

Proceedings on the occasion of opening the New Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane, at Philadelphia : published by order of the Collecting Committee.

Contributors

Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane.
Harvey Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library

Publication/Creation

Philadelphia : Collins, Printer, 1859.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/uasnaqzg>

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by the Harvey Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library at Yale University, through the Medical Heritage Library. The original may be consulted at the Harvey Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library at Yale University. where the originals may be consulted.

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

PROCEEDINGS

ON THE

OCCASION OF OPENING

THE

43278

New Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane,

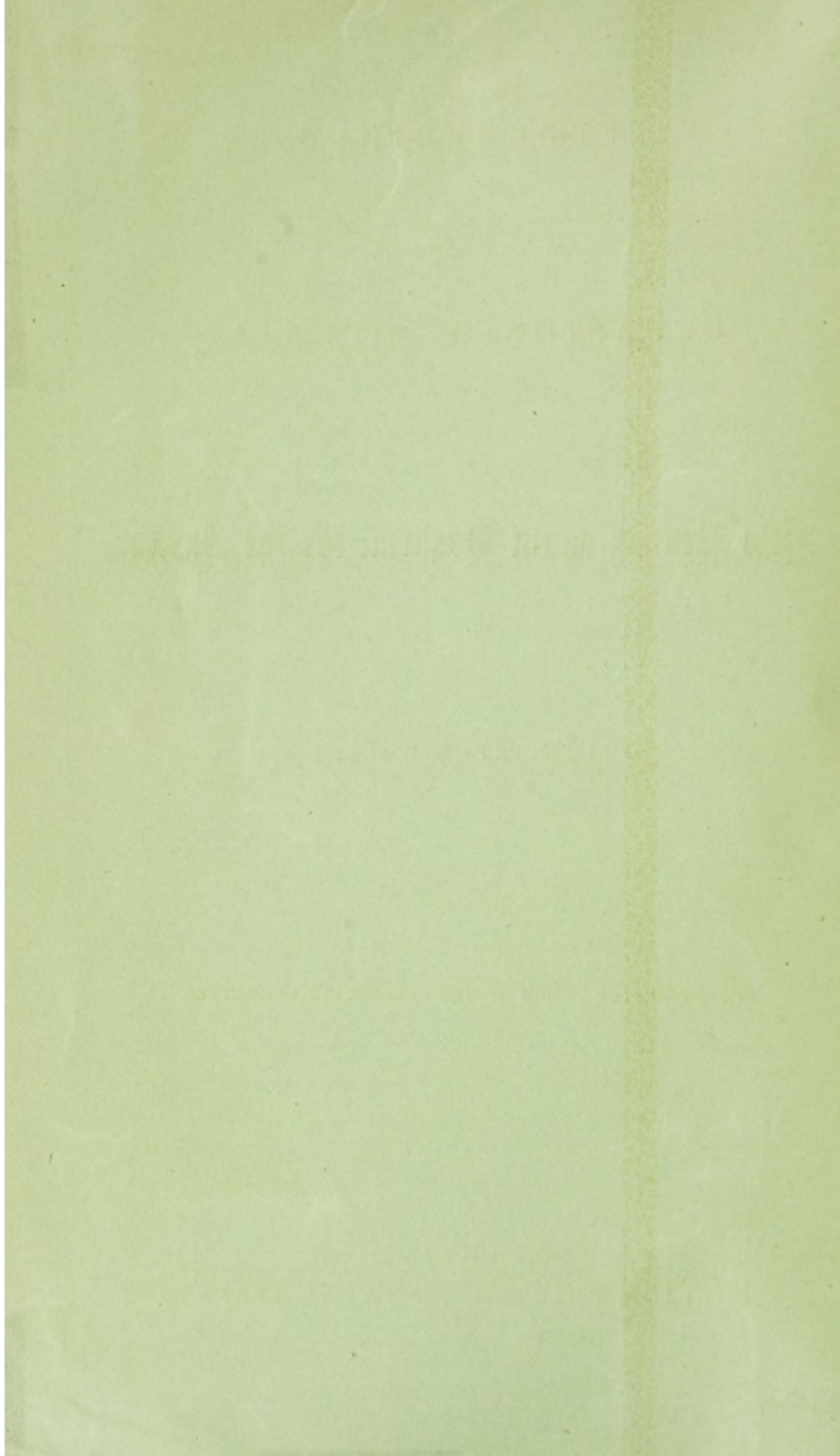
AT

PHILADELPHIA.

~~~~~  
PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE COLLECTING COMMITTEE.  
~~~~~

PHILADELPHIA:
COLLINS, PRINTER, 705 JAYNE STREET.

