

Memorial soliciting a state hospital for the insane : submitted to the legislature of Alabama, November 15, 1849.

Contributors

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Stephen Williamson — with
[SENATE DOC.] *Mr. Nathan's* [No. 2.]
MEMORIAL *Subjects.*

SOLICITING A

STATE HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE.

SUBMITTED TO THE

LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA.

NOVEMBER 15, 1849.

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA.

TWO THOUSAND COPIES.

MONTGOMERY :

BOOK AND JOB OFFICE OF THE ADVERTISER AND GAZETTE.

1849.



MEMORIAL

BUILDING A

HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE

REPORT TO THE

BOARD OF MANAGERS

FOR THE YEAR

ENDING AT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR

TWO THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED

MONTGOMERY

PRINTED AND SOLD BY THE ADMINISTRATOR AND MANAGER

1891



MEMORIAL

TO THE HONORABLE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF ALABAMA.

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives :

Permit your memorialst respectfully and urgently to claim your attention to a necessity which exists for immediate, adequate and appropriate provision for the relief of the INSANE, especially for the insane poor in the State of Alabama.

I need not inform you that at this time there exists no institution of any description for the protection and remedial treatment of this numerous class of sufferers in this State, and that according to the lowest estimates, based on statistical returns, you cannot number fewer than seven hundred idiots, epileptics and insane within your boundaries, and that a large part of these whose freedom would expose themselves and society to injury are unfitly confined, either in comfortless apartments in private dwellings, in poor-houses, or in county jails; many of these are oppressed under cruel and severe treatment, chiefly resulting from the ignorance of those who hold them in charge, and nearly all suffer through need of fit care, and mitigating remedial appliances.

It is hardly necessary that I should remind you that with the fast increasing population, and the rapid developement of the resources of your fine State, the malady of insanity, the certain attendant on active civilization and intellectual culture, is not only established in your midst, but that the numbers classed as *incurables* are already counted by hundreds, not as a few years since by scores; the burthen of supporting these unfortunate ones is becoming annually more oppressive. These facts demand consideration and call for a remedy—the establishment of a curative Hospital which shall stay this cruel and now needlessly perpetuated evil—the source alike of incalculable suffering and of burthensome expences. But it is not upon onerous monetary outlays that I desire to concentrate your deliberations, though a careful dispensation both of County and of State funds, is of high moral no less than of social and civil obligation.

I ask you, men of Alabama, citizens of generous hearts, Legislators who should be wise in counsel and just in action; fathers, husbands, sons whose domestic affections strengthen as new years are added to lengthened life, I ask you to dwell for a little time on the miseries endured by those whose light of reason is hid in thick darkness, and reflect if this sore calamity may not penetrate into and spread dismay in your own homes. Who can you surrender there to the life-long doom of insanity—the loved and venerated mother; the devoted tender hearted wife; the blooming affectionate daughter, or that strong-souled promising son, your destined heir, companion, and support of your declining years? What none of these? and do you in this dire extremity cry aloud for succour for some sure remedy to heal this bitter agony of heart? There is but one probable means of relief—it is found in remedial Hospital treatment.

I do not come to present a view of fancied ills—to rattle the chain, nor

to utter the shriek of the maniac in your ear; I do not come to depict in false and too vivid colors before your amazed vision horrors of which you can have had but the faintest idea, except you have witnessed in some of its Protean forms the manifestations of insanity as it breaks down with resistless force the noblest intellect, overwhelms the judgment, and distorts the affections by the most extravagant and fearful delusions, but I do come to ask your serious deliberation and efficient action in behalf of the most corroding and alarming malady that can reach and overwhelm humanity, or make fearful wreck of the peace of domestic life.

For this dreaded malady we know that in these latter days there is for most of its victims a *remedy*, and *for all alleviation*. But neither healing nor palliative influences can be had without appropriate means involving public action and government support. This action and expenditure I come to ask of the General Assembly of Alabama. I come in the name of those who cannot plead for themselves to urge of you Legislators, individually and collectively, such a monied appropriation as shall construct a State Hospital on a basis so liberal and substantial that your fellow-citizens who suffer under the affliction of insanity whether rich or poor may receive within your own borders the means of care and of cure.

The importance of establishing curative Hospitals for the Insane has not been well understood and generally adopted till within a period of comparatively modern date—in fact, curative Institutions have not been common till the middle of the 18th century; at present they are recognized by civilized nations as not only of great public utility and private benefit, but of imperative necessity and obligation. Since 1830, the number of these Institutions in the United States has been nearly doubled, yet are these already constructed altogether insufficient for supplying the increasing want of the accommodations which they afford. Much has been done but much remains to be accomplished for the relief of these sufferers in our own United States as in other countries. With a population rating at more than 22,000,000, our insane and idiots number at the lowest estimate 22,000; and not 5,000 at this time have the advantages of appropriate care in well organized hospitals, or comfortable situations adapted to their condition and circumstances elsewhere.

