimes we have recitations for them, sometimes a conjuror, and other amusements, but nothing seems to afford them such satisfaction as dancing. I see you are hardly convinced, but if you would really like to go deeper into the subject, and will call here to-morrow, I will show you the whole establishment, and I think you will come to the conclusion there is not an individual here who ought to be trusted with his liberty.”

Painful as the determination was, I resolved to accept the doctor's invitation. Eleven o'clock the next morning was fixed upon for our meeting, and I wished him farewell.

The next day, true to my appointment, I found the doctor awaiting me. He first showed me the domestic offices, the food, and the different culinary arrangements—all of which appeared excellent.

“We will now,” he said, “go through the male convict department. One thing you would oblige me by remarking, that although I have here under my charge some as unmitigated ruffians as the world holds, I have not a pair of handcuffs, or a lock-up cell, or any instrument of punishment whatever, in the whole establishment.”

“In what manner do you maintain order then?”

“Principally by kindness, and a very powerful staff of warders. As lunatics they have not the intelligence for combination in a plot, and

therefore my police is far stronger than even their numbers would lead you to imagine."

"What authority do you give your warders to deal with cases of insubordination?"

"None whatever; even if they are struck, I do not allow them to return the blow. There are always more than one, even in the quietest wards, and their power is quite sufficient to maintain order without violence. When I said I had no punishment, I should have stated I have one. When a man misconducts himself, I do not allow him to attend the balls for some weeks; and, absurd as it may appear, they consider it as a mark of degradation."

While he was speaking, a number of lunatic patients, perhaps a dozen, passed us, accompanied by a warder and a respectable-looking man with a spade over his shoulder.

"That is the gardener's gang going to their work. All the vegetables consumed in the establishment are grown in the grounds."

"Is their labour compulsory?"

"Not at all; that is to say, they are told off for the work, but if they object, it is not pressed."

"Do they receive any remuneration; at any rate those that are not criminals?"

"None whatever beyond a pipe and some tobacco, when they have done work, and with that they are perfectly content."

"But is it not rather hard on those who are not criminals?"

"Not in the least. Remember their work is very different from that of the day-labourer, to which the majority of them have been accustomed. They here work only a few hours, barely sufficient to keep them in health; and so far from their considering it a hardship, they take to it most willingly. Talk to them and judge for yourself, you will then be able to decide if any of them are sane."

I then addressed some questions to different members of the gang, but alas! there was no denying the insanity of the whole. If I received one or two sane replies, subsequent answers were sure to be irrational. They seemed pleased to see the doctor, and made signs to him, which I thought related to myself, but I was mistaken. It was simply a mute manner of asking him for a pinch of snuff, which he gave to each willingly. They then followed the warder to their work.

"Now," said the doctor, "we will visit one of the dormitories of the male convicts, and you would greatly oblige me by pointing out candidly anything to which you object or any improvement which might be made. And do not mind asking an explanation of anything you do not understand."

He then led the way up a flight of stairs, and we entered a long dormitory, well ventilated and light, with the beds ranged in a row against the walls, opposite the windows. The room was scrupulously clean, the walls were whitewashed and hung with coloured prints illustrative of

various events in Holy Writ and in history, ancient and modern. Altogether the place had more the appearance of a well-regulated hospital than that of either a prison or a lunatic asylum. Even the windows appeared to be without bars, but, on investigation, I found the frames were of iron, and that they would only open a certain distance, not sufficient for a patient to escape by.

"This," said the doctor, "is the sleeping ward of some of the most violent or dangerous of the patients. You will see them presently below, and I think you will be surprised at the ruffianly set we have to deal with. They are at present in the exercise-yard and day-room."

"You said," I remarked, "that if anything required explanation you would give it; also that you had no place for punishment. Will you tell me what is the meaning of that iron cage encircling one of the beds in the centre of the ward?"

"That," said the doctor, "is the night-warder's bed. I always insist on a warder sleeping in the ward, and there are others close at hand. When the man retires to rest he gets into that cage and locks himself in, that his throat may not be cut during the night."

