

IN AN ASYLUM.

About once a month you will see a newspaper report concerning some insane asylum, and the statement that some patient has been abused is sure to be made. No doubt there are cases where keepers lose their tempers and inflict summary punishment, but there is one thing you never hear of through the press, that is the injustice inflicted upon keepers. I have been bitten as fiercely as by a tiger, kicked until my legs were black and blue, and knocked square down a dozen times by patients, but I never gave it out to the press. I have known of keepers being crippled or killed, and I have several scars which will go with me to the grave. For a man to go on watch over insane people, especially men, is a more dangerous situation for him than any about a powder mill. If he has an average lot to deal with, he will have to put his hands, and perhaps his feet, upon someone nearly every day. He will have to do it to save himself.

I was a hall master in a great State institution for three years, and I had every opportunity to study the madmen and their ways. A prison convict can be depended on to a certain limit. He must work. He must obey rules and regulations. A guard can turn his back without fear of assault. A madman is a singular combination of wisdom, ignorance, cunning, stupidity, integrity and faithfulness. He has no one line of policy or action. He may have a mood for every half-hour. What will quiet him today may fail tomorrow. He will be as obedient as a child at noon, and at 1 o'clock defy half a dozen men. It is this uncertainty how he is going to act that keeps a strain on your nerves. I have heard people talk of studying a madman. You might as well study the winds. I have heard people tell of the power of the eye over a madman. That is true to the extent that one will seldom assault you if you are facing him, because his aim is to catch you off your guard, and he will dissemble for months to accomplish this. It is perhaps not generally understood by the public that the hour you bring a lunatic to the asylum he catches the idea that he is a prisoner detained by force, the same as a convict. I don't believe there is one man in five hundred who does not get this idea, and who does not soon begin to plot an escape. Very few prison plots include the death of a guard. Nearly every asylum plot includes the death of a keeper. The patients get the idea that the keeper is responsible for their detention, and if he can be killed they will at once secure liberty. After the first year I could generally tell when a patient was plotting against me, as most of them would give it away in action or expression. When satisfied that my suspicions of an individual were correct, my course of action depended upon his characteristics. If he was a defiant man I took him aside and said:

"Now, James, I have found out all about it, and am prepared for you. The first move you make I shall put you in the dungeon."

Sometimes he would at once abandon his purpose and not go back to it for weeks, and sometimes he would persist until he was fully convinced that I was watching him. If the patient was not of defiant spirit I would call him out and say:

"James, the great Mogul has told me all about it."

"About what?"

"Your plotting to kill me and get away. Now I shan't let you take part in the next dance."

"Oh, please do! I'll never let myself want to kill you again!"

I was hall keeper in a ward containing eighty patients, and, though I had several assistants, I saw every patient several times a day. I was allowed to carry no weapon of any sort, and our policy was gentle treatment. Our asylum was one of the first to do away with force, except in extreme cases, and every official about the institution had to be constantly on his guard. The first patient I encountered when entering upon my duties was a man named Thomas, who had gone crazy over the loss of his three children by scarlet fever. He was a well-built man of 40, and had been there three months without an outbreak of temper. The doctor who attended his children bore the same name as myself, and I presume it was this fact which aroused the patient's animosity. I saw from his look that he meant me evil, and was at once upon my guard. It was three months before his plot came to a head, and every hour of the interval was a strain upon my nerves. The man was rational upon all subjects but that of children, and you might have talked with him for an hour upon general matters and never suspected his insanity. He had a habit, as I soon learned, of praying aloud at his bedside, and in this way I learned of the various plots he had in mind. On the first night I listened to him he prayed:

"Oh, Lord, I want to kill Dr. Temple, and I want you to help me. I will come behind him at his desk and catch him by the throat, and I hope you will give me lots of strength."

The next day I called him to the desk, and after a little talk I said:

"Thomas, don't say a word to the people, but there is a patient in this ward who means me harm."

"Is it possible?" he replied, but showing great confusion on the moment.

"Yes, and let me tell you how silly he is. To come up behind me he will have to outwit the snake who guards me, and he is almost sure to get bitten."