In 1844, the number of inmates in the hospitals of England and Wales was 11,272. Additional accommodations have been called for and provided to a large extent. The oldest hospital founded in England is that of Bethlem, which king Henry the VIII presented to the city of London, in 1547.

There are twenty State hospitals, besides several incorporated hospitals, for the treatment of the insane, in nineteen States of the Union, Virginia alone having two government State hospitals. The following is a correct list, omitting several small establishments conducted by private individuals, and several pretty extensive poor-house and prison departments.

The first hospital for the insane in the United States was established in Philadelphia, as a department of the Penn Hospital, in the year 1752.— This has been transferred to a fine district near the village of Man'ua, in the vicinity of Philadelphia, since 1832: number of patients 188.

The second institution receiving insane patients, and the first exclusively for their use, was at Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1773: number of patients 165.

The third was the Friend's Hospital, at Frankfort, near Philadelphia, in 1817: number of patients 95.

The next was the McLean Hospital, at Charlestown, (now Summer-ville,) in Massachusetts, in 1818. This valuable institution is second to none in America. Number of patients 180.

Bloomingdale Hospital, near the city of New York, was established in 1821; number of patients 146: South Carolina Hospital, at Columbia, in 1822; number of patients 74: Connecticut Hospital, at Hartford, patients 122, and Kentucky Hospital, at Lexington, patients 247, in 1824.

In 1845-'46, the Legislature of Kentucky passed a bill to establish a second State Institution in the Green River country.

Virginia Western Hospital was opened at Staunton in 1828; number of patients 217. Massachusetts State Hospital, at Worcester, was opened in 1833, and enlarged in 1843; it has 370 patients. Maryland Hospital, at Baltimore, was founded in 1834; it has the present year 109 patients. Vermont State Hospital, at Battleborough, was opened for patients in 1837, and enlarged in 1846-'47; it has at present 320 patients. New York City Hospital for the poor, on Blackwell's island, was occupied in 1838; it is now being considerably enlarged: above 400 patients.

Tennessee State Hospital, at Nashville, was opened in 1839. According to an act of the legislature in 1847-48, this hospital is to be replaced by one of capacity to receive 250 patients. In the old hospital are 64 patients. Boston City Hospital for the indigent, which has 150 patients, and Ohio State Hospital, at Columbus, were severally opened in 1839.—The latter has been considerably enlarged, and has now 329 patients.—Maine State Hospital, at Augusta, 1840; patients 130. New Hampshire State Hospital, at Concord, was opened in 1842, and has 100 patients.—New York State Hospital, at Utica, was established in 1843, and has since been largely extended, and has 600 patients. Mount Hope Hospital, near Baltimore, 1844-'45: has 72 insane patients. Georgia has an institution for the insane at Milledgeville, and at present 128 patients.—Rhode Island State Hospital was opened, under the direction of Dr. Ray, early in 1848. New Jersey State Hospital, at Trenton, 1848. Indiana State Hospital, at Indianapolis, opened in 1848. State Hospital of Illinois, at Jacksonville, was occupied before 1849. The Louisiana State Hospital will be occupied perhaps within a year.

These institutions, liberally sustained, as are most of them, cannot accommodate the insane population of the United States who require prompt remedial care.

Such being the facts, one can hardly employ language too importunate, arguments too persuasive, to secure such increased accommodations for the Insane throughout the United States, but especially *in those States in which no Hospitals have been established*, as shall assure their sufficient care and protection; their remedial treatment so as to procure recovery when recovery is possible; and their safety and guardianship in all cases where the terrible calamity of *incurability* crowds them forever from all the bland affections and social enjoyments of domestic and friendly association.

As ye would that others should do for you in like circumstances, so do ye for these help'less ones, cast through the Providence of God, on your sympathy and care!

In 1844, there were but 20 institutions in the United States for the curative treatment of the insane; into 13 of these were admitted in one year 1,213 patients, and the entire number under treatment at the same time was 2,890.

Of these, a very large number were of the middle and poorest classes, being rendered incurably insane through previous unfit treatment, but a portion were successfully recovered to the accustomed use of their reason.

Of those who received early, sufficient and prompt hospital care, and who were perfectly restored to society, to usefulness, and high places of trust and influence, I might, if it were proper in this place to name them, indicate several members of Congress, and members of several of our State Legislatures.

I have seen hundreds of patients restored to their health and returned to the enjoyments and blessings of domestic life; and I have seen *thousands* living in misery, wearing life slowly out in dungeons, in cells, in cages, in pens, in barns and outhouses, exposed to every variation of weather, filthy and neglected, abandoned of friends, cared for with less consideration than the oxen in the stall, or the swine in the sty; melancholy monuments of the imperfectness with which society discharges its social and moral obligations.

