

**Third report by the directors of the Asylum for the Blind : 18th January, 1830.**

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# THIRD REPORT

BY

DIRECTORS

## THE DIRECTORS

OF THE

**ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND.**

18th JANUARY, 1830.

GLASGOW:

PRINTED IN THE COURIER OFFICE,

TONTINE BACK BUILDINGS.

1830.

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THIRD REPORT  
BY THE  
DIRECTORS  
OF THE  
ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND.

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IT has been the object of the Directors, during the past year, to pursue the quiet but progressive course of duty. The machine has been completed, and all that remains is to direct its movements and extend its utility. They have the happiness to think that much good has been already effected; that much instruction has been communicated; that much improvement has been made; that much consolation has been imparted; and that much misery has been relieved. But the Institution is still in its infancy, and any thing that it has yet done must be regarded as the promise of its riper growth. In the meanwhile, the pupils have equalled every expectation. To look for preternatural progress in the blind, on the received opinion,

“That if one sense should be suppress'd,  
It but retires into the rest,”

is neither consistent with principle, nor justified by experience; but there can be no doubt that their mental powers receive a peculiar impulse, from a new world being to them suddenly called into existence, and from

the want of external objects to divert their habits of attention. The young idea may thus be taught to shoot with quicker vigour; and during the short period of this Establishment, the Directors have witnessed some rapid and pleasing proofs of attainment.

Since the opening of the House in March, 1828,  
 there have been admitted Pupils, in all.....38  
 of whom there have been dismissed,.....7  
 and there have died, .....3  
 — 10  
 —  
 leaving the present number, ..... 28  
 —

And of these there are--

Adults in the School of Industry,..... 15  
 Residing in the House, Boys,..... 8  
 Girls, ..... 5—13  
 — 28

On the 1st of January, 1829, there were in all 20;  
 so that in the course of last year, there has been an increase of 8.

The mechanical operations of the Pupils will at once be perceived from the following Table:—

	Twine.	Baskets and Mat- tresses.	Mats.	Rugs.	Furning.	Knitting	Total.
Men, ....	5	5	2	2	1	0	15
Boys, ....	1	5	0	0	2	0	8
Girls, ....	0	2	0	0	0	3	5
	6	12	2	2	3	3	28

The quality of the work, and the consequent appro-



bation of the public, will best be evinced by the following statement of the Sales:—

Twine, .....	£189	15	3
Baskets, .....	118	1	1
Mattresses, .....	168	9	11
Mats, .....	68	1	11
Rugs, .....	29	6	1
Turned work, .....	37	4	6
	<hr/>		
	£610	18	9
	<hr/>		

Besides these regular and principal branches of employment, there are lighter and more ornamental species of work by the Girls, which do equal credit to the taste of the Teachers, and the execution of the Pupils. It is only doing justice to both, that the particulars of the disposal should be detailed:—

Silk bags and baskets, .....	£10	7	0
Silk purses, .....	11	12	0
Stockings, .....	4	15	6
Hair Mittens and Nets, .....	10	9	0
	<hr/>		
	£31	15	3
	<hr/>		

These constitute an aggregate of sales, amounting to .....	} £642 14 0

Such has been the result of the *industry* exercised by the inmates. Of their progress in *education*, a practical demonstration was exhibited to the public by the Annual Examination on the 7th November last, and the Directors cannot perhaps better discharge their duty than by referring to the gratifying, though rather diffuse report which appeared in the Newspapers, and which will be found in the Appendix. They regret to add, that Walter Gardner, who so well represented



the Blind on that occasion, and who at the time obviously laboured under consumptive symptoms, is one of those who died in the Institution. On the subject of instruction, it ought to be mentioned, that the expense is greatly economised by the teachers being themselves workers, and receiving their remuneration from that source.

In next directing attention to the state of the Funds, it will be observed that the *Stock* amounted in January last, to.....£4151 18 3  
and is at present,..... 4090 3 9

so that it has sustained a reduction of... £ 61 14 6

This has partly arisen from the repairs on the Premises, which last year amounted to £52 14s. 6d.—but chiefly from improvements on the Washing-house and Rope-walk, which cost £122 6s.—making together £175 6s. Repairs, more or less, will always be wanted, but it is hoped they will now be moderate. The other outlay was found quite essential—the Washing-house having been much too small, and the Rope-walk, which is one of the chief sources of emolument, much too short. The space for the spinning is now lengthened 40 feet, and may be enlarged to any extent, by continuing it down the garden.

