improvement, encourages us to believe that we are hastening on to still higher developments. Much remains to be accomplished, it is true, but the thin edge of the wedge has been introduced, and it is comparatively easy to drive it home.

We have referred to Mr. Brockway, and regret to note that his term of office at Elmira has come to an end, as is set forth on another page of this number of the JOURNAL. His system was sometimes regarded as a foolish pampering of evil-doers; yet it was also his fate to be held up to scorn on the accusation of undue severity. Vile crimes require sharp punishment, and the cat has yet its uses. The criminal and his punishment is one aspect of the question, the criminal and his reformation is another. The latter is what interests us.

Workhouse Lunatic Wards.

Workhouse lunatic wards have achieved an unenviable notoriety of late by the occurrence of several deaths, which have required the investigation of a coroner's jury.

In one case (that at Crumpsall) the night attendant, who had a hundred and fifty of all kinds of insane patients, distributed through a number of wards, to look after, was accused of having strangled a general paralytic who had been very noisy. A witness stated that the attendant had quieted the patient by twisting a towel round his (the patient's) throat.

A special Committee of the Manchester Board of Guardians appointed to inquire into the case (aided by the presence of an inspector of the Local Government Board) recommended that an additional attendant should be appointed. The Local Government Board has since this promulgated an important order, directing that the death of a lunatic in a Poor Law institution shall be reported to the coroner within forty-eight hours. The notice of death, signed by the medical attendant, must mention the time of decease, any unusual circumstances attending it, and also a description of any injuries known to exist at the time of death, or found subsequently on the body of the deceased. Mechanical restraint applied to the patient within seven days of death has also to be reported.

Lunatic wards in workhouses will not, however, become

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places for the proper care and treatment of persons suffering from disease of the mind by merely making regulations to discover ill-treatment, or trying to avoid regrettable incidents by providing additional attendants only. They are not only almost universally understaffed, thereby practically compelling the use of undesirable means of "quieting" troublesome patients; but they are, with a few notable and praiseworthy exceptions, grievously wanting in the means and appliances necessary for the treatment of such cases. The medical officers are commonly overworked, underpaid, and treated in a niggardly fashion, not calculated to encourage zeal, but rather tending to bring that essential of efficient medical service to a minimum; they are not selected for having had special experience in the treatment of insanity.

The workhouse lunatic wards, indeed, need complete and wholesale rearrangement, with the clear recognition of the all-important fact that a few days' efficient treatment of incipient mental disorder may save the need of months of asylum care, and that inefficient or neglectful treatment may be therefore most costly to the ratepayer.

The reception ward for mental cases should be organised on the most liberal scale, and approximated to the reception houses which have been found so efficient in Australia, and the improvement would extend to the chronic wards. The "regrettable incidents" of workhouse lunatic wards have been so numerous that possibly the Local Government Board may be induced to press more vigorously for reform than it has hitherto done, and not be content with the recommendation for an additional attendant or elaborate reports, to cover the manifest deficiencies of insufficient means of treatment and defective organisation.

Pathology in Irish Asylums.

We are glad to find that the Silent Sister is endeavouring to become articulate after modern methods, and that our medical brethren across the Channel seem to have at last awakened to the waste of materials and of opportunities which has so long existed in connection with the Irish asylums. We are,

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