I have said that most of the institutions for the insane are filled to their utmost capacity, showing yet another incontrovertible argument in favor of adopting not only hospital treatment, but early, timely, treatment. One and another may, perhaps, exclaim as this plea for the wretched comes before him, with a seriousness and solemnity which will not be denied,—our taxes are already a burthen, how shall we bear their increase? To these apprehensive and querulous spirits it may be answered as on one occasion by the discerning Franklin, when the citizens once in his times raised the popular cry against increased taxation: "Recollect that the taxes imposed by Government are not the only taxes which you pay; self gratifications the indulgence of luxuries, the lavish expenditures of daily life, are taxes from which neither commissioners nor assessors can deliver the payer."—And I may add, in the present case, that *procrastination* in the execution of a necessary work may impose upon the present and the future, as it has done upon the past, in this State, as in others, a burthen, a perpetual tax, from which there will be no relief. As the expenses of a war are never cancelled, witness that of the Revolution, for which consequent expenses, drafts are annually made on the Treasury, in the form of pensions and compensations; so works of necessity and obligation delayed, impose upon posterity a perpetual tax as vexatious as it is burthensome.

Other examples too recent and too obvious to require exposition, give force to my illustration.

Also, society must pay the tax levied by its false modes of life, its defective organization, its self-indulgence and its self-will in the frequent results of these—poverty and insanity.

Much unsoundness of mind originates in the ceaseless activity which sways all classes of society throughout the civilized world. To act and not to reflect, is the characteristic of the present age; sentiment and impulse take, to a considerable extent, the place of thought. Improvements in the mechanic arts, developments in science, and application of principles facilitating every class and form of mechanical labor, all these, valua-

ble as they are, create undue restlessness, and multiply in quick succession changes upon changes, which, acting upon frames of feeble strength or exhausted powers, create disease, first of body, finally and very frequently of the mental faculties. Added to these obvious and general causes of insanity, are numerous specific exciting agents, which assail and undermine the fabric of sound, healthful exercise of the mental faculties, and establish a form of disease perilous and most fearful.

The treatment and cure of insanity is a distinct branch of medical practice, for which not only special study and special professional skill, but a peculiar tact in influencing and controlling the patients, a ready thought, prompt resource, and active methodical habits, are requisite.

Humanity and economy alike counsel that every known measure should be adopted for the cure of disease. The insane, more than any other class, demand protection, care and sympathy; we cannot escape from the recognizance of the claims they present; we cannot turn a deaf ear to their piteous cry; we cannot shut from our sight a view of their troubles, their privations, their most forlorn estate. Let those who possess and enjoy the full exercise of their mental faculties, who are capable of exercising self-care and self-respect; who are surrounded by the innumerable blessings which are hourly procured by the robust and the prosperous, let these recollect that no building stands so firmly that it may not be cast down; no intellectual sun is so bright but a cloud may extinguish or eclipse its beams. The most exalted intellect may fall in ruins, and the crushed mind utter itself only in maniacal ravings and idiotic babblings. That peculiar, watching, kindly care, which yourselves or your children may need, surely you will not hesitate or delay to provide now that it is needed for others.

In no institution, save in a well-ordered Hospital, I persuade myself you already acknowledge, can the insane receive such medical and moral care as their peculiar disease requires.

When the patient demands continual watchfulness and control; when both safety and comfort requires for him a temporary seclusion and separation from all exciting objects and accustomed companionship, he is, as all experience shows, more ready to yield to sanative measures amongst strangers, and in a hospital, than when left with those whose affections and distress blind their judgment and weaken their decisions. Few recoveries are assured under a home-treatment of insanity, be the care ever so assiduous, or the means of supplying comforts ever so ample.

Also, Alms-houses for the insane poor are objectionable upon every ground. The keeper of a poor-house has no leisure for such a charge, even supposing what is highly improbable, that he has suitable qualifications for nursing and controlling the insane.

Dr. Trezevant, long well known in the Southern States, as the counseling physician of the South Carolina State Hospital, in his report for 1847, presents a painful but exactly correct view of the evils of Alms-house treatment for the insane, and justly deprecates all treatment save that which is provided in rightly managed Hospitals. I quote from his own pages illustrative of this position:

“ Much has been done, and much remains to be done, which I flatter myself will be accomplished: but it will be the work of time, and the gradual enlightening of the minds of the community, and satisfying the Com-