1859.



PROCEEDINGS

ON THE

OCCASION OF OPENING

THE

43278

New Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane,

AT

PHILADELPHIA.

~~~~~  
PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE COLLECTING COMMITTEE.  
~~~~~

PHILADELPHIA:
COLLINS, PRINTER, 705 JAYNE STREET.

1859.



19th
CENT
RC445
P4
P45

PROCEEDINGS.

“THE PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE,” at

ERRATA.

Page 13, line 17, put *even* for “and.”

“ 14, “ 16, “ *budding* for “building.”

“ 23, “ 4, “ *loving* for “living.”

“ 23, “ 12, “ *chord* for “cord.”

use being styled the “Department for Females,” that just opened the “Department for Males;”—both, however, being under the charge of the same Board of Managers and Physician.

Interesting facts in its history will be found in the address of the President on the opening of the new building, which has been erected entirely from the contributions of benevolent individuals; and to give it full efficiency only requires that adequate means should be provided for thoroughly furnishing it, and securing abundant resources for the instruction, occupation, and amusement of its patients. The sum of \$25,000 will be required to effect these objects



19th
CENT
RC445
P4
P45
LDF9

PROCEEDINGS.

“THE PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE,” at Philadelphia, is a charitable institution, deriving no assistance from city or State, but entirely dependent for its vested resources upon the benevolence of private individuals. It devotes all its income to the relief of the indigent who are suffering from mental disease, and is resorted to by patients of every shade of religious belief, of all professions and callings, from every position in life, and from many of the States of the Union.

The Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane now consists of two distinct structures—that heretofore in use being styled the “Department for Females,” that just opened the “Department for Males;”—both, however, being under the charge of the same Board of Managers and Physician.

Interesting facts in its history will be found in the address of the President on the opening of the new building, which has been erected entirely from the contributions of benevolent individuals; and to give it full efficiency only requires that adequate means should be provided for thoroughly furnishing it, and securing abundant resources for the instruction, occupation, and amusement of its patients. The sum of \$25,000 will be required to effect these objects

thoroughly, and it is to obtain this amount that the efforts now about to be made are specially directed. It may not be amiss in this connection to say, that the most enlightened treatment of the insane at the present day requires a great variety of resources and a profusion of means not formerly thought of, and which are limited only by the command of funds to be devoted to such objects. Whenever, therefore, individuals have books, pictures, engravings, musical instruments of any kind, means of instruction, occupation or amusement, or indeed any object that would attract the attention of a single patient for a moment, to dispose of, they may be assured that they will always be thankfully received at either department of this Hospital, and be where they will always prove useful.

The first stone of the new building was laid on the 7th of 7th mo. (July), 1856, and it was opened for the reception of patients on the 27th of 10th mo. (October), 1859, at which time, and in the presence of several hundred of our citizens—contributors to the fund for the erection of the New Hospital, and others interested in the subject—the following proceedings, as reported in the *North American and United States Gazette* of next morning, took place, viz :—

Mordecai L. Dawson, President of the Board of Managers, spoke as follows—

ADDRESS OF MORDECAI L. DAWSON.

Fellow-Citizens—But little more than three years have elapsed since many who are now present were

assembled at this place to participate in the ceremonies of laying the corner-stone of this noble structure, the completion of which, for the reception of patients, we have this day met to commemorate; and we hail it with peculiar pleasure, having for a long time been aware of its necessity, in the increasing demands for admission by that afflicted portion of the human family for whose benefit it is intended.

We would fail in our duty did we not thus publicly bear testimony to the unparalleled liberality of our fellow-citizens in so promptly and generously responding to the call of the Managers, enabling them in so comparatively short a time to erect this building, which, we believe, stands unsurpassed in its admirable arrangements by institutions of its kind in this or any other country.

Our thanks, and the thanks of the community, are also due to these gentlemen who were associated with us as a collecting committee, for their indefatigable exertions in obtaining contributions, which were so signally crowned with success; as well as for the valuable aid rendered by several of the editors of our daily journals in frequently calling the attention of the public mind to this important undertaking, and urging its speedy completion.