We now descended into the day-room. There were in it very few prisoners, for the weather being fine, they had gone into the airing-ground. Those I saw I spoke to. The first was my friend the doctor, who had sung "Jock of Hazeldean," the evening before. He was busy writing at a desk, but put down his pen when he saw us, and addressed the doctor with much good feeling, and myself with great courtesy. To my great surprise he spoke most rationally of the different phases of insanity of his fellow-patients, what cases appeared mending, and what seemed worse. There was not an unreasonable word in his conversation, and had I not been aware the doctor was purposely drawing him out for my instruction, I should have thought they were in consultation. After the doctor had quitted his unfortunate professional brother, I spoke for a short time with a foreigner, a Polish count, who had been punished for swindling, and had become mad in solitary confinement. He spoke so rationally that no one could have thought him insane, and he placed in the doctor's hands a letter, which he begged he would forward by post. The doctor took the letter, and we prepared to leave the room. As we left it we remarked a tall amiable-looking man, with a singularly mild expression of countenance, standing by the door; he made us a military salute as we passed, but said nothing, nor did the doctor even notice him—an omission which struck me particularly, as hitherto he had had a kind word for all. When we were outside the door and the doctor was preparing to open the gate which led into the airing-ground, I asked him if the physician he had spoken to was still insane, as his conversation appeared perfectly rational.

"Certainly he is, and as a proof, when you speak to him of the murder he committed, he maintains he was perfectly justified in doing it, and that he is not understood. He argues on the matter insanelly, and,

of course, it would be most dangerous, with such notions in him, to allow him to go at large; besides, he is not always so rational as you see him to-day."

"And who was the foreigner?"

"Poor fellow, he is to be pitied, for circumstances came out after his madness had fully set in, which render it doubtful whether he was not insane at the time he committed the crime for which he was incarcerated. He obtained a quantity of valuable jewellery to make a present to a lady, and in payment gave a cheque on a banker with whom he had no account. Afterwards it was discovered he had a sum at another banker's sufficient to cover the amount of the cheque. By-the-by, here is his letter, read it."

"But would it not be an act of impropriety?"

"Not at all. I see you think from his rational conversation that he is sane, but it is more than probable his letter will prove to you the contrary."

So saying, he opened it, and gave it to me to read. I was fairly surprised, for the letter was the most incoherent composition possible. Hardly one sentence in it—and it was very lengthy—had the slightest connection with the preceding: it was in every respect the work of a madman.

"And that mild-looking man who saluted us as we went out, what crime has he committed?"

"He was formerly a sergeant in the army, and quartered in some barrack in the Isle of Wight. One night, in a fit of sudden raving mania, he cut the throats of his wife and five children. Did you remark I did not notice him? He has conducted himself badly lately, and is in disgrace. He is not allowed to attend the balls, which annoys him greatly."

The doctor then opened the gate, and we entered the airing-ground. There were at least forty prisoners in it, and several warders in uniform. Here there was no doubting we were in the society of madmen, and those of the worst description. It appeared a very Babel. As soon as we entered two powerful warders immediately placed themselves beside me to preserve me from any sudden attack. Several of the madmen advanced to speak with me, some in a most threatening manner. Several abused the doctor in the most outrageous manner; but he received their insults with perfect equanimity. Others spoke to him civilly, but in so incoherent a manner as to leave no doubt of their insanity. When we were for a moment by ourselves the doctor said,—

"We have here all our worst cases, and I suppose among them are some of the greatest ruffians in Europe; that is to say, they would be if they were not insane. If you had time you would have ample opportunity of studying that vexed question between your profession and mine, whether there is such a thing as moral madness."

"Do you hold there is?" I inquired.

"Indeed I do; and I suspect you will have an opportunity directly of

judging for yourself. Do you see that tall, ill-looking fellow at the further end of the ground? His eye is upon us, and I suspect he will address you as he does every stranger he sees. Pray talk with him, if he gives you the opportunity."

As the doctor spoke, the man advanced towards us with an insolent, defiant look, but without a trace of insanity. When he was sufficiently close to speak, he asked me if I was in the magistracy, and I informed him I was not.

"Are you connected with Government, sir?"

"No, not in any way."