"Are you guarded by a snake?"

"Hush! Don't let any one know it! Now, Thomas, you just watch everybody who seems to mean me harm, and you will see what a bad scrape he will get into."

He at once abandoned his plan of choking me, but was still eager for my death. A week later one of the attendants informed me that Thomas was suspected of having a knife concealed about his person or room. It was not found in his room, and when we invented an excuse for searching him there was no trace of it, but yet I knew by his actions that he had some dangerous weapon. He had gained possession of a knife from the kitchen, but had passed it over to a patient named Isbell, who had gone crazy over an invention. When an insane patient means you mischief there is no telling when he will strike. You have therefore to be on your guard every moment, and yet you must not let the other patients see that you suspect anything. I listened at the wicket, but Thomas prayed in whispers, and I could not catch his words. It was nearly a

month before his opportunity came. During all this time, whenever he came near me I was ready for him and expecting some movement. On the day his plot was ripe I read the fact in his eyes, and the most excitable patients were kept in their rooms under one pretext or another.

At 11 o'clock in the forenoon I went to the workshop to inspect the work of some patients who were making baskets. As I opened the door the thought came to me that Thomas was behind it. It was a heavy door, opened into the shop, and as the thought came to me I swung it violently back and put my whole weight against it. Thomas was there and I caught him. He had a knife in his hand, and had I not discovered him, I should have been severely wounded, if not killed. With this failure he gave up his plotting, having got the idea that a spirit came to tell me all the news.

A few months after my arrival, we received a pugilist as a patient. He was a strong, hearty man, and had gone daft over a love affair. The first impressions of a patient decide his future conduct to a great extent. The pugilist, whose name was Williams, took an aversion to me, though for what reason he probably himself could not have told. A keeper's looks, the tone of his voice, the color of his hair, the cut of his clothes, the merest trifle, is sufficient to prejudice a new arrival. I realized within an hour that I should have trouble with the man. As he was a pugilist, it was natural to suppose that he would attack me with his fists when the attack came. In those days I was not only a pretty good chunk of a man, but was accounted a good boxer, and so I did not worry over Williams as I should have been a different man. He was very quiet and docile, and had the fullest liberty permitted to any prisoner. He seemed perfectly rational on every subject but that of love, and was soon a favorite with other patients. I tried in many ways to make him change his opinion of me, but the first impression could not be eradicated. Unfortunately for me, I had blue eyes, and a blonde moustache. So had the gambler who ran away with a girl the pugilist was to marry. That was why Williams hated me, and why he schemed for revenge. He grew more sulky as the days went by, and by and by the climax came.

One morning, as I stood looking out of a window at some men at work outside, one of the patients called out to me, and, as I wheeled around, Williams stood before me. He was stripped as for the ring, and was in fighting attitude. He had been intending to strike me without warning, but as I faced him he backed off and dropped his hands. I ordered him to go to his room, and he walked off about 40 feet and turned. I saw then that he would attack me, and I had my coat and vest off before he came up. All the patients in my hall came running up, and I knew that I would have to settle the affair with Williams as soon as possible, or there would be a scene of wild excitement. As he came up I stepped out, and next moment we were engaged in prize-ring tactics. I had an advantage in the fact that I had caught him in attempting a clandestine assault, and this fact had rattled him. He led at me with his left, short, and neatly stopped my counter. Then I led and got in on his chin, dodged his counter, and he left an opening for me to swing my right on his jaw. I struck a hard blow, and he was knocked senseless, and did not come to for five minutes. His first act was to shake my hand, and when we were alone he said:

"Ah, sir, you were deceiving me all the time. You are Tom Sayers, and I'll give in to you."

Williams was with us a year after that, and he was one of my best friends. On two occasions when I was violently assaulted by patients he came promptly to my rescue, and saved me from injury. He was finally discharged as cured, but one hallucination remained. He insisted that I was Tom Sayers, and no proof that his friends could bring up would shake his convictions. Although acknowledging that I was the better man, he challenged me for a fight to a finish, and posted \$50 as a forfeit.

