

Account of the Association and Report of Council, Nursing Notes

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THE AFTER CARE ASSOCIATION FOR POOR & FRIENDLESS FEMALE CONVALESCENTS ON LEAVING ASYLUMS FOR THE INSANE.

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* *Executive Committee.*

OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

There are about 30,000 women of various callings and conditions of life in Lunatic Asylums in England and Wales. Of these a large number are discharged in the course of the year recovered. Many of these are entirely friendless, but anxious to earn their own living, and are often very capable of doing so.

The chief objects of this Association is to facilitate the re-admission of Poor and Friendless Female Convalescents from Lunatic Asylums into social life.

- 1.—By obtaining for them when needful an interval of change of scene and air, often so beneficial on recovery from ordinary sickness.
 - (a) By placing them in a Convalescent Home.
 - (b) By boarding them out in the Country when thought desirable, under proper care and supervision.
- 2.—By giving them grants of money and clothing.
- 3.—By assisting them to obtain suitable employment.

NEED FOR THIS ASSOCIATION.

When patients leave an ordinary hospital even there is sometimes a difficulty in at once returning to work. Either the accident or disease may have incapacitated them for their former trade or their strength may not be sufficiently restored. This has been universally acknowledged and met by the establishment of Samaritan Funds and numberless Convalescent Homes. Not so the Asylums, the Hospitals for Brain disease.

The step back for the Convalescent is to the Work-house and the result that often followed this unavoidable course led the founders of this Association to unite in endeavouring to supply an alternative.

As at present no Convalescent Home exists that can often admit this class of inmates, and as the need was urgent, steps were taken to find Cottage Homes where women could be placed for a short time while situations were found for them and where they could become accustomed to the ordinary daily life of the world after the unnatural life of the Institution.

HOW THIS ASSOCIATION WORKS.

In order to carry out this plan effectually, ladies were invited to join as Associates and to take a certain charge of each case as it arose until a suitable situation was found.

WHAT THIS ASSOCIATION WANTS.

That all who read this should endeavour to find *one* such Cottage Home where for a moderate payment a Convalescent may be placed for a short time, and also to inform the Secretary if they know of any suitable situation for Convalescents. *The responsibility of recommending in each case resting entirely with the doctors.*

FUNDS are needed to pay for these Cottage Homes, and often to provide outfits.

LEGALLY PAUPERS.

All inmates of County Asylums are *legally* paupers. How many are very far removed from being really so, will be gathered by reference to a list of a few of the cases dealt with during the last year by the Association.

CASES HELPED.

1.—A young girl, for some time very ill in a London Asylum. Was placed in a Cottage Home in a Sussex village. After being there some time was sent to service at the sea-side. Is doing well and is most happy. Is a member of the M.A.B.Y.S.

2.—This was a case from a Surrey County Asylum. Was placed in a Cottage Home at Guildford, and after being there some time obtained work in a Midland town. Is a member of the G.F.S.

3.—A middle-aged woman discharged from a Metropolitan Asylum. Tried to obtain her living by needlework. Was helped by the Association until permanent relief could be obtained for her.

4.—A very highly-educated lady, quite destitute. Assisted by gift of clothing. Has obtained a situation as governess. Associate of the G.F.S.

5.—A young woman from a Metropolitan Asylum, placed in a Cottage Home in Sussex. Is now in service at Brighton.

6.—A middle-aged woman from an Asylum in Surrey. Was sent to a Home at the sea-side, and afterwards placed in service at Dulwich.

7.—A weakly woman from Surrey Asylum. Most respectable; brother now dead, had been a Baptist Minister. Boarded out in Sussex. Now doing well as assistant at a Coffee Tavern at the sea side.

8.—Respectable middle aged woman from a Midland County Asylum. After being placed in a Home, obtained work as a dressmaker and is doing very fairly well.

9.—A very respectable and superior woman. Is now doing well in a situation as upper servant in the West-end of London.

10.—This case was from the Essex County Asylum. After being placed in a Cottage Home, took a situation as servant to a small farmer.

11.—A very respectable young woman. After being a short time in a Home, took a situation as housemaid. Very highly spoken of.

12.—A young woman suffering from fits. After being in one of the Metropolitan District Asylums for some time was discharged recovered. After being placed in a Cottage Home in Surrey has found suitable work.