It may not prove uninteresting, nor perhaps be out of place at the present time, to give a brief history or sketch of the past, connected with the Hospital, confining ourselves more particularly to the branch having reference to the provision for and treatment of the insane.

We find by the records of the Managers, that on the 28th day of the fifth month, 1755 (one hundred

and four years ago), the corner-stone of the present institution was laid, in the site procured for the purpose on "Delaware Eighth Street," the population of the then infant city, in the Province of Pennsylvania, being only about twenty thousand souls.

This building was opened for the reception of patients, in the twelfth month, 1756, the first meeting of the Managers being held in it on the 27th day of the same month.

A corresponding building, or west wing, facing Ninth Street, was commenced in 1795, and completed so as to be occupied by insane patients in the twelfth month, 1796, which continued to be used for this purpose until the Managers, believing that benefit would result from the removal of the patients to a separate building, and more retired, as the original one which had stood almost isolated on the confines of the city, was now being surrounded by a dense population; and thereby also increase the accommodations, as well as the comforts of the sick, and those suffering by recent accidents, it was deemed advisable to erect a building in all respects adapted to the wants of the insane; and while remote from the populous portions of the city, to be at the same time easy of access at all seasons of the year; and the proposition meeting with the approval of the contributors, authority was given to dispose of the two lots of ground lying east and west of the Hospital, between Seventh and Eighth and Ninth and Tenth Streets, and on the west side of Ninth between Pine and Lombard Streets, the proceeds of which were appropriated to the purchase of this farm, containing more than one hundred acres, and the erection of the Hospital on the adjacent

hill, the corner-stone of which was laid sixth month 22d, 1836 ; but nearly five years elapsed before it was in readiness to receive the patients, as that did not occur until the first day of the year 1841.

This situation has proved in all respects admirably adapted to the purposes intended. The buildings were erected on a scale which it was thought would be of sufficient capacity to accommodate the wants of the community for a considerable time. Yet it has been found needful to enlarge its proportions materially at different times since its erection, and although not quite nineteen years have elapsed since its reception of patients, it has already attained the capacity to furnish comfortable accommodations for two hundred and twenty inmates, which is the maximum number ever contemplated, or that can be comfortably provided for within its walls.

Time has shown the result to be widely different from what was anticipated, which at the present day cannot be a matter of much surprise, when we take into view the unprecedented increase in our population, which numbers now some six hundred thousand souls, exclusive of the other portions of this great Commonwealth, from every part of which, as well as other States in the Union, and the West Indies, individuals are brought to this institution ; so that in fact, for several years past, it has proved inadequate to the demands made upon it, and the house has not only contained more inmates than was ever intended, but the Managers have been obliged, with reluctance, to decline the admission of very many, whose friends eagerly sought a home for them in this safe retreat.

In this state of affairs it was evident that more

ample means must be provided, either by this corporation or through an entirely different channel; and our efficient principal physician, Dr. Kirkbride, believing that benefit would result from a separation of the sexes in entirely distinct buildings, suggested the same to the managers, who, aware that his long experience, superior knowledge, and successful treatment of the insane, for a number of years, entitled him to the fullest confidence of the Board; and believing, also, we possessed advantages superior to others, having already the ground in all respects admirably adapted to it, which would materially diminish the cost, the subject was referred to the consideration of the contributors at their annual meeting, held fifth month 1st, 1854, when it received their hearty approval, and united call upon the public in the hope that, sensible of the necessity which existed for the same, there might be a willing response to an appeal to furnish the requisite means to carry into effect this much needed and desirable object.

Truly, this appeal has not been made in vain, as we find by a report at the meeting of the managers, held the 26th of last month, the sum of three hundred and thirty-seven thousand seven hundred and forty-six dollars and fifty cents had been subscribed, and two hundred and seventy-four thousand three hundred and twenty-nine dollars and eighty-five cents been paid into the treasury; of the balance remaining, it has been computed that from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars will not be collected, which is attributable to the reverses which many met with in the memorable monetary crisis of 1857.

This may appear to some a large amount to have

been expended in the erection of the buildings; but we would remind them of the size and nature of the same, extending in length twelve hundred and twenty-five feet, and divided into so many compartments, which considerably increases the cost.