One of the tragic incidents connected with my administration occurred soon after Williams' discharge. We had received a patient named Latour, who was of French descent. His hobby was the building of a ladder to the moon. Unless one touched upon this particular theme the man talked as rationally as any person you ever heard. He had been sent to the asylum by the officers of the law, and against his wife's protests. She therefore began to pull wires to get him out, and a commission of three doctors was appointed to examine him. Only the day before they came Latour had asked me for six miles of rope to make a ladder to the moon, and when I put him off with some excuse, he smashed a couple of chairs, and raved and cursed for an hour. When the doctors came the man was sane enough to realize what a favorable report would do for him, and he called up all his nerves and cunning. It was wonderful how sharp he was. The doctors pumped him on every subject they could think of, and he was the peer of any one of the trio in sagacity and intelligence. When they touched upon his hobby, he laughingly said:

"Yes, that was a crazy idea of mine, and I don't wonder people thought me insane. To think I expected to reach the moon by a rope-ladder—ha! ha! ha!"

"This man is as sane as I am," said the spokesman of the commission, "and his incarceration here is one of the grossest outrages I ever heard of."

"He was sent here by the courts," I replied, as the doctor was giving the asylum a hit.

"But you should have seen that he was sane. I presume that you'd detain me if sent here by some idiot of a Judge!"

"The man has fooled you, sir. He is certainly off his balance, and I also regard him as dangerous."

"Well, we shall recommend his instant discharge, sir."

The doctors had seemingly failed to observe what was very evident to me. The patient was making a determined effort to conceal his insanity. This is often successfully done. He clenched his hands, the sweat started out on his brow, and he was nerved up as much as a man on trial for his life. The doctors had no sooner departed than he had to lie down to recover his strength, and that evening he came to me, and whispered:

"I find that six miles of rope won't do. I must have at least thirteen, and I've been thinking how I can hook the ladder at the top."

The legal order for the man's discharge came in a few days, and I saw him depart with dire misgivings. He had a dangerous

look in his eyes, and instead of being cured was really worse than when received. He went home to begin on his hobby again. His wife tried to reason him out of it, and he chopped her head off with the axe. It was over 100 miles to the asylum, but he made his way back to it on foot in forty-eight hours, and was arrested while cowering on the steps of the main entrance. He was then insane on all subjects, and a year later committed suicide.

BOTH SAW THE CAT.

The Citizen Who Wanted a House and the Tramp Who Wanted Work.

"My friend," said a citizen to an able-bodied occupant of a park bench, "why don't you go to work instead of lounging here all day?"

"Harder to find work to do than to do it," was the reply.

"Nonsense; I don't believe you would work if you got the chance."

"Try me, captain, and see!"

"All right, are you willing to dig?"

"Yes, sir; if you'll pay me decent wages."

"What is your idea of decent wages?"

"Well," said the tramp, reflecting a moment, "two dollars a day."

"Two dollars a day?" exclaimed the citizen. "Isn't that a little steep for digging?"

"Not when I can make a dollar a day by begging. You know I can live cheaper as a beggar; one doesn't have to keep up appearances."

"All right," said the citizen, "come with me."

The tramp left his bench with a briskness that would have astonished those dainty people who wonder why park loungers are so averse to work. After a ride in the street car the citizen pointed to a vacant lot and said:

"There; I want to build a cottage on that lot, and I will give you two dollars a day to dig the cellar. Clear off the loose stones and then call at my office and I will pay you for what you have done and rig you up with shovel and pick for the rest of the work."

The citizen told the tramp where his office was, and left him.

"Say!" shouted the tramp, with a few emphatic terms intended to be descriptive as he broke into the citizen's office later in the day, "you are a nice specimen of a fraud, ain't you? That lot up there don't belong to you, and the man it does belong to drove me off. I want my day's wages."

The wages were paid, and the tramp fell into a better humor.

"Now, my friend," the citizen remarked, "that lot does not belong to me; but it has never been used, the owner does not intend to use it, it is a good place for a house, I can afford to build a house, and I want you to do as much of the work as you can."

"That's all right, but why don't you buy the lot?" asked the tramp.

