

Copies of communications from the government, and transactions of the Board of Governors of the Belfast District lunatic asylum, with reference to the appointment of chaplains, from April, 1853, to March, 1854.

Contributors

Belfast District Hospital for the Insane.

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COPIES OF COMMUNICATIONS
FROM
THE GOVERNMENT,
AND TRANSACTIONS OF
THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
OF THE
BELFAST
DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM,
WITH REFERENCE TO THE
APPOINTMENT OF CHAPLAINS,
FROM APRIL, 1853, TO MARCH, 1854.

ORDERED BY THE BOARD TO BE PRINTED AND LAID BEFORE THE
GRAND JURIES OF THE DISTRICT.

BELFAST:
PRINTED AT THE NORTHERN WHIG OFFICE,
CALENDER-STREET.

1854.

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COMMUNICATIONS, &c.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS held in the Asylum, on Monday,
August 1st, 1853.

PRESENT :

JOHN SINCLAIRE, Esq., in the Chair ;

JOHN S. CRAWFORD, Esq., J.P.,

C. B. GRIMSHAW, Esq.,

JOHN CLARKE, Esq., J.P.,

RIGHT REV. BISHOP DENVIR,

DOCTOR NUGENT, Government

Inspector of Hospitals for the

Insane,

WILLIAM DUNVILLE, Esq.

The Two Physicians also present.

Laid on the table a copy of "The Sixth General Report of the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums on the District Criminal and Private Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, as presented to both Houses of Parliament, by command of her Majesty;" the same being for the two years ended 31st March, 1853, and thereupon it was

Resolved—"That, inasmuch as the Inspectors have not added to their Report on District Lunatic Asylums the entire of the proceedings of the Board, and the correspondence with Government on the Chaplaincy question, and of the Inspectors, as submitted to the Lord Lieutenant, that his Excellency be respectfully requested to have all the Documents published in a Parliamentary form."

Board of Governors held in the Asylum, on Monday,
September 5th, 1853.

PRESENT :

The Mayor of Belfast (DR. M'GEE), in the Chair ;

JOHN SINCLAIRE, Esq.,

JOHN CLARKE, Esq., J.P.,

WILLIAM DUNVILLE, Esq.,

RIGHT REV. BISHOP DENVIR,

JOHN S. CRAWFORD, Esq., J.P.

The Two Physicians also present.

Read—A letter, dated 18th ultimo, from Major Larcom, Under-Secretary, in reply to the Board's communication of last month, respecting the publishing of the correspondence, in full, of the Chaplain question, and stating "that the subject was still before the Privy Council, and that when it was finally decided, and the correspondence brought to a close, his Excellency would not object to its publication."

*Board Room, Belfast District Lunatic Asylum,
Monday, December 5, 1853.*

PRESENT :

JOHN CLARKE, Esq., J.P., in the Chair ;

JOHN SINCLAIRE, Esq.,
JOHN S. CRAWFORD, Esq., J.P.,
WILLIAM DUNVILLE, Esq.,
C. B. GRIMSHAW, Esq.,
RIGHT REV. BISHOP DENVIR,

REV. T. F. MILLER,
ROBERT BATT, Esq., D.L.,
ADAM J. MACRORY, Esq.,
JOHN M'NEILE, Esq., D.L.,
SIR ROBT. BATESON, BART., D.L.

The Two Physicians also present.

Read—The annexed official communications from Government, respecting the appointment of Chaplains to the Asylum, which were ordered to be taken into consideration at the next regular monthly Meeting, to be held on Monday, the 2d proximo—the Board being specially summoned for that purpose; and that, in the meantime, the communications referred to be printed, and copies supplied to each of the Governors.

By order,

ROBERT STEWART,

Resident Physician.

" Dublin Castle, 9th November, 1853.