We invite your personal and particular examination of the same, satisfied that the result will be that, while you find many conveniences and comforts, you will find no superfluous ornament or wasteful expenditure of the funds contributed, and committed to our care for this important object.

While it is cause of congratulation that this appeal has been so promptly responded to, and the great object in view so nearly attained, with such evidences of approval and corresponding liberality, may we not once more solicit your kindness in contributing the requisite amount for procuring suitable furniture for the buildings, as well as to provide means for the occupation, instruction, and amusement of the patients, which have been found such powerful agents in the restoration to health of those sufferers who so strongly appeal to our sympathy.

It must be remembered that the Pennsylvania Hospital has relied upon individual contributions for its support, having had no aid from the State in the present century—the last grant by the Legislature having been in 1796, towards the completion of the west wing, for the insane, on Ninth Street.

It may not, perhaps, be inappropriate to advert, at this time, to the past, by way of comparison.

When we remember that the benevolent individuals who first moved in this good cause were comparatively but little acquainted with the nature of insanity, its

treatment or its cure, but who saw the necessity of a place being provided for those thus afflicted, for their own sakes, as well as their families and the community generally, having reference more to their safety than the application of any sanative means—where bolts and bars, and even chains were deemed needful to properly restrain them, and insure the safety of those whose duty it was to provide for and watch over them, where the illy adapted cells resounded to the cries of the sufferers, mingled with the clanking of their chains; where but few saw, and few sympathized with them; when the impression was general that it was a fatality that could neither be averted, nor the sufferers materially relieved, we cannot but with peculiar emotions hail this brighter day, and turning from this gloomy picture visit the adjacent building, of which this may be considered the counterpart. We will there find, from one extreme to the other, many evidences of comfort, but none of undue restraint—much interest and sympathy, but no severity; where the law of kindness is the rule of government, and persuasion takes the place of coercion; where everything that is calculated to lessen their sorrows or divert the mind from its immediate cause or evidence of disease is promptly embraced—every amusement compatible with the place cheerfully provided, and every restorative to health promptly applied.

It is to this judicious care and treatment of our efficient head that, under the blessings of Divine Providence, our records bear abundant evidence to the very many who have been restored to their family and to society in their right mind.

Mr. Dawson now introduced William Welsh, the chairman of the collecting committee, who addressed the company present in this eloquent strain:—

ADDRESS OF WILLIAM WELSH.

Friends of the suffering—The zealous President has informed you of the cost, in time and money, of this great structure; \$20,000 were spent on the walls surrounding the pleasure-grounds, and a like sum in grading and ornamenting them, and in other necessary work not included in the original estimate; but he did not depict the grasp of mind necessary to conceive such a project; the labor of maturing the plan, and the firmness and steadiness of purpose required to carry it forward, when even friends were faint-hearted. The walls were built in troublous times; but, when the managers halted for a season, some of the bravest of them—with a little help from without—led on the seemingly forlorn hope, until all rallied and pressed on to the victory we to-day celebrate. I freely own that there was one who never faltered; but, like the Great Physician, he always inspired this noble band of workers with hope. His services can be only estimated where a permanent record is made of true benevolence; surely he will have his reward.

In the name and on behalf of suffering humanity, I thank the good physician, the unrivalled managers, with those who came to their aid, and chiefly the contributors, for this building now being dedicated to a work that was owned and blessed by the Lord of life, when on this earth He cured the insane, and demoniac, restoring them to home and friends, clothed and in their right mind.

'Tis a solemn act thus to dedicate that which cost so much of anxiety, of time, and of money, to a use from which it can never be alienated. The money of the contributors is now, by this act of ours, transferred for ever to trustees who are pledged to use it in giving relief to a class who suffer from one of the greatest ills that flesh and mind are heir to.

If this enterprise had been conducted by those who courted human praise, we would have looked in vain for the glory that now fills this house. God will bless this, the rich man's gift, as surely as he blessed the widow's mite; and He has also looked on the dying Christian, when in a far off land he remembered and aided this work of ours. Noble as is a gift of money when it causes much self-denial of comforts or even of luxuries—yet I can point to a still nobler sacrifice. Does the physician, and do the managers, propose to forsake this child, conceived in years of anxious thought, brought forth with exhausting labor, and hourly watched over in its growth with parental care, that it might be trained up for a noble purpose? Do they throw off all future responsibility as we do our gifts of money? Oh, no! They dedicate *themselves* also to the life-long accumulation of care and anxiety, scarcely second to any upon earth. They shrink not from their great sacrifice, therefore we must honor them highly.