"I can't afford to buy the lot and build the cottage too, without giving a mortgage, and I won't put a mortgage on my house."

"Then you'll have to go without the cottage," said the tramp.

"If so," replied the citizen, "you will have to go without the job of work; and I reckon that is what it comes to. I must rent a home instead of owning one, and you must be a beggar instead of an honest man, unless you are willing to take some body's work from him by doing it for less."

"Begging is easier and more humane, and pays better."

"Do you see the cat?" the citizen inquired.

"No," replied the tramp, looking around the room; "I don't see any cat. But I'll tell you what I do see. I see that if you could build on that lot I would be earning a respectable living. And I'll tell you what I don't see. I don't see what right anyone who doesn't want to use that lot has to prevent you from using it."

"But," observed the citizen gravely, "the other man owns the lot."

"What right has he to own it?" asked the tramp; "he didn't make it!"

"I guess you see the cat."

"Is that the cat?"

"That is the cat."

"Good-day."

Perfectly Ridiculous.

The minister of Braidwardine had rather a large family and the problem of "what shall we do with our boys" constantly confronted him from the time the first of them went to college. If they went to dig, they would lose their social standing; if they were forced to beg, he was afraid they would be miserable failures, for it takes more brains nowadays to beg well than to steal. The minister of Braidwardine had a brother in the Indies, and upon request he absorbed some of the surplus stock of future spiritual advisers, growing up at the manse. Shortly after the arrival of the boys at their uncle's, a cyclone came along and induced that gentleman's bungalow to go off for a dance. Unfortunately the cyclone did not restore the bungalow to the care of its chaperon, but left it all used up in a gully half a mile away. The good man of Braidwardine was sorely exercised during the week following the news, and on Sabbath he proceeded to make some remarks about it in his opening prayer: "We thank Thee, Oh Lord, that we dwell in a Christian land; a land of the Bible and the Sabbath; a land where there is neither the fierce tempest that destroys nor the burning sun that smites; a land where there are neither bungalows to be blown away, nor cyclones to blow them." At that precise moment a gust of wind came down from the mountain, and bursting through the windows swept a blinding cloud of snow right into the old man's face. Gasping for breath, he turned toward the broken window, and in a voice of sad disapproval exclaimed: "Oh Lord, ye ken this is perfectly ridiculous."—*Toronto Labor Reformer.*

Lucky for Dumley.

"I say, Bromley," said Dumley, "do you believe there's such a person in existence as the fool killer?"

"Let me see, Dumley," replied Bromley. "About how old are you?"

"I'm gettin' on toward 50."

"No," replied Bromley, "I don't believe there is."—*The Epoch.*

MY CASTLE IN THE AIR.

Or in the East or in the West,
Where shall I build my bird's nest;
Northward or southward—whither roam
To build my little love a home?

Up yonder, in the clean, sweet air,
I think that I could keep her there,
Too much an angel for the ground,
For Heaven somewhat, too—warm and round.

—John Vance Cheney.

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THE IRISH WIDOW.

Her Views on Society, the Season and the Debutantes.

"The s'society saison's begun, Mrs. McGlaggerly."

"Well, p'what uv id, Mrs. Magoogin?"

"Oh, eschuse me, Mrs. McGlaggerly," said the widow, "O' forgot that neither yerself nor Jurry niver knoo'd nawthin' about s'society—be fwilch O' don't main the A. O. H. ur the young timp'rince s'society, but rale bong-tong Hong Kong s'society, loike the Vanderbilts an' Hamshlayers an' Goosenicks goes into. There, there, now, me frind, don't get yer dander up an' go to callin' harrud names, bekase O' tell ye the thruth, fwilch ye can't deny it's uvry wurrud the thruth, too, aither, Mrs. McGlaggerly. But, as O' said afore, the s'society saison's begun, an' putty soon we'll be seein' the doobants makin' their bows to their frinds."

"An' fwat are doobants, Mrs. Magoogin?" the neighbor inquired.