" SIR,—I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to transmit, for the information of the Governors of the Belfast District Lunatic Asylum, the accompanying copy of an Order of Council, sanctioning the payment of an annual salary of Fifty Pounds to each of the Chaplains—Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Presbyterian—appointed to the Asylum, such salary, in each case, to commence and take effect from the date of appointment.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed),

" JOHN YOUNG.

" R. Stewart, Esq., M.D., Resident Physician,
Belfast Lunatic Asylum."

"By the Lord Lieutenant and Council of Ireland.

"ST. GERMANS.

"UPON reading this day at the Board a communication from the Under-Secretary, dated 4th March, 1853, signifying the approval of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of the appointment of a Protestant Chaplain, a Roman Catholic Chaplain, and a Presbyterian Chaplain, to the Belfast District Lunatic Asylum.

"We, the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council, do hereby order the payment of a salary of Fifty Pounds per annum to each of such Chaplains respectively, such salary to commence and take effect from date of appointment.

"Given at the Council Chamber in Dublin, the Seventh day of November, 1853.

"MAZIERE BRADY, C.

R. KEATINGE.

RICHARD MOORE.

J. W. FITZPATRICK.

JAMES HENRY MONAHAN.

"N. BALL.

JOHN HATCHELL.

A. BREWSTER.

RICHD. W. GREENE.

JOSEPH NAPIER."

"Council Office, Dublin, 15th Nov., 1853.

"SIR,—Adverting to the Order in Council of the 7th inst., fixing the salaries of Chaplains for the Belfast District Lunatic Asylum at the sum of Fifty Pounds per annum for each, I return herewith the estimate for the quarter to end 31st December next, in order that the Directors may insert therein the salaries of the Chaplains from the date of their respective appointments, as I cannot lay the application before the Privy Council until the salaries of all the Officers of the Institution shall have been provided for.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed), "THEOBALD M'KENNA, Clerk of the Council.

"The Manager of the District Lunatic Asylum, Belfast."

"Council Office, Dublin, 29th Nov., 1853.

"THE Clerk of the Council is directed to transmit to the Governors and Directors of the Belfast District Lunatic Asylum fifty printed copies of an Order of Council, made on the 14th ultimo, establishing Further General Rules for the Government of District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland.

(Signed), "THEOBALD M'KENNA, Clerk of the Council.

"The Governors and Directors of the
District Lunatic Asylum, Belfast."

"By the Lord Lieutenant and Council of Ireland.

"ST. GERMAN'S.

"WHEREAS by an Order of this Board, of the 27th of March, 1843, certain General Rules were made, framed, and established for the good conduct and management of the several District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland. And Whereas, by another Order of this Board, bearing date the 13th of April, 1844, certain alterations in the said Rules and Regulations were made.

"And Whereas it is expedient that certain further Rules should be added thereunto.

"Now We, the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council of Ireland, by virtue of the powers given unto us by the statutes in that case made and provided, do order and direct that the following further Rules shall be added unto, and form a part of, the said Rules and Regulations, made, framed, and established as aforesaid.

"1. That the respective Boards of Governors, the Managers, and Matrons of the District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, do afford every facility to the admission of the several Chaplains appointed thereto, in order to enable them to officiate according to their respective Creeds, and to afford Religious Instruction and Consolation to all patients, except such as shall be declared by the Physician to be unfit and incapable of understanding the nature of the Service, and of appreciating the effects of Religion.

"2. That the Chaplains shall attend on Sundays, as well as on other days appointed by the ordinances of their respective Churches, for Religious Service, which shall be performed at such hours as shall be agreed upon as most convenient to the Clergymen of each Church; and they shall, in cases of illness, visit at any time when noticed to do so.

"3. That controversial subjects shall be scrupulously avoided, both in public service and private visitations.

"4. That each patient shall, during his sojourn in the Asylum, be visited solely by the Clergyman of the Religion to which he belonged on his admission, and under the denomination of which he is registered.

