There should, however, in any case, be a medical superintendent, with competent knowledge of the treatment, moral and medical, of the insane, with undivided authority and responsibility inside the institution, although subject to the Government, aided by efficient medical inspection.

Should the contract system be abolished, should capable medical men be placed at the head of the institutions of the Quebec Province, and should inspection made by efficient men be sufficiently frequent and searching, the asylums for the insane of this Province would become institutions of which Canadians may be justly proud, instead of institutions of which they are now, with good reason, heartily ashamed.

Beauport Asylum, Quebec.

I visited the Beauport Asylum, at Quebec, Aug. 18, 1884. It was established in 1845; additions were made to the original building in 1865 for the male patients, and in 1875 for the female patients. The medical superintendents reside in the city, several miles away, and I had not the pleasure of seeing them. There are two visiting physicians. The asylum is inspected by Dr. Desaulniers, Dr. A. de Martigny, and Mr. Walton Smith. Resident on the premises is the warden, and in the vicinity is an assistant physician. I have to express to both these gentlemen my obligations for the kind way in which they received me, the time they devoted to my visit, and their readiness to show me the various parts of the building. My thanks are especially due to Mr. A. Thomson, of Quebec, for the assistance he rendered and for accompanying me.

The asylum is a striking object to visitors to the Montmorency Falls as they pass along the road where it is situated. The approach is pleasant and the entrance attractive, being marked by the taste and cleanliness which characterise the dwellings of the Canadians generally. The warden received us politely, and took us round the building devoted to female patients. His wife occupies the post of matron, and has two assistants under her. The corridors into which we first went are sufficiently spacious, and serve the purpose of day-rooms to a large extent, the patients being seated or walking about. The patients here were well dressed, and appeared to be as comfortable as their condition would allow. The associated dormitories are large, cheerful rooms, well ventilated, and the beds neat and clean. I supposed that the linen had been clean that morning, but was informed that it was the last day in use, and was changed weekly. Strips of carpet and mats in the dormitories, as well as in the corridors, relieved the bareness of the floor.

The position and construction of a series of single bedrooms attached to the wards are most unfortunate. They are placed back to back, so that there is no window in them, the narrow passage which skirts them receiving light from a window at either end. There is an

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aperture over the door, and a small one in the door itself. The ventilation is most imperfect, and it was not denied that in the morning their condition is the reverse of sweet. Some of these cells—for cells they must be called—were very close when I visited them. How such rooms came to be built for lunatic patients, for whom good air and sufficient light are so important, it is difficult to comprehend. I was informed that they were planned to expedite the escape of the inmates in case of fire, there having been a conflagration some years ago in which twenty-six patients perished, but I failed to see the fitness of such an arrangement. It appeared to me to be due to the desire to economise room, and I am not surprised to find, from one of the annual reports given me, that credit is claimed on the ground that the cost for care and maintenance is less than at ten asylums with which the Beauport Asylum is compared.

I have spoken favourably of the associated dormitories opening into the corridors. Those, however, in the attic were very gloomy and crowded with beds. I have also referred favourably to the dress of certain patients. I must add that in some parts of the house they were barely clad, and presented a very neglected appearance altogether.

The number of women in restraint was very considerable. Some wore the manchon or muff, others the close glove (*mitaine*); others were restrained by leather wristbands (*poignet*) fastened to a belt, while some were secured by the *gilet de force*, so that movements of the arms were effectually prevented. Several were secured to the bench on which they were seated. In one small airing court upon which I looked down, not a few were restrained; the whole company appeared to be unattended, or if there were attendants, the latter did not consider it a part of their duty to keep their dress in decent order. In referring to mechanical restraint, I do not judge of the condition of the patient, from the total non-restraint point of view. The amount resorted to in this asylum would not be seriously justified by any physician of the insane with whom I am acquainted, whatever his views on non-restraint may be.

After leaving the building in which the women are located, we walked into the grounds over a stream to a steep, grassy, airing court, which was fortunately shaded from the blazing sun of that day. Here a number of female patients were congregated, with one or two attendants. A wooden fence separates this ground from a corresponding grass plot for the men. From a window in the building for the latter sex I looked down subsequently, and the sight of the female patients lying or sitting on the grass in unseemly attitudes, and with scant and neglected attire, did not commend itself as one altogether desirable. The number of attendants is quite insufficient, and I cannot say I was favourably impressed with their appearance. Where so much importance is attached to economy, this cannot excite surprise. Their pay is very insufficient, as well as their number.