"Doobants," said the widow; "Doobants, Mrs. McGlaggerly, is Frinch, wid th' imphaysis an to the bants; an' it manes th' young gerruls that comes out in s'society in dollyclat dresses an' wid roses in their cossets an' lukin-glass doimunds in their hair, an' shtan's roun' catchin' cowl in their bare shoulders fwilch a pack av imphy-headed joods make moogs at them loike so many monkeys. Sometimes they call them rosebuds, Mrs. McGlaggerly, but my Tammy, who has a wurrud fur uvry-thing, calls them chippies. It's very shwell d'ye know, Mrs. McGlaggerly, to be a doobant an' to have doobants in the family. The only thing me daughter Toozey is sorry for fwilch she lukes back to her gerrulhood is that she wasn't a doobant an' didn't make her daybit in the rale bong-tong shtoyile; but d'ye moind, Mrs. McGlaggerly, this doobant biznis is English an' comes from Cune Victory, an' not fwilch a dhrap av Oirish blud biles in Berdie Magoogin's brains 'll she uver permit anybody belongin' to her to do any doobantin' in her shanty. No, sirree, Bob, Mrs. McGlaggerly. Besides, as Tammy sez, aff Toozey war to thry to doobant an Cherry Hill the goats id aith fringes aff the joods' pantlettees, an' as there can't be anny doobantin' widout rale loive joods to give it a claw—fwilch is Frinch, fwativer it manes—we'd all be in the soup, an' thin fwat id we do? Divil a wan av me knows, Mrs. McGlaggerly!"

—*New York Mercury.*

Enormous Demand For Eggs.

An egg merchant, who goes from house to house buying eggs, told us a few days since, that he expected to have to pay 50 cents a dozen for eggs before Christmas.

This is remarkable, when we reflect that the poultry industry of this country last year amounted to nearly \$700,000,000; and even then, we had to import several million dollars worth of foreign eggs. Our own egg raisers ought to have this money. The demand for fresh eggs for food alone far exceeds the supply. At 50 cents per dozen eggs are as cheap as beefsteak for food. Many persons who keep hens will probably not have an egg to sell when they reach 50 cents. Some one may ask, "what can a body do, when the pesky old hens stop laying, and the pullets refuse to begin until spring?" Why! do as Wm. H. Yeo, master, of Columbia, Conn., editor of the *Germantown Telegraph* did last winter. He says: "Last fall I made an experiment worth giving our readers. Until about Dec. 1, I was getting from 20 common hens only one or two eggs a day. I decided to try Sheridan's Condition Powder. I confess I had but little faith in its value to make hens lay. Commenced feeding, and for nine days saw very little effect. Then the hens began laying and in three months laid 858 eggs. Part of the time the thermometer was 12° below zero, and my hens were laying a dozen eggs a day, while my neighbors (who did not use the powder) were getting none. I now, without hesitation, believe it is a valuable aid to farmers for egg production. Well might he believe, for nearly 72 dozen eggs, in three months, from 20 common hens, with eggs worth 50 cents, is common having. I. S. Johnson & Co., 22 Custom House St., Boston, Mass., (the only makers of Sheridan's Condition Powder to make hens lay) will send postpaid, any person two 25 cent packs of powder, and a new *Poultry Raising Guide*, for 60 cents. The book alone costs 25 cents. For \$1.00 five packs of powder and a book; for \$1.20 a large 2 1/4 pound can and book; six cans for \$5.00, express prepaid. Send stamps or cash. Interesting testimonials sent free.—*Advt.*

His Intentions Were Good.

A Bangor gentleman who recently traveled in Europe, while on a German railroad fell in with a German who had partially mastered the English language. The two engaged in conversation, when it appeared that the German man was a director of the road. After a while the latter asked the Bangorian, who was accompanied by his wife and two other ladies:

"Are all these ladies of your party?"

Being answered in the affirmative, he endeavored to be complimentary, by remarking:

"Ah! They are remarkably fine specimens."—*Commercial.*

He Could Budge for Both.