"5. That each Chaplain do keep a separate Monthly Book, in which he shall state the duties performed; the number of visits to each patient; the number of patients and servants attending Divine Service; and the general results of his religious ministrations; with such other observations as he may think proper to make; and that he submit the same, when required, to the Inspectors, Governors, Managers, and Physicians of the Asylum."

"6. And we do hereby further order and direct that the Thirteenth General Rule,* made by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council on the

* Rule 13 stands thus:—"The Board to make regulations for the admission of Clergymen, to visit in that character any patients of their own persuasion. Frequent visits of the parochial Clergy to the Institution are particularly desired. The Board to make arrangements for the celebration of Divine Service before such of the inmates as their respective Clergymen and the Physician shall deem fit to attend the same."

27th of March, 1843, be annulled as regards the patients of the Religious Denominations of the respective Chaplains; but that the said Rule shall be in force as to all other patients.

"Given at the Council Chamber in Dublin, the Fourteenth day of October, 1853.

"MAZIERE BRADY, C.
RICHARD W. GREENE.
JOHN YOUNG.
JAMES HENRY MONAHAN.
L. PERRIN."

*Board Room, Belfast District Lunatic Asylum,
January 2d, 1854.*

PRESENT :

JOHN SINCLAIRE, Esq., in the Chair ;

SIR ROBT. BATESON, BART., D.L.,
ROBERT J. TENNENT, Esq., D.L.,
RIGHT REV. BISHOP DENVIR,
REV. DR. EDGAR,
C. B. GRIMSHAW, Esq.,
JOHN CLARKE, Esq., J.P.,

ROBERT GORDON, Esq., D.L.,
JOHN S. CRAWFORD, Esq., J.P.,
R. B. B. HOUSTON, Esq., D.L.,
BISHOP OF DOWN, &c.,
REV. T. F. MILLER,
WILLIAM DUNVILLE, Esq.

The Two Physicians also present.

The Documents from Government, before the Board last Meeting, and dated respectively 9th, 15th, and 29th November, 1853, having been again read—

Moved by John S. Crawford, Esq., seconded by Sir Robert Bateson, Bart.,

Resolved—1st. "That retaining as we do in full force our objections to the appointment of Chaplains to this Asylum, we observe with regret that the Lord Lieutenant and Council have proceeded to nominate three such officials, and to order the payment to each of a salary of £50 per annum."

Amendment by the Bishop of Down and Right Rev. Bishop Denvir,

"That the Rules and Regulations of the Lord Lieutenant in Council, in reference to the admission and services of the Chaplains, be strictly complied with."

Question put, and division taken upon the amendment—

Minority—AYES, 3, viz. :

Mover, Seconded, REV. T. F. MILLER.

Majority—NOES, 8, viz.:

MESSRS. GRIMSHAW,	MESSRS. GORDON,
“ DUNVILLE,	“ TENNENT,
“ CLARKE,	“ JOHN S. CRAWFORD,
“ BLAKISTON HOUSTON,	SIR ROBERT BATESON, BART.

For the original resolution—

Majority—AYES, 8. Division same as before.

Minority—NOES, 4, viz.:

BISHOP OF DOWN,	REV. DR. EDGAR,
RIGHT REV. BISHOP DENVIR,	REV. T. F. MILLER.

Moved by J. S. Crawford, Esq., and Sir Robert Bateson, Bart.,

Resolved—2d. “That though unaware of the legislative provision under which such appointments have been made, and such salaries ordered, we yet, out of respect to the Lord Lieutenant and Council, do hereby direct Dr. Stewart, the Resident Physician, to give to the Clergymen so designated as Chaplains every facility whether for personal interview or for the celebration of Divine Service; but always under his responsibility, not to permit their access to any patient or patients to whom he may deem it likely to be injurious, on the same principle as has hitherto been acted upon with respect to the parochial and other Clergy; and that he continue to act in the same manner with respect to the patients of other persuasions.”