Benevolent contributors, you are aiding powerfully in the humane work of ministering to the mind diseased—perhaps more powerfully than you have yet dreamed of. Physicians and managers can, in this house, assure the most sensitive class of sufferers that are ever brought under treatment, that they are sur-

rounded by materials procured and reared up with money—not wrung by taxation from unwilling subjects—but given, ay, freely given, in love. They can touch that shrinking, sensitive nature by telling of the benevolent spirit that breathed upon the first stone that was laid; and how it hovered over the structure, till the top stone was lifted up with rejoicing. They can tell this story of love until the very stones shall cry out of the walls, and the beams out of the timber shall echo these Æolian strains—ay, until the whole house becomes vocal with the spirit of the gospel. Who, when sick and desponding, has not been touched with unexpected comforts provided by friends, raised up or brought to light by his sufferings? The spirit of Him who comforted the troubled ones of earth, by the assurance that He was going before to prepare a place for them; and His spirit, illustrated however imperfectly by those who erected this building, will lighten the labor of the physician. In this institution, brute force is viewed as belonging to the dark ages, and the power of love must be exhausted before any other power can be applied to the cure of the insane; and when that power shall have been exhausted, time shall be no longer. Could our own experience now pass in review before us, we would remember that the insanity of anger, as it was growing into malice, was often quelled by a tone, a look, or an act of tenderness. Often have we experienced this mode of cure, calling us out of self into self-forgetfulness, until our better nature prevailed over this demoniacal tendency.

Before concluding, there is one subject of deep interest that I desire to press upon your attention. I

refer to the important work of thoroughly equipping this establishment with furniture so tasteful as to give an air of comfort to it, with every appliance for instruction, employment, and amusement, so that the patient may be enticed away from self, and planted, for the brief season needful for his restoration, in a genial, health-imparting atmosphere. The importance of this can scarce be adequately appreciated. A very small part of the benefits that this establishment should confer can be availed of without these appliances.

Poets, being in union with the spirit world, tell us that a flower-bud is never fragrant until its petals open; then an angel breathes upon it a heavenly odor.

The petals of this building enterprise are even now ready to unfold, and I earnestly invoke a blessing upon it from the sex that lingered at the cross and hastened to the sepulchre; for man, at every stage of his existence, knows in his inmost soul, and feels, that woman affords the best earthly illustration of the unfallen. Oh, how the remembrance of a mother's love lingers until the last spark of life is extinguished! Her love—as felt in tone, in look, in word, and in act—has often been the guardian angel that warned man of the tempter's wiles, and gave him power to break away from the allurements that would have ended in his ruin.

The purity of a sister's affection has developed the love of virtue in many a man, and served as a talisman to draw him back from the temptation to wrong doing that else would have overwhelmed him. Ladies, will you not now band together, and resolve

that you will equip this house thoroughly? For although it may cost much of time and money to breathe such a blessing upon the home of the fearfully afflicted, yet trouble and money weigh not with you, when you see the husband, the father, the son, and the brother, restored to their hearts and homes, in perfect soundness, through your agency.

Womanhood, in such an age and in such a land as this, bears with it powerful agencies for weal or woe to man.

Let me assure you that here, in this very house, an agency for weal is opened to you; and, by your accepting it, many of the choicest spirits in our land will be relieved from a malady produced by an over-labored brain.

He who here ministers to the mind diseased, will then make the heart of the sufferer glow with the inexhaustible theme that woman's love provided every appliance for developing taste, promoting comfort, and affording instruction or amusement. Associate the ladies of this city with each agent of pleasure, and you will give it a tenfold power for good.

The President now stated that he was happy in the privilege of introducing to the audience their friend, Morton McMichael, who would say a few words to them. Mr. McMichael then spoke as follows:—

ADDRESS OF MORTON McMICHAEL.