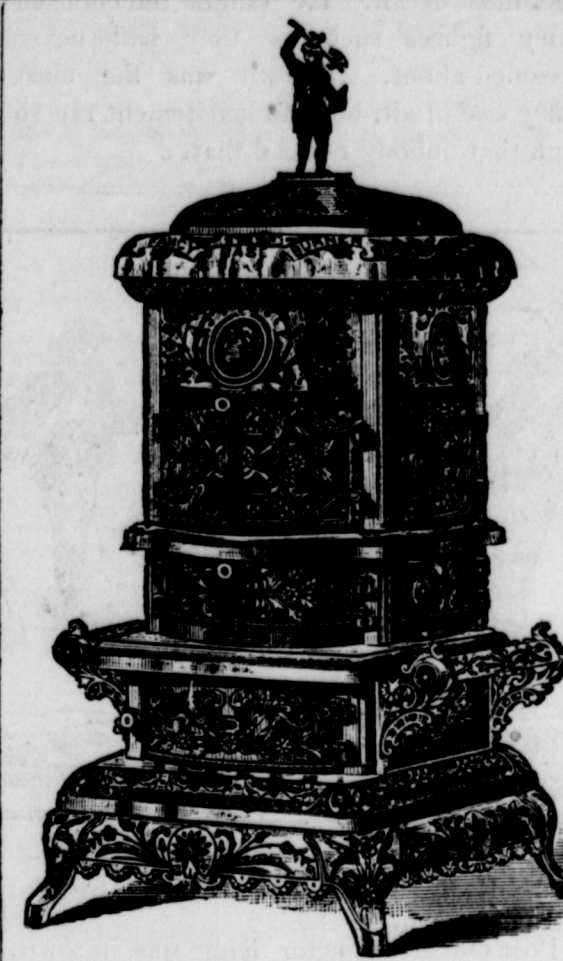
"Absalom," said the wife, settling herself firmly in her seat, "you have gone out between acts three times already. If you intend going again you will have to climb over me. I shan't budge."

"That's right, Nanshy," said Mr. Rambo, approvingly, as he climbed over her. "You shtay right there. I c'n (hic) budge 'nough fr th' whole family, Nanshy."

At a Splice.

"Can you tie a true lover's knot, my dear?" inquired Merritt.

"No," replied Mamie, hiding her blushes with her fan, "but our new clergyman can do it very nicely."—*Harper's Bazar.*



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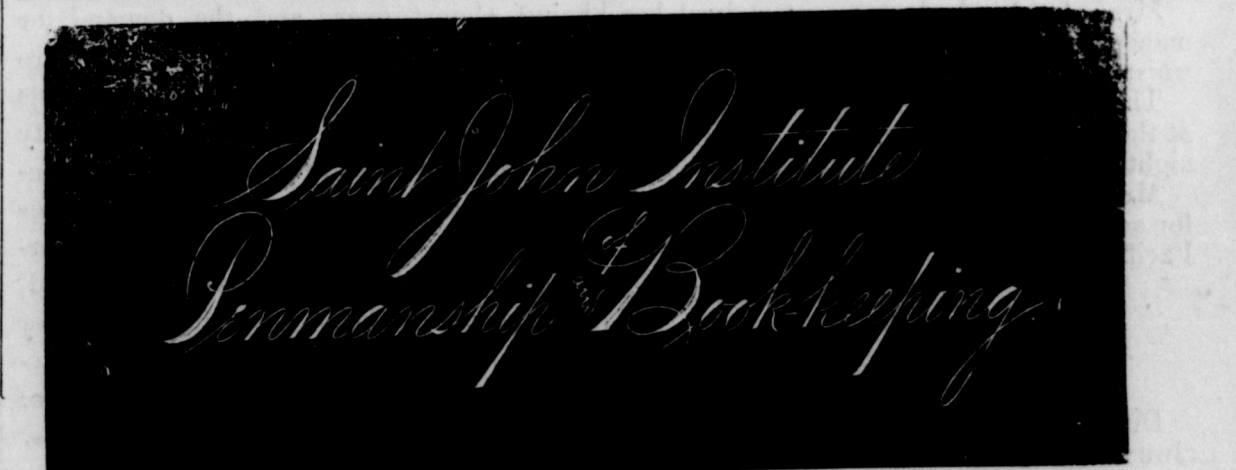
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