Amendment by Bishop of Down and Bishop Denvir,

“That the Rules and Regulations, as set forth by the Lord Lieutenant in Council, bearing date October 14th, 1853, be complied with, and that the Resident Physician, Dr. Stewart, be authorized to give effect to the same.”

Question put, and division taken upon the amendment—

Minority—AYES, 3, viz.:

BISHOP OF DOWN, BISHOP DENVIR, and REV. T. F. MILLER.

Majority—NOES, 8. Division same as before.

Question and division upon the original resolution—

Majority—AYES, 8. Division same as before.

Minority—NOES, 3. Division same as before.

Moved by John S. Crawford, Esq., and Sir Robert Bateson, Bart.,

Resolved—3d. “That with respect to the document dated 15th November, 1853, and signed “Theobald M’Kenna, Clerk to the Council,” in which he states that he has taken upon himself to intercept from the Board by whom he is employed, the Estimate for the quarter ending 31st March 1853, and to return it to this Board, in order that we should insert therein the salaries of the Chaplains from the date of their respective appointments—we can only take this communication as one from himself, having no evidence of its having been sanctioned or even seen by the Council. That the Estimate be, therefore, returned in its original state to Mr. M’Kenna, in order to be submitted to the Privy Council; and that he be informed, at the same time, for the information of the Privy Council, if necessary, that this Board will certainly not make itself a party, directly or indirectly, to the taxation of the district, for a purpose against which they have repeatedly remonstrated as injurious to the best interests of the unhappy beings under their charge, and which has received the unanimous condemnation of the three Grand Juries, who are the financial representatives of the County of Antrim, of the County of Down, and of the County of the Town of Carrickfergus.”

Question put, and Meeting divided—

Majority—AYES, 8. Division same as before.

Minority—NOES, 4. Division same as before.

Moved by John S. Crawford, Esq., and Sir Robert Bateson, Bart.,

Resolved—4th. “That we consider it scarcely necessary to record the fact, that the Resolutions of the Board of Governors on the present question have not been influenced by any degree of political or sectarian feeling. They have been arrived at on a deliberate consideration of the subject, and

from an intimate knowledge of the local circumstances which, in the judgment of the majority, make the proposed experiment perhaps more dangerous here than elsewhere. They have been supported by the great majority of the Governors, including various shades of political and religious opinion, and they have, as we feel assured, the approval of the great mass of the educated and intelligent portion of the community."

Amendment by the Bishop of Down and Rev. T. F. Miller,

"That whilst we deplore the discussion which has taken place at the Board, in reference to the appointment of Chaplains, we consider that the Resolution now proposed is unnecessary and uncalled for."

Question put upon amendment, and Meeting divided—

Minority—AYES, 3, viz.:

Mover, Seconder, BISHOP DENVIR.

Majority—NOES, 8. Division same as before.

Question put upon resolution, and Meeting divided—

Majority—AYES, 8. Division same as before.

Minority—NOES, 3. Division same as before.

Moved by John S. Crawford, Esq., and Sir Robert Bateson, Bart,

Resolved—5th. "That the Memorial now prepared for an issue of two thousand and sixty pounds one shilling and two pence be adopted by this Board, and transmitted, through the Clerk of the Council, to the Lord Lieutenant in Council."

Amendment by Bishop Denvir and Bishop of Down,

"That the sum of £128: 1s. 6d. be added to the above Memorial, being the amount due to the respective Chaplains, from the date of their appointment up to December 31st, 1853."

Question put upon amendment, and Meeting divided—

Minority—AYES, 3. Division same as before.

Majority—NOES, 8. Division same as before.

Question put upon resolution, and Meeting divided—

Majority—AYES, 8. Division same as before.

Minority—NOES, 3. Division same as before.

Moved by J. S. Crawford, Esq., and Robert James Tennent, Esq.,

Resolved—6th. “That copies of the foregoing Resolutions, and Amendments, and Votes, be transmitted to the Lord Lieutenant in Council, through the Clerk of the Council.”