missioners of the poor of the actual necessity of sending *early* their insane to the Asylum, and by proving to them, by incontrovertible facts, *that it is cheaper to do so, and far less expensive in the end* to the district over which they preside. *Retrenchment has been the curse of the poor, and especially of the insane.* I have nothing to do with it politically, but it comes before me so frequently in the acts of some of the Commissioners, daily and hourly, that I cannot but feel that it is a wonderful agent of mischief, even in that most humble portion of our State government. The law leaves it in a measure optional with the Commissioners, and though imperative in its phraseology, yet it gives a discretionary power, and for fear of increasing the poor rates, many will, with the utmost purity of heart and genuine kindness of feeling, save the parish, but at the fearful sacrifice of the maniac. They will retain him at the poor-house, where he can be kept for \$50 per annum, and perhaps eventually send him to the Asylum, as it has been done, with the skin literally roasted from his limbs by the fire, for the want of proper attention. Some wretched old crone, half crazed herself, or unable to move about, the partaker of their charity, is installed as the keeper of the insane, and the effect of their injudicious parsimony is very speedily made obvious, by the wanderings of the maniac, the trouble he occasions in the neighborhood, or the injuries inflicted on him by those who, ignorant of his mi-fortune, deem him an impudent and troublesome vagrant. The law should be positive. Whenever the mind is warped, and the reason gone, no circumstances should be considered as valid in preventing his being placed in the institution erected by the State for his especial benefit—there should be his location, and it should be the pride of every resident of the district, to see that the wretched maniac was sent to the place appropriated for his comfort and happiness.”

The last annual report of the Directors of the Baltimore City Alms-house contains an appeal, to which innumerable facts might be added, in support of the plea for hospitals for the relief of the disease.

“Insanity,” writes the Secretary, “is an affliction that appeals urgently to the sympathies of a benevolent and enlightened public. To omit providing the means which may contribute to the comfort and recovery of those who are visited by this awful calamity, is like denying the physician to the sick, and medicine to those who must perish without it. There are at this time eighty-five insane inmates, in various stages of insanity, in this Alms-house, who supplicate for sun-light, air, and a comfortable resting-place. The apartments assigned to the maniac men, in particular, are dark, damp, cheerless and uncomfortable. Enlightened humanity has long since broken down the system which consigned the maniac to cells, to the strait-jacket, and to chains. Kind treatment is alone the remedy which can restore reason, and restore the passion of unreason. That class of inmates must steadily increase upon us unless a suitable hospital is erected for their accommodation.” If these are the results of the experience of Directors in an Alms-house, liberally sustained and receiving from fifteen hundred to two thousand inmates, what must be the miseries of the insane in that class of poor-houses parsimoniously managed, and but seldom inspected.

If, then, a poor-house is an unfit place of confinement for the insane, how much more objectionable are the dungeons and cells of the County Prisons. Humanity shrinks from the revolting picture of the maniac confined with felons and criminals of every grade, compelled to be associated

with the vile and the base whom society, to preserve its own peace and rights, is compelled to exclude for the benefits liberty secures, and as the intellect occasionally emerges from thick darkness, to a vague confused twilight-consciousness, what more bitter aggravation can reach the sufferer than to find himself in a prison, degraded and abased; innocent, but the companion of the guilty; sick, and for that sickness punished, not nourished and protected.

The keeper of a well conducted jail lately writing to me on the subject of the committal of insane persons to prison for safe-keeping, concludes in the following language: "I protest against the abuse of committing maniacs and idiots to county jails, which are altogether unfit places for their detention; and so far as my experience goes, the officers are unqualified for so responsible and difficult a charge. The practice is as cruel as it is unjust, and should not be sanctioned in any intelligent community."

Another keeper of a jail writes as follows, shortly after I had visited his prison and found there insane men and women associated with the sane prisoners: "I assure you that no unwillingness exists on my part to labor in making the condition of these unfortunate persons more comfortable, but it is not possible to effect this in a prison. I have not the means of assisting their recovery. They are necessarily shut up in dungeons; they have no associates but criminals; they have no intercourse with the world abroad; they are left to brood on their own distracted fancies; they destroy their clothes; they are filthy in their habits, and daily become worse; they are the most distressed and outraged creatures on God's earth; and I do hope the time is coming when the public will feel the truth of this, and build Hospitals, where, if they cannot be cured, they can be taken care of."

"No place," writes an eminent author and physician, "can be more unfit for the insane than the county jails. I am not cognizant of a single recovery within their walls; nor could it well be otherwise. The patient is thrust into a narrow room, badly warmed and ventilated, and which he may not leave for years together; his medical treatment, if judiciously prescribed, is imperfectly administered for want of skilful attendants; he is debarred from all healthful exercise of his limbs, and probably of all employment of body or mind, and finally becomes a standing subject of exhibition to the curious visitor. Every effort of nature to bring back the wandering faculties, is just sufficient to render him conscious of the disagreeable and untoward circumstances of his condition, but of nothing better. Finding himself completely environed by stone and iron, associated with felons, and communicating only with those who, by their manners and conversation, treat him like one, the idea of crime is necessarily obtruded on his mind. Unable, amid the disordered and painful recollections of the past, to discern the true character of his case, his spirit is overborne by this fearful idea, and again and again it passes under the cloud which finally becomes an impenetrable veil of darkness and confusion. His mental condition is now fixed, and if he continue to observe the common decencies of humanity, and retain its outward aspect, instead of sinking down to the lowest point of degradation, it is now owing more to some happy accident of his disease, than to any favorable influence in the circumstances around him. We received one of this class of persons who had been confined for eleven years. During all this time, constituting so

large a share of the period allotted to man, he never left his cell except to pass into an adjacent one ; he had never placed his foot upon the ground, nor breathed the air of heaven except through grated windows. One may faintly conceive, but language cannot describe, the luxury of the sensations which thrilled through every nerve and muscle in his body, as he paced our galleries, and once more walked abroad, with nothing between him and the open sky above and the solid earth beneath. After staying with us about nine months, he was discharged, and from that day till this, he has been earning an honest livelihood by working on a railroad. Had this person committed any crime of unparalleled atrocity, that he should have been subjected to any punishment which for duration and severity is unequalled by a single penalty in the statute book ? Far from it ; he had committed no criminal act whatsoever ; *he was only insane !*"