I am happy, Mr. President, to unite with you, and with my friend, Mr. Welsh, in offering congratula-

tions on the auspicious event we are engaged in commemorating. At the period of which you have just spoken, three years ago, in company with many of those who hear me—among whom I am particularly glad to welcome a lady who has shed lustre on her sex by her constant and self-sacrificing labors in the cause of humanity (I shall, of course, be understood to mean Miss Dix, who has just arrived among us)—three years ago, I had the pleasure of participating, along with you, sir, in laying the corner-stone of the noble pile of buildings under whose roof we are assembled. At that time, heaps of stone and masses of lumber, loosely scattered about, furnished the only external indications of the structure which has since, under the guiding hand of the architect, reared its graceful proportions, and expanded into the spacious corridors, the commodious apartments, the well-provided offices, by which we are surrounded. But even then—crude and immature as everything seemed—the knowledge the spectators had of the parties to whose custody the work had been committed, left no doubt of its completion as soon as circumstances would permit. In the remarks I had the honor to make as part of the ceremonial referred to, I took occasion to express—what I felt confident was a prevailing public sentiment—admiration of the intelligence, energy, and industry manifested in the administration of the affairs of this institution; as well in the careful and thorough control exercised by the general management, as in the wise and skilful conduct of the medical staff. During the interval which has elapsed, I have been a not inattentive observer of what has gone forward in this direction, and with the added experience thus

acquired, all that I then said I am prepared fully to reaffirm. Nor let it be thought by any that such a testimonial is inappropriate. If it be deserved, it is eminently fitting that it should be rendered—rendered here, and rendered now. And that it is deserved, surely what we have seen with our own eyes, and heard with our own ears, this afternoon, abundantly demonstrates.

We claim to be, and we are, a benevolent people in Philadelphia. The all-embracing spirit of “peace on earth, good-will toward men,” which our pious founder—drawing his inspirations from the purer founts of heavenly love—infused into the body, and illustrated in the name of his chosen city, has animated his descendants and successors through many generations, and still survives among us. As the legitimate offspring of its genial influences, we point with an honest and laudable pride to the stately edifices—this not among the least—we have dedicated to the gentle ministrations of kindness, and consecrated by the holy symbols of philanthropy; and we rejoice, with a not unworthy joy, in the ample and varied means we have provided for the care of the sick and the suffering; in our liberal appliances for the protection and maintenance of the widow and the fatherless; in our humane instrumentalities for the reclamation of the erring and the reform of the vicious. Towards the endowment and support of these, our citizens of all classes, according to the measure of their abilities, have contributed freely from their basket and their store; many of them have shown again and yet again, that their hearts are open as the day to the melting hand of

charity; and all—some in larger, some in lesser degree—all, with few exceptions, have tasted the luxury of doing good. But, while it cannot be denied that, as a community, we possess the impulses which incline us to do right, it must at the same time be admitted that here, as in other communities, these impulses must be stimulated and quickened before they can be developed into actual growth. Our good wishes are of little avail, so long as they are merely good wishes; our diffusive benevolence must be concentrated before it can be made to produce effective fruits. And, so far as relates to the Insane Department of the Hospital, in this respect, the managers of the institution, and those who have co-operated with them, are entitled to especial recognition and praise. They have reduced to practical application the kindly feelings of our citizens. They have given form and shape to vague desires to do good. They have converted praiseworthy intentions into substantial realities. And these, as all know, were no easy matters to perform. Predisposed as we are, I trust, to do whatever may fairly be required of us, unless in obvious and urgent instances, we seldom go in pursuit of opportunities. Our sympathies naturally cling to

“That which before us lies in daily life,”

if some effort be not made to divert them into wider and deeper channels. And, in a case like that of which we are now speaking, where the afflictions to be mitigated are not such as appeal directly or palpably to the emotional side of our natures, the task of raising large sums of money, by voluntary contributions, is both arduous and irksome. Such a task you,

Mr. President, and your fellow-directors; you, Mr. Welsh, and your fellow-laborers of the committee, have accomplished. And for myself, for those in whose presence I stand, for the community—which, in this regard, I am sure I faithfully represent—I thank you both; I thank you all—sincerely, earnestly, and heartily, I thank you.