Passed *nem. con.*—Meeting adjourned.

Board of Governors held in the Asylum, on Monday, February 6th, 1854.

PRESENT :

The Mayor of Belfast (F. H. LEWIS, Esq.) in the Chair.

JOHN SINCLAIRE, Esq.,
SIR ROBT. BATESON, BART., D.L.,
ROBERT J. TENNENT, Esq., D.L.,
RIGHT REV. BISHOP DENVIR,
REV. DR. EDGAR,
R. B. B. HOUSTON, Esq., D.L.,

JOHN M'NEILE, Esq., D.L.,
C. B. GRIMSHAW, Esq.,
JOHN S. CRAWFORD, Esq., J.P.,
JOHN CLARKE, Esq., J.P.,
WILLIAM DUNVILLE, Esq.,
REV. T. F. MILLER.

The Two Physicians also present.

Read—The following copy of an Order of the Privy Council, received from the Clerk of the Council on the 27th ultimo, viz. :

“By the Lord Lieutenant and Council of Ireland.

“ST. GERMANS.

“UPON reading, this day, a letter from the Manager of the Belfast District Lunatic Asylum, together with the documents transmitted therewith, viz.:—A copy of the proceedings of the Board of Governors, assembled at a specially summoned stated meeting, held on the 2d January, 1854; an Estimate and Application for Issue (duplicate) for the quarter ended 31st December, 1853; and an Estimate and Application for Issue for the quarter to end 31st March, 1854.

“We, the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council of Ireland, do hereby order and direct that the application from the Board of Governors, for an issue for the support and maintenance of the Asylum for the quarter ended 31st December, 1853, be remitted to the Governors to be amended, by inserting therein the salaries of the Chaplains from the dates of their respective appointments, at the rates fixed by our Order of the 7th No-

member last, as already required by the letter of the Clerk of the Council, of the 15th November last, addressed by and with our authority to the Manager of the Asylum.

“And we do further order that the application from the Board of Governors, for an issue for the support and maintenance of the Asylum for the quarter to end 31st March, 1854, be returned to the Board of Governors, to be amended in like manner.

“And we do further order and direct that a copy of this Order be transmitted to the Board of Governors.

“Given at the Council Chamber in Dublin, the 23d day of January, 1854.

“MAZIERE BRADY, C.

RICHARD MOORE.

RICHD. W. GREENE.

FREDERICK SHAW.

“R. KEATINGE.

JOHN HATCHELL.

A. BREWSTER.

“A true copy.

(Signed),

“THEOBALD M'KENNA.”

Moved by John S. Crawford, Esq., and R. B. Blakiston Houston, Esq.,

Resolved—1st. “That this Board regret their inability, consistently with their conscientious convictions, to amend the Estimates in the manner directed by the Privy Council; and that the Privy Council be referred to the Resolutions passed at the last Meeting, to which this Board still adhere. That the Estimates be accordingly returned to the Privy Council in their original form.”

Amendment by Rev. Mr. Miller and Bishop Denvir,

“That in order to save delay, and secure to the Asylum the ordinary and requisite supplies, the Chaplains' salaries, as directed by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council, be inserted in the Estimates.”

Question put upon amendment, and Meeting divided—

Minority—AYES, 2, viz.:

Mover and Seconder.

Majority—NOES, 7, viz.:

SIR R. BATESON, BART.,
MESSRS. BLAKISTON HOUSTON,
“ CLARKE,
“ CRAWFORD,

MESSRS. GRIMSHAW,
“ TENNENT,
“ DUNVILLE.

Question put upon resolution, and Meeting divided—

Majority—AYES, 7. Division same as before.

Minority—NOES, 3, viz.:

BISHOP DENVIR, REV. DR. EDGAR, REV. T. F. MILLER.

NOTE.—Mr. Sinclaire declined voting at all; and Mr. M'Neile was obliged to leave the Meeting before any vote was taken.