If the confinement of the insane in private dwellings, in almshouses, and in jails, has been proved altogether objectionable, we have innumerable examples of the fatal consequences of leaving them at large, unguarded and unguided. I record a few instances still fresh in my recollection.— More than twenty suicides have been brought to my notice within the last year alone, who, after insanity was fully developed, had been still kept at home through the mistaken affections and sensibility of friends in delaying hospital care and restraint. In the cases of maniacal insanity mothers in their own houses become the destroyers of their children : in one instance the unfortunate parent was immediately after the act taken to a hospital, and in four months perfectly received her reason. What reproachful pangs must have preyed upon her friends for previous neglect of her case, attended, as it was, with irreparable fatal consequences !

Lately an individual, long laboring under insanity, shot a relative, which caused immediate death ; the miserable family repenting their misjudgment when too late to prevent this bloody deed.

A farmer in a northern county, incited by a violent paroxysm, killed his sons, set fire to his house, destroyed his horses and cattle, and burnt his barn, and was dashing on to other acts of violence and destruction when his neighbors arrested his destructive career.

A woman in St. Lawrence, insane for several years, and whose case had been wholly disregarded, in a sudden paroxysm, seized an axe and killed her only son, with whom she resided.

A young girl in Alleghany county, Pennsylvania, living with her infirm mother, deliberately murdered her in a most shocking manner. She was known to have been insane for several years.

In Rowan county a woman committed a most barbarous murder while in a state of furious mania.

In Wake county a man murdered first his wife, for which he was arrested, committed to prison, tried, and discharged on the ground of irresponsibility by reason of insanity. He shortly killed his son, a young lad,—was again arrested, imprisoned, tried, and discharged, as in the first instance, on the ground of insanity, which forbade his imprisonment, and there was no hospital where he could be placed for security.

Some time since an insane man was found in a swamp below Tuscaloosa, in a state of miserable exposure and suffering. I found a woman wandering in a pitiable condition and wholly unconscious of aim or object : she belonged to the eastern part of this State.

Many are chained to prevent escape, and this serves to keep up, as well as stimulate, excitement and violent passion.

Improper freedom and severe confinement, whenever indulged or enforced, assure serious and often fatal consequences.

Of eight examples of horrible murders committed in prisons within my recollection, by madmen, besides innumerable murderous assaults, I give a single fact: A criminal placed in the cell of a maniac for companionship and care of the same, slept, not apprehending danger, the patient seized a knife and severed the muscles and jugular vein of the sleeper, and was shortly discovered by the keeper in a state of complete nudity, bathed in the blood of his victim, and uttering the most furious imprecations.

From the contemplation of these afflictions and horrible circumstances, direct your attention to the wards of a well regulated Hospital. The buildings are constructed to facilitate all daily labor, and promote the most comfortable cares and arrangements. The furniture is neat, substantial, and conveniently disposed. The *workers* accomplishing quietly and steadily the various labors of the establishment; the *nurses*, chosen for their activity, kindness, patience, and ability to promote the well-being of the patient, accompany every where those who are confided to their charge, whether in their several apartments, at their employment, their amusements either within doors or abroad, in the gardens, the grounds at large, and whenever or however the Superintendent directs. The officers of the Hospital each alert to fill his station usefully, and above all, the physician whose vigilant eye is over all; and who with patience, cheerfulness, firmness and kindness, offers an example to all whom he directs, of the calm, self-possession which must prevail amongst all who are entrusted with responsible cares. The physician is the careful observer of his patients; he prescribes for them medically; he controls them morally; he is their friend and counsellor; firm but not arbitrary; his word is law, and from his decision there is no appeal. His life is devoted to the benefit of his patients; his reward is their improvement and recovery.

Those patients who have been well educated, and who have had habits of employment, both mental and physical, have always the first chances of recovery: the ignorant, stolid patient, or those who by choice have led an indolent life, must be seen to labor under the greatest disadvantages when brought under the moral, sanative influences of a hospital; if they recover it is ascribable to chance circumstances, rather than capacity to reap the highest benefits of care.

