

Report respecting the lunatic asylum of Edinburgh for the year 1818.

Contributors

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Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

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REPORT
RESPECTING THE
LUNATIC ASYLUM

OF
EDINBURGH,

FOR THE
YEAR 1818.

Presented by the Managers to the General Meeting of Contributors, held on the last Monday of January, in terms of the Royal Charter,

Monday, 25th January 1819.

Sir WILLIAM FETTES, Bart. in the Chair.

SINCE the Edinburgh Lunatic Asylum was opened for the reception of Patients in the year 1813, there have been admitted into it seventy-four unfortunate individuals; of these, thirty-two have been dismissed, either completely recovered from the mental affliction, to which they were subjected at the time of admission, or in such a state of re-convalescence, as to render confinement no longer

longer either necessary or proper. And the Managers have much satisfaction in being able to state to the Contributors, that continued observations of the effects resulting from the Asylum, affords them incontestible evidence of the benefit resulting from it, even on the very limited scale upon which it must at present be conducted, from only a small part of the intending building being completed.

They have, however, often occasion to regret, that from want of proper accommodation, they have been obliged to refuse admission into the Asylum, of many urgent cases, in very calamitous circumstances. From the want of funds, they have not been able to proceed with a part of the building which was begun some years ago, in the hopes, that aid from the benevolent would have enabled them to complete it. The completion and furnishing of this part would require a farther sum of five thousand pounds, in addition to what has already been contributed. But, if that money could be obtained, besides the reception of a greater number of Patients, even of some Mendicants, many additional conveniences would in different ways be acquired, tending both to the comfort and cure, of the limited number which can be admitted into the present buildings; particularly larger rooms for exercise in bad weather.

At the commencement of the year 1818, there were twenty-seven patients in the Asylum, and during

during the course of the year, seven more were admitted. Of these thirty-four, one died in the Asylum of a dropsical affection, four were for different reasons removed by their relations to other situations, and seven were restored to society with the world, in such a state of convalescence, that confinement was no longer considered to be necessary. The remaining twenty-two continued in the Asylum at the 1st of January 1819.

The Managers think it incumbent on them to report to the General Meeting of Contributors, that they have had every reason to be satisfied with the attention of the Physicians to the Asylum. The Medical Register affords incontrovertible evidence of the fidelity and humanity with which they have attended to the health of the patients, with a view to the removal both of their mental and bodily diseases. The Managers are persuaded, that in both these ways, the care and skill of the Physicians has been attended with the best effects.

Of the conduct of Mr HUGHES, the Superintendent of the Asylum, they are happy to make the same report as in former years. They have every reason to be satisfied with his humanity and attention in the discharge of every part of his duty. It is indeed true, that two patients, who have left the Asylum during the course of last year, have stated complaints against him. But after diligent inquiry, these complaints have appeared to the Managers to be totally groundless. Some of the
privations

privations of which these Patients complained, such as the want of the free use of pen, ink and paper on all occasions, of candles, and of razors, have their origin in the rules to which Mr HUGHES is subjected by the Managers; and they are convinced that these complaints arose solely from the patients alluded to, having left the Hospital before they were in a state of perfect re-convalescence. Other patients, completely restored to the use of reason in the Asylum, have returned to Mr HUGHES the most cordial acknowledgments for his humane attention. As far as the Managers have been able to learn, not one Patient has left the Edinburgh Asylum fully recovered from his unfortunate calamity, who has not gratefully acknowledged the benefit and the blessings he derived from it.

The conduct of the Matron, and of the under keepers, both male and female, during the year 1818, has been such as to merit the approbation of the Managers.

Subscriptions for the Edinburgh Lunatic Asylum are received, and receipts granted, by ALEXANDER BONAR, Esq. Banker, at Messrs RAMSAYS, BONARS, and COMPANY, Royal Exchange. It is the intention of the Managers to finish that portion of the building which is already begun, as soon as money can be obtained for that purpose.

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A
VINDICATION
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,

(As a School of Medicine,)

FROM THE ASPERSIONS OF "A MEMBER OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD."

WITH

Remarks on Medical Reform,

AND

AN APPENDIX

Containing copies of the Charter granted to the University
by King James VI. and of the letter from the Execu-
tors of the late GENERAL REID, announcing
his bequest to the University.

By LAWSON WHALLEY, M. D.

EXTRAORDINARY MEMBER OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL SOCIETY
OF EDINBURGH: SENIOR PHYSICIAN TO THE GENE-
RAL DISPENSARY, AND THE HOUSE OF
RECOVERY AT LANCASTER.

SECOND EDITION.

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1822.

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P R E F A C E.

