transactions afterwards. Therefore if a dismissal could not take place without good cause being shown by the tribunal that had the power of dismissal, it would be almost impossible that good cause could be shown at all. The reason of that is obvious. The person who may have been illtreated by the officer or servant of a lunatic asylum may be a lunatic, who could give no proper account of the transaction at all, and the lunatic may be a witness of such a transaction, and yet may not be able to give a proper account of it. . . . What, under these circumstances, was the Board of Governors to do? The Board is bound to inquire into the matter as well as it possibly can; and not merely is the Board justified in inquiring from the various officers, but they were bound also to inquire from the various lunatics, and if they did not do so they would be guilty of the greatest dereliction of duty. Well, the result of the inquiry was that the Governors determined, in the exercise of their discretion, to dispense with the services of this particular servant—Hayes; and what I am deciding here is that they were justified in doing so, and discharging him without giving any reason of any kind."

It will be seen from the dictum of Mr. Justice Holmes (which is widely different from that of the learned Recorder of Dublin), that the charge of assaulting the patient was not the question to be tried, although the Recorder seemed to lay particular stress upon that point. The case really hinged upon a question of law as to the right of the Board to dismiss their servants without giving any cause for so doing, and Mr. Justice Holmes's clear exposition of the law upon this point will prove a great boon to the Irish asylum authorities in future. Upon the other part of the question, which relates to the admissibility of the evidence of lunatics, Mr. Justice Holmes' ruling will be found to follow the lines laid down by the case of "Regina *v.* Hill," to which we have referred.

Suicide in St. Paul's Cathedral.

The Service of Reconciliation in St. Paul's Cathedral on October 13th, 1890, is so remarkable an event in psychological and ecclesiastical history that it ought not to pass unrecorded in this Journal. During the previous month, Edward Easton attended the Sunday service, committed suicide by shooting himself, and died in the consecrated edifice. At the inquest the jury found a verdict of suicide "whilst temporarily insane," which to the unlegal and uncanonical mind would seem to divest the circumstances of

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.37.156.113 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the taint of crime as much as if the man had broken a blood vessel. It cannot be the blood in itself that renders reconsecration, or rather reconciliation necessary; it must be the supposition that there had been some infraction of the moral law. However, after the careful consideration of precedents, the Dean and Chapter presented a petition, in which it is stated that they had been advised that the cathedral had been, "by such act of self-murder, and by the blood-shedding consequent thereupon, polluted and defiled." To this petition the Bishop of London replied, and by virtue of his episcopal authority declared "the said Cathedral Church to be exempt and reconciled from all canonical impediment, and from every profanation contracted and incurred by, or through, the aforesaid acts of suicide and blood-letting for ever." In this quaint phraseology it is curious to note the event is recognized as involving two acts. The Bishop acted under the advice of the Chancellor, Dr. Tristram. In justification of his advice he makes a very singular observation: "The evidence at the inquest established a case of partial insanity or suicidal mania; there was none to show that he was otherwise of unsound mind." It is to be regretted that the Chancellor should express an opinion on a subject he knows nothing about. As well might a physician pronounce an opinion upon an obscure point of law. But this is the way with the lawyers. They are as much at home in the philosophy of the human mind and its pathology as if they had studied medical psychology for a lifetime. The service consisted of an anthem, a short address from the Bishop, followed by his direction to the Registrar to read the petition of the Dean and Chapter. Then the Litany and 51st Psalm were next read, and the latter portion of the Commination Service was read. When the prayers were concluded the Registrar read out the Sentence of Reconciliation. While it is admitted that in the Canon Law of both the Eastern and Latin Churches an obligation to pursue this course existed, and was therefore in force up to the time of the Reformation, it would seem that it was not imperative upon the Bishop to act as he did. Since the Reformation there is no mention of a single instance of the performance of this remarkable service. Dr. Tristram believed that the public desired to have the ceremony performed. *The Times* was of opinion that there was no general wish for such a service. On the contrary, their correspondence supported the belief that the Bishop, Dean, and Chapter would have

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exhibited more prudence if they had ignored the suicide and allowed the services to go on in the usual way.

The Times makes the following very sensible remarks on the whole case:—"Whatever view may be taken of the necessity or otherwise of a Reconciliation Service and an episcopal sentence under the circumstances, it remains clear that the action of the Cathedral Authorities is logically indefensible. The church either was, or was not, technically 'polluted' the moment Easton killed himself within its walls. The cause of the pollution is not for the moment important. It may be in the eye of the Canon Law the physical act of bloodshed, as suggested by our correspondent 'E. A. A.' It may be the sin, *coram Deo*, of self-murder—a thesis, by the way, which Dr. Tristram seems disposed to adopt in the face of the verdict at the inquest that Easton committed suicide when of unsound mind. If the cathedral was not polluted and profaned, why trouble the church with a contentious service and ceremony at all? If it was polluted and profaned, why continue to use it for Divine worship and for the celebration of the eucharist for nearly a month in its unreconciled condition? As 'A Country Rector' pointed out in a letter we published shortly after the ceremony, the clergy in the cathedral when the suicide was committed were bound, on the pollution theory, to stop the unfinished service, strip the altar, and close the church until the reconciliation was effected. Immediate action of the kind is implied in the whole theory of the Eastern 'Opening,' and the Latin 'Reconciliation,' of a desecrated edifice. They did none of these things. They waited to be advised, and meanwhile they carried on the daily services of the cathedral as if nothing had occurred. Then, when the general feeling of horror and perturbation caused by the unhappy man's death had nearly subsided, they again fixed public attention on his terrible end by springing a novel rite upon their congregation, under circumstances which go far to make it wholly unmeaning. The compromise is not a happy one. The old function had its significance, but we are by no means assured that English Churchmen are in these days prepared to accept the doctrines it would seem to import. In default of clear legal obligation, which apparently did not in the present case exist, it seems of doubtful expediency to celebrate a ceremony practically obsolete, impregnated with pre-Reformation principles, and which has in all likelihood been suffered to survive only

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because it was unknown. But, in any event, it was absurd to thrust it prominently before the public after first pursuing a line of conduct which manifestly deprived the rite of the only meaning and justification it could ever have possessed."

PART II.—REVIEWS.

Thirty-second Annual Report of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland. Edinburgh, 1890.

The total number of lunatics under the official cognizance of the Commissioners in Scotland on 1st January, 1890, was 12,302. This is an increase during the year 1889 of 348, an increase which has taken place entirely among pauper patients, private patients having diminished by two. The increase of *registered* lunatics (*i.e.*, not including inmates of training schools or the lunatic department of the General Prison at Perth) is 334. In Royal and District Asylums there is an increase of three private and 172 pauper patients; in Private Asylums a decrease of two private patients; in Parochial Asylums an increase of 18, and in the lunatic wards of poorhouses a decrease of two pauper patients; in the Perth Prison an increase of one; in imbecile training schools an increase of 11 private and two pauper patients; and in private dwellings a decrease of three private and an increase of 148 pauper patients.

As regards Establishments, the number of private patients admitted during the year, excluding transfers, was 479, or 40 less than during the preceding year; and the number of pauper admissions was 2,161, 60 more than during 1889. The number of voluntary patients admitted was 76, 21 more than the average for the decennium 1880-89, and the number resident on 1st January was 55.

Two hundred and one private patients were discharged *recovered*, being 18 more than during the year 1889, and 17 above the average for the quinquennium 1880-84; and the recoveries among pauper patients amounted to 944, the same as last year. The proportion of recoveries to

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