

Observations respecting lunatic asylums in Scotland.

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OBSERVATIONS

RESPECTING

LUNATIC ASYLUMS IN SCOTLAND.

To the Publisher of the Scots Magazine.

SIR,

By inserting in your periodical work, which has long had the credit of tending to support both the honour and interest of the nation, the fol-

lowing observations on Lunatic Asylums, you may do some benefit to the public; and will at the same time oblige, your constant reader,

A Scot.

Edinburgh, 30th June, 1810.

THE kingdom of Scotland has long been distinguished by the number of its charitable establishments, intended for the relief of the aged, the indigent, and the diseased. In every parish, without oppressive and ill-managed poor-rates, provision is carefully made for poverty, particularly when combined with sickness. The metropolis of Scotland is, in an especial manner, distinguished by a variety of humane and useful institutions. But it is a singular fact, that, to this hour, it has never contained any proper receptacle either for the pauper or criminal maniac; and it may almost be said, that there is not yet any commodious establishment of this kind, in any part of Scotland.

It has long been the earnest wish of the intelligent and humane to wipe off this national disgrace; and, accordingly, laudable attempts have lately been made, not only at Edinburgh, but also at Dumfries, Glasgow, and Aberdeen, and, in a particular manner, at Montrose, to provide both for the comfort and cure of the unhappy maniac; and there is reason to hope, that, by due perseverance, these attempts will be ultimately crowned with the wished-for success.

Both at Edinburgh, and at Glasgow, some progress has at least been made; which may, in no long time,

give rise to establishments in these cities, which will afford accommodation, for the cure of insanity, not inferior to any in the British Empire. Excellent plans for proper lunatic hospitals have been gratuitously presented to both these cities, by two ingenious architects, Mr Robert Reid and Mr William Stark; and in both cities liberal subscriptions have been received from the benevolent for beginning these much-wanted buildings. A sufficient sum, however, is not yet obtained at either; and the object of the present address is to recommend these institutions to every inhabitant of Scotland, whom Providence has blessed with the means of affording, without injuring himself, some aid to the relief of the wretched.

In the kingdom of England, this subject has so far engaged the attention of some enlightened patriots in the British Senate, that a proper provision for pauper and criminal lunatics has lately been the subject of investigation in the House of Commons. A very interesting Report from a Select Committee has been printed by order of the House. As an appendix to that Report, there is annexed the following plan for the division of the kingdom of England into districts, for the erection of Lunatic Asylums:

Plan

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Address to the Public respecting Lunatic Asylums.
 The plan for England has been examined, and it will be found that the plan for England is a very good one, and that the plan for Scotland is a very good one, and that the plan for Ireland is a very good one, which are best and most entitled to consideration on some one subject.

Plan for the Division of the Kingdom into Districts, for the Erection of Lunatic Asylums.

COUNTIES.	Population.	Population of each District.	Places of Asylum.
1. { Northumberland	157,101	476,309	DURHAM.
{ Cumberland	117,230		
{ Westmoreland	41,617		
{ Durham	160,361		
2. Lancashire	672,731	672,731	LIVERPOOL.
3. Yorkshire	858,892	858,892	YORK.
4. { Cheshire	191,751	444,536	CHESTER.
{ North Wales	252,785		
5. { Derbyshire	161,142	510,049	NOTTINGHAM.
{ Nottinghamshire	140,350		
{ Lincolnshire	208,557		
6. { South Wales	288,761	523,534	HEREFORD.
{ Hereford	189,191		
{ Monmouth	45,582		
7. { Salop	167,239	545,725	SHREWSBURY.
{ Stafford	239,153		
{ Worcester	139,333		
8. { Leicester	130,081	486,384	LEICESTER.
{ Rutland	16,356		
{ Warwick	208,190		
{ Northampton	131,757		
9. { Cambridge	89,346	143,928	CAMBRIDGE.
{ Huntingdon	37,568		
{ Hereford	96,577		
10. { Essex	226,437	483,802	NORWICH.
{ Norfolk	273,371		
11. { Suffolk	210,431	524,559	BATH.
{ Somerset	273,750		
12. { Gloucester	250,809	389,672	OXFORD.
{ Oxford	109,620		
{ Berks	109,215		
{ Bucks	107,444		
13. { Bedford	63,393	LONDON.
{ Middlesex		
14. { London, Westminster, and Southwark	534,752	EXETER.
{ Surrey		
15. { Cornwall	191,751	520,082	SALISBURY.
{ Devon	343,001		
16. { Dorset	115,319	457,935	CANTERBURY.
{ Wilts	185,107		
{ Hants	219,656		
{ Sussex	150,311
{ Kent	307,624		

