of our "hereditary legislators." But we have no desire to see its members, or, indeed, the members of any other class, without the special qualifications of knowledge and responsibility, left free to act as the arbiters of the liberty of habitual drunkards.

THE ASYLUM CHAPLAIN'S COLUMN.

"Ut Co-operatores simus."

[The following paper addresses itself to a chaplain's qualifications, particularly in dealing with the idiosyncrasies of patients.—EDS.]

The Asylum Chaplain "Ministering to the Mind Diseased." By Rev. P. T. SYRÉE, County Asylum, Chartham Down, Kent.

The first and altogether indispensable qualification for the work of the minister of Religion is, and must ever be, that his heart and soul are absorbed in his work. All the learning of the schools would be of no avail, and yet all possible knowledge of both men and things could find ample scope in that interesting and all-embracing field of service, the very "labour of love!" But if the heart-service of any religious minister of the Gospel is so all-important a requisite for the due performance of the daily duties of the ordinary parish priest, yet more is it so in the case of him whose daily duty, nay, whose great privilege it is to "minister to the mind diseased," and unless the heart be really and truly in his work he can be of little, if any, good service to the mentally afflicted. Such a sad condition would prove a most prolific source of unhappiness and unprofitableness all round. "Can the blind lead the blind?" It is an old-established truth that no two persons are totally and unmistakably alike! Even so is it a moral fact that no two characters agree in every particular; and yet more, this thought brings me to the most interesting consideration of the whole matter, viz., the psychical condition of the insane, which is as varied as the physical and moral states of ordinary mortals. *Quot homines tot sententiæ.* The asylum chaplain, whose heart and soul are really and truly in the work, will make it his daily study to fathom the psychical conditions of his afflicted flock, so as to find ways and means and opportuni-

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.40.169.252 Published online by Cambridge University Press

ties for the soothing balm of comfort and consolation! Very deep and sincere has been the gratitude of many a poor man or woman thus lovingly dealt with, and great the chaplain's encouragement and reward! *Nisi dominus frustra.*

But these matters are mysteries to the uninitiated, and can only be known by living and working among the insane. The treatment of them was, years ago, simply barbarous and inhuman, and although this is all changed, and for the better in every particular, yet remains there much to regret and to correct and reprove! The outer world have yet to learn their Christian duty towards the insane, and what I make a charge against the community at large I make a yet more pointed and special charge against the authorities in the Church, who appear to shun the very approach of the insane, as though insanity and leprosy were akin! By such conduct they lose, nay waste, many an opportunity of doing good to the patients and encouraging those whose lot and joy it is to minister to "the mind diseased." If this my first account of asylum work should happily bring about a better and more hopeful state of things in these few particulars, I shall consider myself well rewarded and encouraged to go on hopefully, and withal prayerfully, in a depressing and yet intensely interesting Christian work, and may have to say something more hereafter.

[In subsequent numbers of the Journal will appear under this column brief articles by the Rev. Hayman Cummings, Chaplain of the Oxford County Asylum, Littlemore, and by the Rev. H. Hawkins, Chaplain of the London County Asylum, Colney Hatch. The title of the former is a very practical one, namely, "Asylum Chapel Services; of what sort, and within what limits?" The article contributed by Mr. Hawkins is also eminently practical, and is entitled "A Plea for Daily Services in Asylum Chapels." The limited space set aside for contributions under "The Asylum Chaplain's Column" necessitates very short contributions, but we hope that these will be regularly contributed.]

"*He who would benefit the insane must first love them.*"
ESQUIROL.

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