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Passing to the building for the male patients, over which the resident physician escorted us and manifested the greatest willingness to show every corridor and room, I would observe that there are certain wards which, like those for the corresponding class of women, are both clean and respectably furnished; but when I have done justice to the accommodation afforded in these galleries, I have said all that I can say in the way of commendation. The higher one ascended in the building, the lower the condition of the patient—the corridors were much crowded, and the amount of mechanical restraint excessive. In the worst ward, the sight was in the last degree painful to witness. Here were some thirty patients. Some had leathern muffs, others the belt and poignet, while several were in cells as dark as those on the women's side, and were also restrained. One had his legs fettered at the ankles. There were also several men in restraint-chairs, to which they were fastened, and not only so, but they wore muffs. They were in their shirts, and over their exposed persons flies were crawling in abundance—a spectacle which it must suffice to describe without characterizing further. Among patients of the class now referred to, I counted fourteen restrained, but I do not pretend to have noted them all. For a man who was given to scratching his face, it was considered necessary not only to secure his hands by the muff, but to place him in a crib-bed.

But it is needless to describe in more detail an institution which, however willingly I may praise where praise is due, is so radically defective in structure and so fundamentally different from any well-conducted institution of the present day, in the matter of moral, to say nothing of medical, treatment, that no tinkering of the present system will ever meet the requirements of humanity and science. I regret to write thus. It is a thankless task for a visitor, courteously treated as I was, to criticise any institution which the officers permit him to inspect. But I write in the hope of helping, in however humble a way, to bring about a reform in the injurious practice of the State contracting with private individuals for the maintenance of its insane poor. The proprietors receive 11 dollars (45s. 10d.) per head per month for maintenance and clothing. This system involves the probability of patients being sacrificed to the interests of the proprietors. It has the diastrous tendency to keep the dietary as low as possible, to lead to a deficiency in the supply of clothing, and to a minimum of attendants, thus inducing a want of proper attention to the patients and an excessive resort to mechanical restraint, instead of that individual personal care which is no needful for their happiness and the promotion of their recovery. I consider that the number of attendants in such an asylum should not be less than 1 in 8,* instead of 1 in 15; and that a higher class should be obtained by giving higher wages. At present they are as follows: 9 to 10 dollars a month in winter for

* So in original MS., but in the "Canada Medical and Surgical Journal" the number 7 appears, owing to the writer's hasty correction of proof in travelling.

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male attendants ; 12 to 14 in summer. Women attendants have 5 to 6 dollars a month, or £12 to £15 a year. With a higher class, it might no longer be an irony to speak, as the chaplain does in one of the Reports, of "the good and virtuous keepers who are selected with great discernment."

I venture also to express the hope, in conclusion, that the Province of Quebec will itself undertake the responsibility of providing the necessary accommodation for its insane poor and their skilful treatment, that a resident medical superintendent, with full authority, will be appointed, and that there will be a Board of Management, as well as really efficient inspectors.

Since this article was written, the following has appeared in the "Canada Medical and Surgical Journal," November, 1884 :—

"At a largely attended meeting of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Montreal, held on Nov. 7, the following resolutions were unanimously passed :—

"1. That this Society has every reason to believe that the statements contained in the Report of Dr. D. Hack Tuke, of London, England, upon our Provincial Lunatic Asylums, are, in every material respect, true and well-founded.

"2. That these statements show a most lamentable state of things as regards the general, and especially the medical, management of these Institutions.

"3. That it appears to this Society to be the imperative duty of the Provincial Government to institute a thorough investigation by competent persons into the entire system of management of the insane poor in this Province.

"4. That the 'farming' or 'contract' system, either by private individuals or by private corporations, has been everywhere practically abandoned, as being prejudicial to the best interests of the insane, and producing the minimum of cures.

"5. That in the opinion of this Society all establishments for the treatment of the insane should be owned, directed, controlled and supervised by the Government itself, without the intervention of any intermediate party.

"6. That the degree of restraint known to be employed in our provincial asylums is, according to the views of the best modern authorities, excessive. That the ablest European, American, and also Canadian alienists have almost entirely given up any method of mechanical restraint. That these facts call urgently, in the name of humanity, for reform in this direction in our provincial asylums.

"That this Society concurs fully in the opinion already expressed by Dr. Tuke in his Report, to the effect that 'the authority of the Visiting Physician (Dr. Henry Howard), appointed and paid by the Government, has been hitherto almost, if not entirely, *nil*. His hands have been so tied that he could not be held responsible for the way in which the asylum has been managed.'"

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