This plan for England has been reprinted in a work lately published at Edinburgh by Messrs Constable and Co. entitled, "Observations on Hospitals for the Cure of Insanity;" and the editor of that work, has annexed the following remarks on a similar proposed division of the kingdom of Scotland;

"It is much to be regretted, that while a plan for the proper treatment of criminal lunatics engages the attention of the legislature, for the whole counties of England, no part of Scotland should have been the subject of consideration. It is, indeed, true, that the laws respecting the poor in the two kingdoms differ very considerably; and there are many intelligent members in both Houses of Parliament, who would be sorry to see all the abuses of the English Poors' Rates introduced into Scotland. This, however, can hardly occur as an objection to a proper legal provision being made in both kingdoms, and also in Ireland, for the unfortunate

criminal lunatic. It will be a matter of no small difficulty to prove, that the same humanity and the same precautions, which are best fitted for the unhappy criminal maniacs of Middlesex, of Yorkshire, or of Cornwall, are not equally well suited for those of Edinburgh, of Perthshire, or of Caithness;—and that criminal lunatics are not wanting in every county of Britain, is a melancholy truth. The editor, therefore, of the present volume, hopes and trusts, that he will be excused when he presumes to recommend this subject to the particular attention of those whose duty it is to watch over the laws and the police of Scotland in the Parliament of the United Kingdoms. And when he humbly ventures to annex to this report a Plan for the division of the kingdom of Scotland into districts similar to those proposed for England, he would fain indulge in the hope, that it will not be thought unworthy of the attention of a patriot statesman.

Plan for a Division of the Kingdom of Scotland into Districts, for the Erection of Lunatic Asylums.

COUNTIES.	Population.	Population of each District.	Places of Asylum.
1. SOUTHERN DISTRICT.			
Wigton,.....	22,918	191,032	DUMFRIES.
Kirkcudbright,.....	29,211		
Dumfries,.....	54,597		
Ayr,.....	84,306		
2. EASTERN DISTRICT.			
Roxburgh,.....	32,712	409,140	EDINBURGH.
Selkirk,.....	5,070		
Berwick,.....	30,206		
Peebles,.....	8,717		
Haddington,.....	29,936		
Edinburgh,.....	122,954		
Linlithgow,.....	17,844		
Stirling,.....	50,832		
Fife,.....	93,743		
Kinross,.....	6,725		
Clackmannan,.....	10,858		

COUNTIES.	Population.	Population of each District.	Places of Asylum.
3. WESTERN DISTRICT.			
Lanark,.....	147,796	460,419	GLASGOW.
Renfrew,.....	78,056		
Dumbarton,.....	20,710		
Bute,.....	11,719		
Argyle,.....	75,700		
Perth,.....	126,366		
4. NORTHERN DISTRICT.			
Angus,.....	99,127	540,770	ABERDEEN.
Kincardine,.....	26,394		
Aberdeen,.....	123,071		
Banff,.....	35,807		
Moray,.....	26,705		
Nairn,.....	8,257		
Cromarty,.....	3,052		
Inverness,.....	74,292		
Ross,.....	53,525		
Sutherland,.....	23,117		
Caithness,.....	22,609		
Orkney,.....	46,824		

N. B.—The population in the above Plan is taken from the “Gazetteer of Scotland,” published in 1803.

From this sketch it must appear, that the erection of proper Lunatic Asylums at Dumfries, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen, for the southern, eastern, western, and northern districts of the kingdom, is not a local but a national object, and an object of the utmost importance, at least for the cause of humanity. It is, therefore, earnestly to be wished, that the patriotic and humane in every part of the kingdom of Scotland would at present unite their endeavours for the accomplishment of this object, and that some benevolent and active individuals in every county, in every town, and in every parish, would exert themselves in promoting subscriptions for the Lunatic Asylum of that district in which they are situated.

In the Asylum at Edinburgh in particular, the building of which is already begun, no peculiar advantage will be possessed by the inhabitants of the city; but, like the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, the doors of the Asylum, under the same fixed regulations for all, will be equally open for the cure of the unfortunate maniac from every corner of the British Empire.

Subscriptions for the Edinburgh Lunatic Asylum are received by ALEXANDER BONAR, Esq. treasurer to the Institution, at the Banking-house of Messrs RAMSAYS, BONARS, and Co. Royal Exchange, where may be seen a complete list of all the subscriptions which have already been received for erecting this most necessary building.