Moved by Sir Robert Bateson, Bart., and Robert J. Tennent, Esq.,

Resolved—2d. “That there is at present due to the Bank, by this Asylum, £686 : 7s. 8d., and accounts unpaid to the amount of £406 : 11s. 11d. That the attention of the Privy Council be, therefore, called to the necessity of an immediate supply of funds, so that the Governors may be enabled to pay these debts, and to defray the current expenses of the Establishment.”

Question put, and Meeting divided—

Majority—AYES, 8, viz.:

MOVER,
SECONDER,
MESSRS. BLAKISTON HOUSTON,
“ CLARKE,

MESSRS. CRAWFORD,
“ GRIMSHAW,
“ DUNVILLE,
REV. DR. EDGAR.

Minority—NOES, 2, viz.:

BISHOP DENVIR, REV. T. F. MILLER.

Moved by Sir Robert Bateson, Bart., and William Dunville, Esq.,

Resolved—3d. “That the consideration of the tenders for contracts for the ensuing year be postponed, and no cheque drawn till the Board shall have funds in Bank.”

Question put, and Meeting divided, and carried as above.

Moved by C. B. Grimshaw, Esq., and R. B. Blakiston Houston, Esq.,

Resolved—4th. “That Dr. Stewart, the Resident Physician, be directed to transmit these Resolutions to the Privy Council, and to summon a special Meeting of the Board so soon as an answer shall be received.”

Question put, and Meeting divided—

Majority—AYES, 7, viz.:

MOVER,
SECONDER,
SIR R. BATESON, BART.,
MR. TENNENT,

MESSRS. CLARKE,
“ CRAWFORD,
“ DUNVILLE.

Minority—NOES, 3, viz.:

BISHOP DENVIR, REV. DR. EDGAR, REV. T. F. MILLER.

Moved by R. B. Blakiston Houston, Esq., and Robert J. Tennent, Esq.,

Resolved—5th. “That copies of the communications from the Government, and of the transactions of this Board, with reference to the appointment and payment of Chaplains, since the last Annual Report, be sent to each of the three Grand Juries, viz.:—for the County of Antrim, the County of Down, and the County of the Town of Carrickfergus.”

Question put, and Meeting divided—

Majority—AYES, 7, viz.:

MOVER,
SECONDER,
SIR R. BATESON, BART.,
MR. CLARKE,

MESSRS. CRAWFORD,
“ GRIMSHAW,
“ DUNVILLE.

Minority—NOES, 2, viz.:

BISHOP DENVIR, REV. T. F. MILLER.

At a Meeting of the Board of Governors, held in the Asylum, on Monday, March 6, 1854—

PRESENT:

The MARQUIS OF DOWNSHIRE in the Chair.

SIR ROBT. BATESON, BT., D.L.,
THE MAYOR OF BELFAST (F. H. Lewis, Esq.),
DR. NUGENT, Government Inspector of Hospitals for the Insane,
R. B. B. HOUSTON, Esq., D.L.,
JOHN CLARKE, Esq., J.P.,

W. M'CANCE, Esq., J.P.,
RT. REV. BISHOP DENVIR,
JOHN S. CRAWFORD, Esq., J.P.,
W. DUNVILLE, Esq.,
JOHN SINCLAIRE, Esq.,
REV. T. F. MILLER,
REV. DR. EDGAR.

The Two Physicians also present.