"Are you acquainted with any one that is? If you are, pray stand my friend, for I am treated here in the most infamous manner. I am no more mad, sir, than you are, and yet the doctor, for his own profit, keeps me here."

"But you know," said the doctor, "that you are a prisoner, and I have no voice in the matter. The Government sent you here, and without their order you know perfectly well I cannot release you."

"But you know," said the man, "that if you only told the truth, and said I was not mad, I should be allowed to go at once."

"Not at all; you would only be sent to some prison. Besides, you have applied to the Commissioners, and they refuse to interfere in your behalf."

"Because they go snacks with you, I believe," said the convict.

"Well, then, this gentleman," said the doctor, "is a stranger to me, and is connected with the law, and can doubtlessly bring forward your case, if he thinks proper."

"It would be a charity if you would, sir, for you may imagine what a terrible thing it is for a sane man to pass his life with the horrible madmen you see here."

"Tell the gentleman your own case," said the doctor, "and then he can judge for himself."

"I will tell you everything, sir," he said, "and as true as the Gospel; for I am not at all afraid of letting my case be known. I was formerly a respectable tradesman in the North of England. One day a tax-gatherer called on me and said he had a claim against me for twelve shillings. I asked him what for? He said I had been keeping a dog which I had made no return of, and for matter of that it was perfectly true. 'Well then,' said he, 'you must pay the tax for it.' 'I shall do nothing of the kind; no man ought to pay a tax for keeping a dog.' 'Now be reasonable,' he said, 'and pay it, for you can; if you don't I must summon you, and I do not want to do that to you or any man.' 'Take my advice,' said I, 'and don't try it.' 'I must,' said he, and he left me. A few days afterwards he called with the summons, and I took up a knife and I killed him."

"You did a very infamous action, then," I answered, astonished at the fellow's recital. "A short time since a man was hung for killing a



broker who seized his goods for rent, and I do not see much difference between his case and yours."

"And he really deserved it," said the maniac; "but my summons was for a dog."

"No matter; you are bound to pay the tax for a dog as well as a house," I replied, totally forgetting I was reasoning with a maniac.

"Is that really your opinion?" he said, getting greatly excited.

"Certainly."

"Very well, I shall know you whenever I see you again, and if ever I get from here, I will rip you up as I did the tax-gatherer!"

I devoutly hoped, as I turned from him, that it would be some time before he left the asylum.

As we were preparing to leave the ground, the doctor remarked the sight before us must be a sad one for a stranger, "and yet," said he, "even here kindness is occasionally appreciated. That warder," he continued, pointing to a remarkably powerful man, "is an exceedingly kind, good-tempered fellow, and a great favourite with the patients. However, some time since, one of them conceived that the warder had offered him some affront, and to revenge himself he concealed a piece of iron hoop he had found and sharpened it to a point. He then contrived, unseen, to fix it in a piece of wood as a handle. Taking his opportunity, he one day leaped upon the warder, and made a violent stab at his throat. Fortunately it missed the carotid artery, but inflicted a very severe flesh-wound. The warder controlled his temper, and did not return the blow; but his strength, and that of two others with him, was called out to the fullest in protecting the wretched maniac himself; for the other patients, enraged at seeing their favourite warder treated in such a manner, rushed on the would-be assassin, and would certainly have killed him had they not been prevented."

As we were leaving the ground, the doctor called my attention to the plants and flowers bordering it, which were well preserved. "I will speak of the care the patients take of them, presently," he said.

We afterwards went into several other departments for male patients, divided as they were with regard to the different phases of their disease, although none seemed so irreclaimable as the first we visited.

"We will now," said the doctor, "visit the women's part of the asylum."

We entered by a back staircase into the first floor of a long building. The room was as scrupulously cleanly as those of the men. In it we found about a dozen mad women and two female warders. As we entered we heard one woman scolding vociferously, and on seeing her, I found it was the old lady who the evening before had accompanied the doctor in his song. She no sooner perceived me than she immediately turned her anger on me. She scolded me in so marked a manner, and appeared in so terrible a rage, that even the doctor was astonished, and asked what had occurred to ruffle her temper in such a manner.