The *Expenditure* has exceeded the *Income*—the former having been.....£458 10 0  
and the latter,..... 396 15 6

being the amount stated of diminution in

Stock,..... £61 14 6

In forming a strict estimate, however, of the ordinary expenditure and income, the extra charges as above specified, ought to be deducted from the former;



and the extra sources of receipt, consisting of donations, to be deducted from the latter. The result will not be very different—so that there must still be a deficiency. With all the desire and with all the efforts of the Directors to make the Institution maintain itself, they fear it must still be some time before they can arrive at a consummation so devoutly to be wished. They owe much to the patronage of the public in the purchase of the manufactures, without which this excellent Refuge could not pretend to exist—but the continued contributions of the benevolent, till such period as the regular revenue is adequate to the necessary charges, are still respectfully and earnestly entreated.

It now only remains for the Directors to return their annual acknowledgments. To Mr. Alston, as first and foremost, they will leave it to the Blind themselves to say, in the words of Shakspeare—

“Evermore thanks, the exchequer of the poor,  
Which, till our infant fortune come to years,  
Stands for our bounty.”

Principal Macfarlan deserves a eulogium little less flattering. Dr. Panton has kindly continued his gratuitous medical attendance; the Glasgow Water Company have shown their usual liberality, in granting the supply of water for all purposes; Mr. Buchanan has set an example of a donation of coals from Drumpellier, which it is to be hoped will be followed by the other proprietors; and Mr. Fleck has obligingly offered the use of his rooms in the Black Bull Inn for the Directors. Of the official residents in the Asylum—the Matron and her Sister, who are indefatigable in their discharge of duty—Matthew Semple, who efficiently superintends and assists the male inmates—and of the Blind Teachers, who continue successfully to perform their labours, the Directors have to speak in terms of due praise.



# MINUTE OF GENERAL MEETING.

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*At the Annual Meeting of the Qualified Contributors to the GLASGOW ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND, called by public advertisement, and held within the Black Bull Inn, on the 18th January, 1830.*

BAILIE ROBERTSON in the Chair.

The foregoing Report having been read, and the Treasurer's Accounts submitted, the Meeting unanimously approved both of the Report and of the Treasurer's Accounts, and exonerated and discharged the Directors of their management. The Meeting also, upon the motion of the Chairman, seconded by the very Rev. Principal Macfarlan, unanimously expressed their obligations to Mr. Ewing, by whom the Report had been prepared.

The following Gentlemen were declared to be Directors for the present year:—

The Honourable the Lord Provost.

The Rev. Mr. Muir,	} Named by the Directors of the Glasgow Royal Infirmary.
James Wilson, Esq.,	
David Mathie, Esq.,	

William Hamilton, Esq., named by the Town Council.

Very Rev. Principal Macfarlan, named by the College.

The Dean of Guild,	} Named by the Merchants' House.
Wm. Smith, Esq.	

The Deacon Convenor,	} Named by the Trades' House.
Hugh M. Kay, Esq.,	

John Gibson, Esq., named by the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow.

Rev. Mr. Patrick Macfarlane, named by the Ministers.



James Ewing, Esq.,  
 Septimus Ellis, Esq.,  
 Baillie Fleming,  
 William M'Lean, Esq.,  
 Bailie Roberson,  
 Wm. Gilmour, Esq.,  
 Jas. Hutchison, Esq.,  
 Dr. Alexr. Panton,  
 Dan. M'Kenzie, Esq.,

} Elected by the Meeting.

The thanks of the Meeting were, upon the motion of Dr. Panton, unanimously given to Baillie Roberson, for his conduct in the Chair.

Extracted from the Records of the Asylum, by

T. CHRISTIE, Secretary.

ABSTRACT STATEMENT  
OF THE  
ANNUAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE  
OF THE  
**Glasgow Asylum for the Blind,**  
FOR THE YEAR 1829.

To Balance from last Year, . . . . £4,151 18 3

INCOME.

To Contributions from Individuals, . . £111 4 0  
 Donations, &c. . . . . 57 15 9  
 Boarding from Sundries, . . . . 34 13 0  
 Rent of Cottage and Garden, . . . 42 0 0  
 Interest from Sundries, . . . . 143 16 8  
 Manufactory—Profit on Work done by  
 Blind Persons at the Asylum, . . . 7 6 1  
 Total Income during the Year. . . . £396 15 6

£4,548 13 9

EXPENDITURE.