IT is singular, that of the great number of European Universities, so few, even to the present period, have become celebrated for the pursuit of medical science.

So early as the middle of the seventh century, several Hebrew, Greek, and Latin professors of medicine, had settled at Salernum, in Italy; which from their residence soon became so celebrated, as to induce Charlemagne to found a College there, in the Year 802; at that time, the only one in Europe, and from which issued the book called "Schola Salernitana," dedicated to Robert, Duke of Normandy, eldest son of William the conqueror, who was residing there in A. D. 1100, to be under the care of the Physicians of this celebrated seat of medical learning.

This is the most ancient regular school of medicine in Europe.

The next in order, is the University of Padua, in the territory of Venice; the ancient Patavium, the birth place of the Roman Historian Livy, which was highly celebrated as a school of medicine, during the 16th and 17th centuries, and was resorted to by Students from all parts of Europe.

About the same period the University of Paris became famous for its medical learning, and at this day attracts a considerable number of Students;* but its lustre was greatly diminished by Montpellier and Leyden, which became the great points of medical resort, in the earlier part of the last century, and maintained their estimation until eclipsed by Edinburgh, which, about the year 1720, by the institution of an additional number of medical professorships, and presenting them to men of great celebrity for their talents and medical erudition, suddenly, not only equalled, but, towards the middle of the last century, excelled, in fame, the continental Universities, as schools of medicine: at present

* For many years it has been more celebrated as a School for Surgery than Medicine. The practice of physic in France, is nearly a century behind the state it has arrived at in Great Britain.

it possesses the high character of the first medical University in the world, and which it is probable, it will hand down unimpaired, to distant generations. The means adopted for the attainment of this splendid reputation, have been such, as in all human probability could not have failed in their object, viz. the appointment of men of the most splendid talents and great acquirements, to fill the professorial chairs. In proof of this assertion, I need only mention the names of Cullen, Monro, Gregory, Duncan, Rutherford, Home, Hope, and Hamilton.

The University of Glasgow, for the greater part of the last century, has cultivated medical science with great success, consequently, many eminent Physicians have been educated there ; and at this day, as a medical Seminary, it ranks, at least in this Kingdom, next to Edinburgh,

The University of Gottingen, from 1736 to about 1753, the period during which the immortal Haller enjoyed a professorship there, was highly renowned as a school of medicine, and attracted great numbers of students ; since which time, though it may be reckoned

among the Academies, where more than ordinary attention is paid to medical learning, still, it does not rank, in that respect, with the University of the Metropolis of Scotland ; though for several years it has been celebrated for the successful study of the languages of Greece and Rome, and some of the persons most eminent for classical literature on the Continent, have been either professors or students in that University.

During the last and present century, the Universities of Jena and Halle, in Upper Saxony, have paid some attention to the cultivation of medical literature, and the Emperor of Russia has endeavoured to lay the foundation of a school of medicine in the University of Wilna, in Lithuania ; still, the two former cannot be considered as first-rate medical Seminaries, and the last is quite in its infancy.

At the Swedish University of Upsal, some attention has also been paid to medical instruction ; but it certainly cannot be placed in the same rank with Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leyden, Padua, Montpellier, and Paris.

These are all the Universities, (at least that I am aware of,) that have been eminent for

medical erudition, and of these, only one or two at the same period, have been celebrated, which must have caused great inconvenience and expence to the Students of medicine, as vast numbers of them must, consequently, have resided at great distances from the chief seats of medical learning; and, at present, the University of Edinburgh may boast of having Students within its walls, who have resorted to it, from a distance of three and even of four thousand miles.

In page 13, I have stated, that the University of Edinburgh was founded in 1581, by Robert Reid, Bishop of Orkney, who gave the funds for erecting it; perhaps I should have added, that he did not carry his design into effect himself, as the College was erected by the Magistrates of Edinburgh, (with his benefaction,) I believe, after his death.

In page 35, I have said, that the medical lectures at Oxford, are very few in number, and scarcely attended by any Students; perhaps the lectures on Chemistry, form an exception.

In page 43, it is mentioned, that the library of the University was founded in 1580, by

Clement Little, Esq. Advocate; if the date of the foundation of the University, and the date of the bequest of the library are compared, I shall seem to have committed an anachronism, but the fact is, that the library was presented in 1580, a year previous to the date of the foundation of the College of Edinburgh, and it was kept, (as I find on further research,) in a building erected for it, by the town-council, (to whom it was presented by Mr. Little,) for some time, before it was removed to the College.

In the Postscript I have given extracts from the Apothecaries' Act of 1815, with some observations upon them. During the last Session of Parliament, an Act was passed to amend that of last year, but it has not made any alteration in the clauses I have selected.