13.—A young woman from Australia become ill, and was placed in a County Asylum. Assisted back to Australia by a grant of money.

14.—A young girl of 16. Member of the M.A.B.Y.S. After being placed in a Cottage Home soon became fit for work.

ANNUAL REPORT OF COUNCIL, 1887-1888.

The Council of the After-Care Association for Poor and Friendless Female Convalescents on leaving Asylums for the Insane, present herewith their Annual Report. They wish to thank the Subscribers and Supporters by whose help the work has been carried on, and are glad to be able to report a very fair amount of progress during the past twelve months. The work undertaken by the Society can never be expected to become very popular, in the strict sense of the word. But there is scarcely any work more needed, and this Association is the only one that offers any help to those poor people recovering from perhaps the worst of earthly ailments—the sad trial of insanity.

During the past year 48 cases have been before the Committee, of which 41 have been accepted, 5 declined as not suitable, and 1 withdrawn. Besides these, several cases not coming under the Rules of the Association have been placed in the way of obtaining relief in other channels. The Boarding-out of Convalescents in cottage homes in the Country has been continued with very great success, and, as a rule, is much preferred by the women themselves to being placed in a Home. Very suitable cottage homes have been found in Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Essex and Somerset. In all cases the care of Convalescents when boarded-out is entrusted to some lady in the neighbourhood, and the cottages are inspected by the Secretary before any case is ever sent. In nearly all cases the friendship commenced between the Cottager and Convalescent while together continues after the latter has obtained suitable employment. The Council are glad to state that in nearly every case the Convalescents placed by them in service have given satisfaction to their employers, and remain in the places found for them.

Cases have been assisted from the following Asylums during the past year:—

The Middlesex County Asylum, Banstead.
The Middlesex County Asylum, Colney Hatch.
The Surrey County Asylum, Cane Hill.
The Essex County Asylum, Brentwood.
The Northampton County Asylum, Berrywood.
The Suffolk County Asylum.
The Somerset and Bath County Asylum, Wells.
Royal Bethlehem Hospital.
Peckham House Asylum, Peckham.
Fisherton House Asylum, Salisbury.
Hoxton House Asylum, Hoxton.
City of London Asylum, Dartford.
Metropolitan District Asylum, Leavesden.
Metropolitan District Asylum, Caterham.

During the past year the Council have lost the services of Mrs. F. H. Murray, through death, and Mr. T. Almond Hind, through pressure of other work. Dr. E. W. White (City of London Asylum) and Dr. Hurtle Sankey (Littlemore Asylum) have joined the Council.

In May last a most successful Bazaar was held in Littlemore, through the kindness of Dr. and Mrs. Hurtle Sankey, the result being that a handsome sum of money was handed over to the Association's funds. A Concert was also held at Littlemore, through the kindness of the Vicar (Rev. V. T. Green), on behalf of the Association, with satisfactory results. The Council hope that the examples shown at Littlemore will be followed by many other Asylums in various parts of the country.

It is hoped that branches of the Association will shortly be formed in connection with both a North and West County Asylum.

The Council feel that they cannot close this brief Report without specially thanking Drs. Hack Tuke, T. C. Shaw, G. H. Savage, and S. Rees Philipps, for their most valuable counsel and assistance, always put at the disposal of the Association. Also to Miss Mary Otter and Miss Eva Harrison for the most successful way in which they have found suitable employment for the cases boarded-out under their care. They must also add that the "After-Care" Working Association has assisted with gifts of clothing, from time to time, some of the Convalescents needing help.

MEATH, (President.)
London, HENRY HAWKINS, (Hon. Secretary.)
June 30th, 1888. H. THORNHILL ROXBY, (Secretary.)

There are more than 200 Convalescent Homes on the Register of the Charity Organisation Society, but not one appears to be specially designed and available for persons recovering from mental derangement.

Persons subscribing not less than 5/- per annum, or giving a donation of not less than £2 10s. od., become Members of the Association, but larger annual Subscriptions and Donations are much needed.

Working Associates subscribe 2/6 per annum, and undertake some special work on behalf of the Association.

All communications to be made to the Secretary, Mr. H. THORNHILL ROXBY, Emblewood, Osbaldeston Road, London, N., by whom contributions will be thankfully received, or they may be paid into the account of the "AFTER-CARE ASSOCIATION," Union Bank of London, (Regent Street Branch,) Argyll Place, London, W.