"She noticed that gentleman," was the answer, "talking yesterday evening when she was at the piano, and that always enrages her. She has been angry ever since, and I think he had better go, or we shall have a great deal of trouble with her."

I was on the point of apologizing for my rudeness, but the aspect of the old lady stopped me. It is impossible to conceive anything more furious than her countenance. She was a large powerful woman, and would have made a most formidable adversary, so we took the warder's advice and left the room. As we descended the stairs, we met a very amiable, nice-looking woman, about thirty years of age, to whom the doctor spoke in a very kind manner for some moments. When she had passed, he informed me that the old lady had been an inmate of the asylum for more than five-and-twenty years. That for the first few years, when the treatment of insanity was not as well understood as it is at present, her temper was so violent, and her behaviour so dangerous, that it was thought necessary to keep her continually in a strait-waistcoat; but afterwards they tried kindness and succeeded to a very great extent. She was still dangerous, but infinitely less so than formerly.

"And who was that mild-looking woman we met on the stairs?" I inquired.

"She is the wife of a sergeant. In a fit of insanity she killed her sister at Kingston."

We now entered the airing-ground of the more dangerous of the female convicts.

"I called your attention," said the doctor, "to the flowers and shrubs in the airing-ground of the dangerous male convicts, and the good state of preservation they were in. Now look around you, and you will not find a flower. We try all we can to encourage their growth, but it is useless, for these women destroy every one the moment it shows its head above the ground."

"To what do you attribute it? Women are generally fond of flowers."

"It is difficult to say: possibly to that reversion of feeling and natural tastes that insanity so frequently causes."

We now heard some one tapping at the entrance gate of the ground; one of the female warders opened it, and my friend X, who had introduced me the evening before, entered. He had come to see a private patient, then under the care of the doctor. He inquired whether I had obtained much information by my visit. I told him I had been much interested with what I had seen, but the amount of information had yet to be decided on.

"At any rate," said X, "you must perceive there is a far greater affinity between insanity and crime than is generally imagined."

"Granted. On that subject there is much to be learned, I admit."

"I go further," said X. "I maintain that frequently there is a great affinity between bad temper and insanity."

"You would not attempt to maintain such a theory seriously."

"Indeed, I would. Doctor, could you not show us a case of the kind?" said X, pointing to a remarkably powerful woman standing in the middle of the airing-ground.

The doctor laughed. "Remember," he said, "I pass no opinion on the subject. I will introduce you to the patient X alludes to, and give you her history afterwards."

So saying, we advanced to the woman, who met us in a very good-natured manner. Several other patients—more than one confined for child murder—were pointed out at the same time. When we had left the ground, the doctor asked me if I had ever read the *Memoirs of a Prison Matron*?

I replied that I had.

"Do you remember the case of the woman K? she is the one I spoke to. She is there described, and very justly, as resembling, by temper as well as personal strength, more a tigress than a human being. Whenever she flew into one of her passions, it was necessary to send for several male warders to control her. The whole description the prison matron gave of her is most graphic. Punishment seemed not to have the slightest effect on her, and she was totally insensible to indulgence. Her passage to the dark cells, in which she was frequently confined, was strewn with the warders' clothing, torn in pieces from their limbs; and when locked up, she generally amused herself by tearing up the flooring of the cell.

At last the authorities assumed she was insane, and she was sent to me. Frequently, at the commencement, I admit I could find no insanity in her. For a few days she conducted herself very well, but at last she got into one of her passions. Here we have a very different system to that very properly pursued in prisons. We sent for three male warders, all powerful men, and they put her into an arm-chair, and then held her hands, preventing her from rising. Their management, of course, was better than that of the prison warders, from their constant experience, and they held her immovably in the arm-chair. Her powerless condition seemed to increase her passion, and she raved and swore at the top of her voice at the warders. Occasionally she would stop for a moment and regard them with intense surprise, their conduct was so different from what she had been accustomed to. They made her no threats, nor did they attempt to calm her, but quietly stood by her side looking at her, not only without anger, but with perfect indifference. She continued in her rage till she was utterly exhausted, and they then left her without any remark to the care of the female warders. When she had recovered she seemed much ashamed, and evidently could not understand the reason she had neither been punished nor scolded.