By Tradesmen's Accounts—sundry Repairs  
 during the Year, . . . . . 52 14 6  
 Extending Rope-Walk and Building  
 Washing-House, . . . . . 122 6 0  
 Incidental Charges, Sundry Petty  
 Charges, Garden Work, &c. . . . 40 16 9  
 Stationary and Printing, viz.:—  
 Printing Report, . . . . £5 5 0  
 Stationary, &c. . . . . 8 6 0  
 . . . . . 13 11 0  
 Advertising Contributions, &c. . . . 11 1 7  
 Salaries and Servants' Wages, . . . 89 9 0  
 Candles, Soap, and Coals, . . . . 14 14 2  
 Provisions, . . . . . 100 10 0  
 Furniture, . . . . . 13 7 0  
 Total Expenditure during the Year, . . . , £458 10 0

BALANCE.

Glasgow Bank Co. Balance, . . . . £860 0 0  
 Clyde Trustees Bill, . . . . . 3,000 0 0  
 Cash in hands of Treasurer and Matron, . 20 1 8  
 Stock of Goods on hand, and Debts con-  
 nected with Manufactory, . . . . 210 2 1  
 . . . . . £4,090 3 9  
 £4,548 13 9



# AMOUNT OF SALES IN 1829.

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Door Mats, . . . . .	£68	1	11
Baskets, . . . . .	118	1	1
Silk Bags, . . . . .	9	7	0
Silk Mounted Baskets, . . . . .	1	10	0
Stockings, . . . . .	4	15	6
Hair Matts, . . . . .	2	11	9
Mattresses, . . . . .	168	9	11
Turned Boxes, &c. . . . .	37	4	6
Twines, . . . . .	189	15	3
Nets, . . . . .	...	19	0
Hearth Rugs, . . . . .	29	0	1
Silk Purses, . . . . .	12	12	0
	<hr/>		
	£642	14	0

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# ABSTRACT—INVENTORY OF ARTICLES ON HAND.

Baskets finished of different kinds,	11	10	3	
Door Mats, do.	8	7	3	
Twines, do.	16	8	3	
Rugs, do.	6	5	3	
Sundry Articles,	88	16	3	
	<hr/>			121 17 3
Willows of different kinds, for Work,	£43	15	0	
Unspun Hemp,	6	5	9	
	<hr/>			50 0 9
Debts due to the Asylum by Sundries,				28 4 1
	<hr/>			£210 4 1



# CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS FOR THE YEAR 1829.

Sir Charles Ross,	-	-	-	-	£10	10	0
Moses Steven, Esq.	-	-	-	-	10	10	0
Thos. D. Douglas, Esq.	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Francis Brown, Esq., St. Vincent's, <i>per</i> Wm. Smith, Esq.	-	-	-	-	50	0	0
Wilson, Stowe & Co.	-	-	-	-	5	5	0
Jas. Glassford, Esq., London,	-	-	-	-	5	0	0
Thos. Leslie, Esq., Aberdeen,	-	-	-	-	5	15	0
Augustus Schut, Esq., <i>per</i> Dr. Cleland,	-	-	-	-	3	0	0
Andrew Robertson,	-	-	-	-	2	2	0
Jas. Murray, London,	-	-	-	-	1	0	0
Patrick Falconer,	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Graham Hutcheson,	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Robt. Brown,	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Mrs. M. Campbell,	-	-	-	-	1	0	0
Jas. Gray,	-	-	-	-	1	0	0
Cash, small sums,	-	-	-	-	2	19	0
A Fine for Trespass, <i>per</i> J. Campbell, Esq., Peterhill,	-	-	-	-	1	0	0
Cash in Lobby Box,	-	-	-	-	16	15	0
Net Proceeds of Exhibition of Flowers,	-	-	-	-	5	11	9
Glasgow Bank Sum of £21, lodged in 1824, for the Blind Asylum, with Interest,	-	-	-	-	24	7	6
Collection at the Public Annual Examination,	-	-	-	-	10	1	6
					£168	19	9