Of the vast benefits which this institution has already conferred, and will hereafter confer, in an augmented and augmenting ratio, on the city of Philadelphia, on the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, on all parts of the Union, indeed, to which its example may extend, I do not propose to speak. That subject has been sufficiently exemplified by the gentlemen who have preceded me; or, if it should require further illustration, will probably be presented by others who may follow. My purpose has been to offer a brief tribute to those through whose agency the end has been achieved, rather than to dwell on the evils to be remedied, and the good to be attained, by the successful issue of their efforts. But I feel that that tribute would be most imperfectly bestowed, if I closed without a direct allusion to the medical superintendent, my honored friend, Dr. Kirkbride. To Dr. Kirkbride, my fellow-citizens, we all owe a large debt of gratitude. For more than eighteen years, since the hour, in fact, when it first went into operation, this trans-Schuylkill branch of the Hospital has been under his personal charge. How zealous, how indefatigable he has been during that period, all are aware who are in the slightest degree acquainted with its history; the improvements he has introduced in the physical and moral treatment of

patients; the ameliorated condition and increased comforts he has secured to them; the salutary changes he has wrought in the public mind in regard to the character of mental disease; these are familiar to all who are familiar with the advance of medical science; they are appreciated by all who are interested in the progress of humanity. And, sir, it is within my own observation, that in procuring the funds required for the construction of the splendid Hospital in which we are gathered, he has been something more than an efficient co-worker. Diligent, untiring, and hopeful, he impressed a portion of his own enthusiasm upon those with whom he was brought into contact; and many a purse has opened to his earnest but unobtrusive persuasions, which would have otherwise remained closed; many an auxiliary has been secured for the enterprise whom no other consideration could have prompted to promote it. Indeed, it may be asserted, without disparaging the valuable services which others have performed in this behalf, that to Dr. Kirkbride, more than to any one man, belongs the credit of completing this great work. And as he has given to it his whole mind, and his whole heart, and his whole strength, his days and his nights, his time and his talents, let us hope that he may long live to witness the beneficent consequences of his unselfish devotion to a good cause, and to receive, in addition to the rewards of his own conscience, what he so richly deserves, the cordial plaudits of his obliged and grateful fellow-citizens.

LADIES' COLLECTING COMMITTEE

OF THE

NEW PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE.

THE suggestion made in one of the addresses on the occasion of opening the new building, that the ladies would be glad to raise the entire amount of \$25,000 still required to give full efficiency to the new Hospital, having been promptly responded to by several benevolent individuals, a meeting of the Collecting Committee was held at the Pennsylvania Hospital on the 31st of the 10th mo. (October), 1859, at which the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted, viz:—

“ *Whereas*, it is believed that the sum of \$25,000 will be required to furnish the new building, and to provide adequate means for the occupation, instruction, and amusement of the patients, and,

Whereas, it is known that a number of benevolent ladies are willing to aid us in the object we have so long had in view, therefore,

Be it Resolved, That an invitation be extended to the ladies to aid us in collecting the amount still required to give full efficiency to the new hospital.

Resolved, That William Welsh, Mordecai L. Dawson, S. Morris Waln, Samuel Welsh, and Thomas S.

Kirkbride, be appointed a Committee to assist the ladies in their benevolent undertaking, and to print the proceedings on the occasion of opening the new building, and such other documents as they may deem desirable.

Resolved, That the Chairman of this Committee furnish each lady who may be willing to engage in the work of collecting funds for the objects already alluded to, with a copy of the above preamble and resolutions."

Extracted from the minutes,

WISTAR MORRIS,

Secretary.

The following Correspondence between the Chairman of the Collecting Committee and the Physician of the Hospital, in reference to the objects referred to in the preceding resolutions, has been deemed worthy of insertion, in connection with the proceedings on the occasion of opening the new building for the reception of patients.

PHILADELPHIA, October 28th, 1859.

MY DEAR DOCTOR :—

Having been called upon yesterday as the Chairman of the Collecting Committee, to assist in dedicating the structure erected by benevolent contributors, to a use approved by God and man, I stated that success in treating the insane would be very much promoted, if the physicians and attendants could assure the patients, that not only was the whole

building alive with the spirit of benevolence, but that each article within and around it, ministering to the pleasure and comfort of the patients, was the gift of woman—living woman.