Incurable patients, even the demented and idiotic, may be trained to perform useful and productive labor, and are always happiest when some sort of employment is provided for amusement or for use. It may be observed that sedentary employments are less advantageous for the patient than those which are active; and that for the men agricultural labors are preferable to those of the shops. The working hours ought rarely to exceed six, and amusements should be supplied for a part of every day.—Recreation is found with the ball, drafts, chess, &c. and in the reading-room are furnished to such as find pleasure in reading, newspapers, general and religious periodicals, and books upon a large variety of subjects.

Nothing so much gratifies the patient as a consciousness of being useful, the knowledge that his work can be turned to some good account. Sales

from eight acres of ground, cultivated in vegetable productions, at Bloomingdale Hospital, afforded the last year returns of more than \$4000. At another Hospital of 217 patients, 130 were actively engaged in out-door work from five to seven hours daily, 16 in spinning, 12 in knitting, 12 in washing, 18 in ironing, 16 in white-washing and weaving, and 12 in learning to read and in spreading the tables at the hours for meals. At the Maryland Hospital 45 of 89 patients are habitually employed in useful work. Dr. Chandler reports of his patients as follows :

“ Our inmates have performed as much labor the past year, on the farm, as usual. The garden has looked as well and has yielded as abundantly. The effects of labor on those who work are salutary, unless they over-work, which is not apt to be the case, except in certain recent cases.— Physical health is promoted, and mental quietude is increased, by out-door exercise, and some profitable labor is the most agreeable way of taking it. We try to furnish our inmates with as much exercise on a farm, and in the garden, as they can be induced to take. It has been in a few cases, the great means of their recovery. This establishment has been liberally supplied, during the summer, with vegetables from the garden, and, besides these, that have been consumed at the time, the following lists, with their prices, is presented with the products of the farm :

110 bushels of corn	at	90 cents,	:	:	:	:	\$99 00
75 “	potatoes,	“	50 “	:	:	:	37 50
25 “	dry beans,	“	\$ 1 25 “	:	:	:	31 25
11 “	“	peas,	“	1 00 “	:	:	11 00
107 “	“	green peas	“	1 00 “	:	:	107 00
95 “	“	beets,	“	34 “	:	:	32 30
345 “	“	turnips,	“	25 “	:	:	86 25
40 “	“	parsnips,	“	67 “	:	:	26 80
105 “	“	onions,	“	67 “	:	:	70 35
25 “	“	apples,	“	50 “	:	:	12 50
1500 cabbages,	at 4 cents a piece,	:	:	:	:	:	60 00
36500 quarts milk,	at 3½ cents a quart,	:	:	:	:	:	1186 25
4736 pounds of beef,	at 6½ cents,	:	:	:	:	:	298 50
4273 “	“	pork	“	6½ “	:	:	267 06
90 “	“	poultry,	at 10 cents,	:	:	:	9 00
							\$2 334 76

There was raised for wintering the stock,							
50 tons of hay	at \$10 per ton,	:	:	:	:	:	\$500 00
1206 bushels	carrots,	at 25 cents,	:	:	:	:	301 50
corn fodder	:	:	:	:	:	:	15 00
							\$816 50

Female patients occupy time in various kinds of needle-work, in reading, exercise, and also household employments according to their previous habits, and the nature and state of their disease. The male patients have a variety of occupations, in the shops, on the grounds, in the reading-room, and in exercise halls. No restraints are imposed which can be dispensed with ; no peremptory word is uttered when persuasion will avail : the law of the Hospital is the law of kindness, and the spirit which prevails is the spirit of good will.

This is no fancy sketch. I rejoice that you can verify this brief descrip-

tion each for yourselves; and by visiting our best institutions, may comprehend and appreciate the inestimable blessings they have procured, and continue to procure and dispense.

"Adequate provision for the insane," writes Dr. Kirkbride, "is more urgently required in public institutions than for any other class of patients or invalids. Those sick of other diseases, if in comfortable circumstances, will, of course, be generally treated at home, and for even these, pecuniary aid can commonly furnish all that is required at their own houses; *but for most of those who are visited with insanity*, a Hospital is the only resource: the cure of their disease, the relief of their families, and the protection of the community, alike require that they should leave home, and neither wealth, nor station, nor influence, can protect many from requiring the aid of all the resources and appliances furnished by these institutions.

Liberal outlays seem to be indispensable to the prosperity and success of Hospitals for the insane. Dr. Luther V. Bell's condensed history of a late tour in Europe, for the purpose of visiting the most approved Hospitals for the insane, affords the following practical remark, which I quote as being equally applicable to institutions already established in the United States:

"I found everywhere this principle recognized, and declared to be the practical fruits of the experience of institutions brought into existence within thirty years. The principle is this, *that there is no such thing as a just and proper curative or ameliorating treatment of the insane in very cheaply constructed or cheaply managed institutions. That the measure of expense should never be regarded in providing for the insane.* The mind of the tax-paying community must be trained to understand and to act upon the necessity of more than a high class of Alms house arrangements, and if it be worth while to have any institutions at all, it is worth while to have such as will accomplish all of care and of cure which is practicable."