Submitted and read, the annexed letters :—

*“Belfast District Hospital for the Insane,
February 24th, 1854.*

“SIR,—I beg calling your particular attention to the enclosed copy of a letter, received this date, from the Contractors who supply the Institution with bread, in which they give notice that the supply, after this month, will be discontinued for the reasons therein stated; and to request accordingly, that you will be pleased immediately to inform me the course to be pursued under circumstances so very urgent and pressing. I may take this opportunity also of stating that the house is similarly situated with the several other Contractors, who, not having been paid their accounts as usual, for the month of January last, may cease at any time to supply milk, meat, &c.; and that parties to whom accounts in ordinary are owed, are becoming importunate for payment. And further, that according to the copies of the Resolutions of the Board, forwarded to you on the 6th instant, it will be seen that a special meeting was directed to be summoned when an answer arrived to them, but that none having been received, no meeting can take place till the stated monthly one, on the 6th proximo, so that, in the meantime, it is absolutely requisite for the support of the inmates, to know what is to be done.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ROBERT STEWART, Resident Physician.

“The Clerk of the Council, Council
Office, Dublin Castle.”

[COPY OF LETTER REFERRED TO ABOVE.]

“Newry, 23d February, 1854.

“SIR,—In consequence of the terms of our Contract having been broken through by the non-payment of our account for bread for the last month, we hereby give you notice that we will not continue to supply the Lunatic Asylum with bread after this month; and as we have no wish to put you to any inconvenience, we give you this notice, that you may make other arrangements for your future supply.—Yours very respectfully,

KIDD, BROTHERS.

“Dr. Stewart, Lunatic Asylum, Belfast.”

“IMMEDIATE.

“Council Office, Dublin, 28th February, 1854.

“SIR,—I am directed to acquaint you that an Order in Council was this day made for Issues to the Governors and Directors of the Belfast District Lunatic Asylum, for the periods herein set forth, viz :—

Issue for Quarter ended 31st December, 1853,	.	-	-	£898	1	8
Issue for Quarter to end 31st March, 1854,	-	-	-	1,037	10	0

In these Issues provision has been made for the sums necessary for the

payment of the salaries of the several Chaplains. The Lords of the Treasury have been requested to direct the Issue accordingly.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

“THEOBALD M'KENNA, Clerk of the Council.

“The Manager of the District Lunatic Asylum, Belfast.”

“*Dublin Castle, 28th February, 1854.*

“SIR,—I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to acquaint you, for the information of the Governors of the Belfast District Lunatic Asylum, that application has been this day made to the Lords Commissioners of her Majesty's Treasury for an advance of £1,935, 11s. : 9d. for the support and maintenance of the Asylum.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

“(Signed) THOMAS A. LARCOM.

“R. Stewart, Esq., M.D., Resident Physician, &c., Belfast.”

The Board considering that the words “issued accordingly,” contained in the letter now read of the Clerk of the Council, required explanation before any cheques were drawn, the granting of the money appearing to depend on the Board's ordering “the payment of the salaries of the several Chaplains,” which had been included in the Issues by Government, Dr. Nugent undertook, on his return to Dublin, to call the attention of the proper quarter to the above point, and communicate the result to the Board without any delay; and, thereupon, it was

Ordered—“That this Meeting, at its rising, do adjourn until Friday next, the 10th instant, at the hour of one o'clock, the Governors being specially summoned for that day; and that, in the meantime, the signing of cheques for the payment of the accounts of January and February be postponed till then, and also the consideration of the Tenders for Contracts for the year to commence on the 1st proximo.”

Sir ROBERT BATESON having requested information from the Physicians of the Institution regarding the effects produced on the inmates by the attendance of the several Ministers of Religion, who had been visiting the House since

January last; and the Board, on debate, having resolved that the question should be answered,

Dr. M'CORMAC, in reply, stated that his sphere of local observation was, of necessity, more limited than that of Dr. Stewart. He could not say that he had witnessed much, if any, change in the general condition of the patients during the period in which additional facilities for affording religious instruction had been furnished. In two of the inmates, however, to whom religious ministrations had been imparted, there was very distinct evidence of consequent injurious (maniacal) excitement. In the course of some subsequent remarks, Dr. M'Cormac stated that, however desirable it might prove to bring the insane within the sphere of just spiritual relations with the Deity, he did not think that collective religious ministrations necessarily had this tendency. To realize such relations in the poor insane would, in Dr. M'Cormac's opinion, require protracted personal attention, along with general curative influences judiciously directed, to each individual case.