"She certainly got better, but still she was a most dangerous patient. At last, by carefully watching her, we discovered that her attacks of

passion were invariably preceded by a sulking fit of two or three hours, threatening the while some one from whom she had received an imaginary affront. We then determined to treat her differently, and when we noticed her sulking fit coming on, we generally, with a little simple medicine, excited a slight nausea, and continued it long enough to let the time for the passion pass over; and now she is tolerably quiet, still she wants watching."

We now entered the grounds of one of the houses set apart for private patients, in which resided the one X was interested in. The house was furnished not only with comfort, but with a certain degree of luxury. In the parlour a remarkably neat-looking servant-girl was laying the cloth for lunch. On leaving it I remarked to the doctor that he was fortunate in getting so nice a girl to reside as servant in a lunatic asylum. "She is a prisoner," he replied, "and is confined here for murdering her infant. Her case, however, was a very sad one, and excited public sympathy greatly at the time it happened. She was undoubtedly insane from desperation at the moment she committed the deed."

"But do not these murderers when they recover their senses repent of the crimes they have committed?"

"Never. It is a singular fact, and in my opinion, a very beautiful one, in which nature seems to draw a line between crime and misfortune. I never met with a case in which a genuine repentance was visible in a person who had when in a fit of insanity killed another. You remember, perhaps, the case of Celestina Sommers, who murdered her daughter in a most cruel manner? She died here a few months afterwards quite mad. She appeared naturally a very mild woman, and was evidently genuinely sorry if she offended any one; but she never appeared to show the slightest sorrow for the murder of her daughter. A more singular case still is the man you see working with the gardener. In a fit of raving insanity he murdered a woman. There was no doubt about his case, and the jury on that ground unhesitatingly acquitted him. He continued insane for some months afterwards, and then recovered his senses as quickly as he had lost them. When informed of the crime he had committed he appeared greatly surprised. He is very religious, and attempted to repent, but was not able to succeed. He still wishes he may have the power, and does all he can to obtain repentance by reasoning on the subject, but without avail. He will not allow himself the slightest indulgence, and refuses to attend the balls. Another circumstance you may also note in this singular insensibility to their own crimes is this, that the same kind of crime committed by another they hold in genuine horror. By way of amusing them last winter I engaged a man to give them some dramatic recitations. The performer incautiously read the murder scene from *Hamlet*. It excited the greatest interest in the whole audience, especially those committed for murder, and they expressed their horror in a most marked manner. But the one who, perhaps, showed the

strongest detestation of the deed was himself confined for cutting off his doctor's head and kicking it about the garden."

The doctor now opened the door of a very handsome chapel, and pointed out the different arrangements. To my inquiries what was the behaviour of the insane in church, and what was the effect of religion on their minds, he replied that religious observances evidently had a great effect upon them, and that the behaviour even of the most ruffianly was in general excellent.

I now prepared to take leave of the doctor, but he insisted on conducting me to the entrance door. In the garden, on our way, we met a remarkably handsome gentlemanly-looking man. He immediately advanced to the doctor—

"I have been waiting to see you;" he said, "I want to bid you good-by, and thank you for your kindness to me."

"And you feel yourself quite well?"

"Quite. I have no fear of a relapse whatever."

"Well," said the doctor, "I do not want to see you as a patient again; in any other capacity it will always give me pleasure."

When we were out of ear-shot, I said to the doctor—

"Of course you do not allow him to go on his own judgment?"

"Indeed I do," said the doctor. "He suffers from dipsomania, or thirst madness, and when he feels the fit coming on he requests permission to reside here till it is over. For many months, in all probability, it will not return."

"But what good can you do him here?"

"We can keep him from obtaining spirits, however earnestly he may beg for them. Tell me, now, are you lawyers quite right in maintaining that drinking increases the magnitude of a crime instead of diminishing it?"

Without answering the question, I took leave of the worthy doctor. Possibly I acquired but little scientific information by my visit, but I conscientiously came to the conclusion that every male prisoner I had seen was properly deprived of his liberty, and that the taunt incessantly cast upon the Government for its morbid sympathy with criminals is unjust.

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