"Every State," writes Dr. Woodward, "should make ample provision for the cure of insanity, whether amongst the rich or the poor. All classes need this guardian care from the Government, and they should have it."

"If there are any in our days," writes Dr. Butler, of Hartford, "who doubt the propriety of sustaining Hospitals for the insane we refer them to the more than four hundred patients in this State restored to their families, in health and the renewed vigor of their mental capacities."

What cost then, I ask, can balance the inestimable blessing of restored or improved faculties?

Dr. McFarland, of Concord, says in his report for 1848-'49: "The measure of success which has thus far attended the institution has more than equalled the hopes of its warmest friends. The amount of good it has already accomplished can be fully appreciated only by those, who, having been admitted within its walls, suffering from various attacks of mental derangement, have, after a few months or years, returned to their friends and to society, wholly restored."

"No fact," says Dr. Stribling, of the Western Hospital, Virginia, "has been more clearly established, than that insanity must be properly treated in its incipient stages, or very early after it has been developed, to justify a reasonable prospect of cure, and it has been ascertained with equal certainty, that the remedial aids to be found only in appropriate institutions are in most cases indispensable to success, whilst home and its associations al-

most invariably operate to the lasting prejudice of the patient. Of one hundred and fifty-eight cases now in the asylum, who are in all probability doomed for life to endure the burthen of remediless disease, how many might have been speedily restored to reason, to usefulness, and to happiness, had weeks or only months been permitted to elapse before suitable resources were resorted to for their relief; but years went on, and at last, the anxious and exhausted friends bring to the asylum the long afflicted patient, laboring under a *fixed* malady, and for whom our best cares result in little more than soothing the pathway to the tomb!" In connection with this plain and truthful exposition, I find the following official record: "Received, 151 cases of *less* than one year's standing:—of these, 119 recovered; 17 were relieved; 4 wholly unimproved, and 11 have died."—What can more forcibly illustrate the value and obligation of early hospital care and treatment for the insane?

The report of the Superintendent of the Pennsylvania Hospital, for 1848, shows—cured, 120; much improved, 23; improved, 24; stationary, 19; died, 17. Total 203.

The history of a large proportion of cases which may be traced, and which have passed, into a chronic state, show that had remedial resources been promptly adopted, many might have been restored to sound health and to reason, and thus to ability to share in the duties of life, and those acts which make every rational individual an assistant in sustaining the social and civil organization of society. It is not a theoretical supposition, but a fact capable of absolute demonstration in every State and country where hospital treatment has been developed, that though the first expense of maintaining a patient in a hospital is greater than in a jail, a poor-house, or a private dwelling; yet, in consequence of the number cured and the small number of *early* treated cases which remain on charge, the *final* expense is much less than if they are suffered to drag out a wretched existence, laboring under the infliction of a distracted or demented mind.

"A point of great importance," writes Dr. Buttolph, of the New Jersey State Hospital, "and one that should be distinctly understood and *conscientiously* acted upon, by friends of the insane, is that *appropriative curative* treatment be resorted to *early* after the attack. The statistical records of institutions for the insane, in all countries, show that a much greater percentage of recoveries occur of the patients treated within the first few months of the attack, than those in whom it has existed for a longer period."

Dr. Bates, of the State Hospital, at Augusta, Maine, records of cases admitted *within one year after the attack*, 52 recovered; 25 unimproved, improved, and died. Of those admitted in 1848, after more than one year's duration of disease, only 8 recovered; 38 remained improved, unimproved and died." In the McLean asylum, the same year, "87 were discharged, restored; 8 much improved; 16 improved; 21 underwent no important change."

Referring to authentic hospital records, too copious to transfer to these pages, I find the following summary: In the Massachusetts State Hospital in 1843, *twenty five old* cases had cost \$54,157 00; average expense of these \$2,166 20. Whole expense of *twenty-five recent cases* till recovered 1,461 30; average expense of *twenty five recent cases* \$58 48.

In the Western Hospital, Virginia, *twenty old* cases had cost \$41,633 00; average cost \$2,081 65. Whole expense of *twenty recent ca-*

ses \$1,263 00; average expense of twenty recent cases till recovered \$63 23. The cost of supporting 102 cases in five different hospitals had amounted to \$201,336 00, on an average for each to \$1,973 88; while in the same institutions the *same number of recent cases discharged, cured*, amounted to only \$6,068 60, or to an average of \$59 49.

In one single institution in New England, three cases of incurable insanity first admitted, have already cost their friends \$11,100, or \$3,700 each; while the three last cases of recovery have cost \$170 74, or only \$56 96 each. The old cases, so far as is apparent, had they been brought under early treatment, might have been recovered, and not have remained a sorrow of heart and a burthen on the resources of their friends; the last, which were recent cases, are already sharing in society the duties of life.