If I overstated the importance of this, as an aid in promoting the early cure of the insane, please correct me. I firmly believe that man never falls so low in this world as to hate holiness, or to lose his respect for virtuous woman; and even the most depraved can be influenced for good by moral suasion; although this power can only be developed in them by touching some cord that reproduces scenes of purer days, when their tender emotions were stirred deeply. *All* have such softening experiences in life; and it seems to me that in a Hospital for the Insane, every means should be adopted that will aid in reaching and reproducing that sensitive period in the early history of each patient. If this is true—and your long experience and acute observation enable you to certify to the value of such a scheme—I know that there are ladies who will respond favorably to any call upon them for aid to increase the chance of cure to those committed to your care.

Ladies were present yesterday who have felt strongly, thought deeply, and some of them are well qualified to write tenderly and forcibly on this subject. I misinterpreted their interest in the monument of benevolence just erected, if they are not willing to unite in giving it *the crowning blessing*, thus imparting to it a resurrection power over many a decaying mind.

If you say that your hands will be strengthened by such a course, I am sure the ladies will band

together to equip the house and grounds with all needful appliances. Twenty-five thus animated could readily and pleasantly collect one thousand dollars each, if in your judgment that sum would suffice. When the contents of a room, or even when a single article is given by or in the name of a child or lady, living or dead, it could be numbered and an account written of some trait of character, or some cause for gratitude, without revealing the name to any other than the person who prepared the sketch.

The insane would then be surrounded by wives, mothers, children, and sisters, who, after death, will still speak peace to many a troubled mind. Would not such a record, related by the physician or attendant to patients, afford an inexhaustible topic of entertainment, and aid in tracing to its source the disease that is often too deeply seated to be discovered, until some latent emotion is awakened?

Very truly, your friend,

WM. WELSH.

To THOMAS S. KIRKBRIDE, M. D.

PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE.

October 29th, 1859.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

I have received your letter of the 28th inst., and cordially concur in the views you have expressed in reference to the favorable influences that may be exercised on the insane, by everything around them which has a tendency to excite pleasurable emotions, or to recall the mind, even for a moment, from any of its delusions. Important as an enlightened medical treatment is in a large majority of cases, still,

there is something beyond and above that, and without which our institutions for the relief of mental disease, can never become what they ought to be, or fulfil but a small part of their true mission. The means you have suggested, and coming from the sources you have indicated, will most assuredly strengthen the hands of those who are to direct this great charity, and cannot fail in all future time to exercise a beneficial influence on those who resort to it for relief.

I agree with you, too, most fully, that it would be "a crowning blessing" to this great work of benevolence, if the finishing up of its arrangements for the comfort of its patients, the furnishing of their halls, parlors, and chambers, the fitting up of their museums and reading-rooms, and the provision of the numberless means that may be made to minister to their instruction, occupation, and amusement, were to come from the generous and voluntary efforts of woman. Coming from such a source, they would be doubly valued. Such a history would be a matter of honest pride for every one, and an endless source of interest to all those—and who shall say who they are to be—that may be received within these walls.

There would seem to be a peculiar fitness that this closing labor of completing our new Hospital should come from the sex that never tires when suffering is to be relieved, and whose sympathy for the unfortunate never grows cold. The best and most useful traits in those who have charge of the insane are found in highest perfection in woman—and there is no physical force in the strongest man, comparable in real power for good or general efficiency, to that gentleness

of tone, feeling, and action, which especially belongs to woman. And the new arrangements, when fully carried out, while benefiting all, will show their highest advantages in "the Department for Females."

Public sentiment is gradually becoming right on the subject of insanity and the treatment of the insane, and when this malady is universally recognized as one to which all are liable; that it is as amenable to treatment as many others; that once fully restored, a sufferer from it has just as good a right, with common prudence, to expect to continue well as after a restoration from many other maladies; that institutions like this for the treatment of the disease, are among the necessities of an enlightened Christian age; that rightly conducted they are public blessings, bringing to all what can nowhere else be obtained, and which no amount of wealth, no devotion of time and the tenderest affection, can supply;—then will half the agony which often results from this affection be removed, and the way opened for other and greater advances in its treatment. Woman has already done a liberal share in bringing about this improved public sentiment. She has it in her power to do much more, and entering heartily on the work you have suggested, cannot fail to develop a new interest in behalf of those who are mentally afflicted, and to secure a reward abundantly ample to satisfy every humane heart.

Very truly yours,

THOMAS S. KIRKBRIDE.

To WILLIAM WELSH, Esq.