## EXAMINATION OF THE INMATES, &amp;c.

The Second Annual Public Examination of the Inmates of the Blind Asylum, took place in the Great Hall of the Andersonian University, on Friday, November 7th, 1829. The Hall was quite filled by a most respectable audience, chiefly Ladies. The inmates were seated on benches raised behind, and on a level with the lecturer's table, the elder being in the back seats, and the boys and girls in the front. The table was covered by specimens of the articles produced in the Asylum, such as baskets of all descriptions, door mats, hearth rugs, door rugs, table rugs, hair mittens, silk bags, stockings, turned snuff-boxes and bottle sliders, ritlecules, twine, and the apparatus used in teaching the pupils arithmetic. Several seats on the left of the table were occupied by the Lord Provost, Principal M'Farlan, several of the Magistrates, and the Directors of the Asylum. After an impressive prayer had been offered up by the Principal, he said that he had been requested to address them on the subject of the Meeting. The Institution, they were aware, was intended, by its benevolent Founder and Patrons, to relieve, as far as was possible, the helplessness of the situation in which they were placed, who suffered under the deprivation of one of the most useful, and, in fact, the chief sense which we enjoyed. For, in proportion to the value of the sense, so was the extent of the loss sustained when deprived of it, and equally so should exertion be made to supply the means by which the effects of the deprivation might be in some degree obviated, and the comfort and happiness, as well as the intelligence of the sufferers increased. He returned thanks in the name of the Directors, for the respectable attendance they had been honoured with, and hoped that the exhibition made would be found worthy of their countenance. Deacon Convener Alston then gave a brief account of the state of the Asylum. Since it was opened in March, 1828, there have been 35 individuals admitted—twenty-nine of whom are at present in the Asylum. At the last Public Examination there were 19 inmates; 13 have been admitted since, of whom three have left the institution. Of the present number 21 are males and 8 females. The former are employed in various occupations, such as the spinning of ropes and twine, for which purpose there are two Rope-Walks under cover; the weaving of Hearth and Door Rugs, for which two looms have been erected, and at which the Blind weaver succeeds to admiration;—Turning, both of plain and fancy work, such as Snuff-boxes;—the Weaving of Door Mats;—and the making of Baskets and Mattresses of every variety. The latter are employed in manufacturing articles of Needle-work, such as Silk Purses, Ritlecules, &c.; Stockings; Mittens; and other fancy articles. Portions of the day are set



apart for Religious Exercises; and for Teaching the Younger Inmates such branches of Education as can be useful to them; and the present Examination would show what experience they had made. R. A. Smith's Anthem "100th Psalm," was then sung with considerable effect, and with excellent taste. Several of the Children repeated two verses each of the 5th chapter of Matthew, and answered Questions from various parts of the Shorter Catechism, put to them by their Teacher, Mr. Lang (also Blind), with astonishing accuracy. The Teacher then exhibited their proficiency in Spelling, upon which, he said, from their manner of communicating, depended altogether on their success in Education. The Scholars exhibited many other proofs of what they could do, after which Walter Gardner, one of the inmates, in a very emphatic and forcible manner, addressed the Lord Provost as follows:—"My Lord Provost, circumstanced as we are, under so many privileges, we would beg to call to mind a grateful feeling of veneration, as a humble tribute due to the memory of departed worth, whose munificence contributed so largely towards the commencement of this valuable Institution. Nor can we but feel a deep and an affectionate sense of the solicitude manifested by Mr. Alston, in promoting the interests and welfare of the Establishment; the fatherly concern he has taken, and unceasingly takes, in the happiness and comfort of every individual connected with it; together with the unwearied attention of the very Rev. Principal M'Farlan, in inculcating on our minds the principles of Christianity. Objects of so many mercies, it behoves us to be actuated by every feeling which gratitude can dictate, towards the all-wise disposer of events, the giver of every good and perfect gift. We now return our sincere thanks to His servants, our benefactors, through whose instrumentality so many advantages are derived; and we will make it our constant study to render ourselves useful; our success being the principal object and ardent wish of our generous patrons, who have taken so active an interest in our well-being." This was received with the greatest applause. Mr. Alston felt highly gratified that his exertions had been productive of good, either by rendering the bereaved condition of the inmates more comfortable, or by adding to their means of usefulness and enjoyment. He could assure the audience that while the greatest attention was paid by all to their temporal interests, an equal care was bestowed on their more important spiritual concerns. The Lord Provost said, he could not forbear saying the progress the Pupils had made, reflected the highest credit upon all—on the teachers—the taught—and on those under whose charge and superintendence they were.











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