In 1844-'45, 104 patients were discharged, recovered, from the Massachusetts Hospital, whose cases were *recent* at the time of admission; at the same hospital, the per cent. recovery in all recent cases was 89½ in 1843; 79 in 1846; 72 in 1847; 86 in 1848; *and of old cases*, 31½ in 1845; 28 in 1846; 17 in 1847, and 19 in 1848.

In the hospital at Augusta, Maine, the average *time* of recent cases recovered was 157 days; that of old cases recovered was 229 days.

This is a work not to be deferred in Alabama; it is not an obligation to humanity which can be cancelled at any future day as well as now. At this present time, the need is as imperious as the demand is obligatory; at this very hour, hundreds pine in gloomy confinement for want of its accomplishment. In support of my plea, if it needs support, I refer you to the numerous cases of which some of your honorable body are, I am confident, already cognizant. I would that an all-persuasive eloquence could lend a charm to my pen, which should penetrate and move you by a resistless force; but I mistake,—I cast reproach on your judgment, and utter a libel upon the impulses of your hearts, when I say that any eloquence or earnestness of persuasion is needed to quicken you to the performance of a high civil and moral obligation: one which every intelligent and informed mind will be ready to acknowledge; rather will you, rising above all political and narrowing influences, hasten upon the broad ground of common necessities and a common humanity, to assist in a work that will, as you recollect the benefits it has been your privilege to secure for your distressed fellow-citizens, pervade your whole lives with blessed and grateful recollections, and in the dread hour of entrance upon another existence, soothe you with the consciousness, that in this act, you, having "done justice and loved mercy," may be hailed "good and faithful servants."

I will not importune you, though my cause sanctions importunity; I will not urge you, for I cannot dishonor you, by distrusting the promptness and efficiency of your response to the prayer of this memorial.

Your State demands a Hospital; such an institution as shall fully answer the high objects aimed at in its establishment; one which, like the many that already do honor to our country, shall bear the most vigilant inspection; which shall, to employ the just language of the Trustees reporting on the New Jersey State Hospital, "combine all the influences which human art and skill can command, to soothe, to bless, and to restore the wandering mind. The State may proudly point to that asylum as a noble illustration of that charity, which born from above diffuses its blessings on the unfortunate." And I may add that there comfort and cleanliness, order and kindness; watchful care and sedulous fidelity, attend upon the

skill exhibited in the medical department and moral treatment of the patients. What a contrast is this to fetters and chains, to cells and dungeons, to filth, neglect and exposure?

Oh, you, who rejoice in the exercise of unclouded reason; who walk in freedom whither your will dictates; who eat in ease and plenty, and sleep in peace; provide for the coming of a dreary day, and an unresting night; prepare, if not for yourselves, for those who will lead their days in weariness and their nights in despair!

I will not detain you, gentlemen, upon this subject. Assuming your favorable action, a passing reference may not improperly be made, first to the choice of a *site*, which should be chosen within a convenient distance from some considerable town; ordinarily, from a mile and a half to two miles, is as far removed as is desirable; it should be in a section of country readily accessible from public roads and great traveled routes. It should enjoy a climate as salubrious as you can command, under all circumstances; and above all, there should be an unfailing supply of pure water, so abundant that no restriction at any season need be imposed on its use for all purposes. Many thousand gallons are daily expended in all large institutions. You will build for use, not for ornament; for comfort, not for show.

As to the amount of land to be connected with the establishment, not less than one hundred acres are absolutely necessary; two or three hundred are desirable; and four hundred should not be exceeded. The expense of sustaining the establishment will be essentially reduced by the cultivation of vegetables, fruits, and some grains; the raising of poultry, cattle, swine, sheep, &c., &c. The receipts for the board of the patients will also reduce the cost of the institution to a very small amount, compared with the vast, the immeasurable advantages, of which it will be the source.

You will choose to have your State Hospital inferior to none in the United States, in capacity to supply curative influences and commodious arrangements; and you will feel a noble, honest pride, in building up an institution so greatly needed, in the best manner possible, with all the assistance the experience of those who have led the way in this humane enterprise can give.

Commence your work now; hasten, for no time should be lost; hasten to gather up and repair the deranged mechanism by which healthful action is imparted to disabled minds; hasten to restore those whose sole hope of deliverance from life-long miseries rests on your present appreciation of the calamity which has smitten them. So far as human agencies are sufficient, you are their Saviors or their Destroyers; from one of these two positions, you cannot retire; from the responsibility of declaring for them here, in your halls of legislation, an intellectual life or death, you cannot shield yourselves. Nothing can absolve you from a duty imperious, above all others. Ordinarily, your deliberations reach not beyond the protective and pecuniary interests of your constituents; now with these is associated the high moral objects which I have endeavored to illustrate so plainly, that they could not be misapprehended; and so forcibly, that your heart and your judgment should at once yield an affirmative decision in favor of the petition of the memorial herewith respectfully submitted.

D. L. DIX.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., November 14, 1849.

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