Dr. STEWART said that, in answering the question sanctioned by the Board, he felt constrained to express his conviction that the effect produced on the patients generally, by the Sunday ministrations of the several Clergymen, had been prejudicially exciting, and not salutary.

Bishop DENVIR requested that Dr. Stewart would inform the Board of the cause of so few patients now attending the ministrations of the several Clergymen on Sundays; he particularly, however, referred to those of the Roman Catholic persuasion, not more than three or four, as he had been told, being present, whereas the number at first was much greater.

Dr. STEWART, in reply, stated that, for the first few Sundays, a comparatively large attendance of patients had been sanctioned by him, in order that he might be able to form a fair judgment of the effects of the celebration of collective worship by the different Clergymen; but that he found it

absolutely necessary, from the unsatisfactory results produced, in many cases, on the patients, in the discharge of his conscientious duty, and in accordance with the resolution of the Board, to limit the number afterwards very considerably.

Bishop DENVIR then inquired if it were not the case that, for a period of seven years, no parochial Roman Catholic Clergyman had been sent for to visit Roman Catholic patients, and if a Clergyman had not been refused admission to see a patient when he called for that purpose.

Dr. STEWART said that he could not charge his memory as to the time that elapsed in the special or casual visitations of particular Clergymen; he could, however, positively state, that during the whole period of his office, every reasonable facility had been afforded to Clergymen of all religious denominations for visiting patients who were at all fitted to receive such visits. That he remembered the circumstance of a Roman Catholic Clergyman presenting himself, some years ago, to visit a female patient whose mental condition was such, that it was deemed quite useless, or rather likely to be injurious, for a Clergyman to see her; the Clergyman, however, being very pressing, he was permitted to visit this patient, and did so. The patient shortly after died, without having shown the slightest symptom of rationality. Dr. Stewart added, that, with reference to another case which had been complained of, in which a patient died without having seen a Roman Catholic Clergyman, though having asked for one, he could only say, that he himself had sent his own private servant with the message to the house of Bishop Denvir, and had been informed that the delay of the Clergyman's arrival arose from Bishop Denvir's servant having forgotten to deliver the message.

In reply to the Rev. Dr. Edgar, about the Presbyterian Clergyman not obtaining ingress to the patients by the front hall-door,

Dr. STEWART stated that the front hall-door entrance was

exclusively for access to the Board-room, and to the private residence of the Superintendent Physician, such being the regularly planned and approved arrangement when the proposed alterations and improvements in the central building were directed to be carried into effect. That, for the general official purposes of the Establishment, two side-doors were in use—one at the male wing, the other at the female; and that, upon one occasion, the Roman Catholic Clergyman had been admitted by the private door, but only as a matter of courtesy.—Adjourned.

At an adjourned Meeting of the Board of Governors, held in the Asylum, on Friday, March 10th, 1854.

PRESENT :

SIR ROBERT BATESON, BART., in the Chair ;

MARQUIS OF DOWNSHIRE,
JOHN SINCLAIRE, ESQ.,
W. DUNVILLE, ESQ.,
JOHN S. CRAWFORD, ESQ., J.P.,
R. B. B. HOUSTON, ESQ., D.L.,

BISHOP DENVIR,
JOHN CLARKE, ESQ., J.P.,
C. B. GRIMSHAW, ESQ.,
ROBT. JAMES TENNENT, ESQ., D.L.

The Two Physicians also present.

Proceedings of last Meeting read and confirmed.

Read—A letter from the Paymaster of Civil Services, dated Pay Office, Civil Services, Dublin Castle, 6th March, 1854, stating that the sum of £1,935:11s. 9d. had been lodged that date in the Bank of Ireland, to the credit of the Asylum.

Read—A letter from Dr. Nugent, dated Dublin Castle, 7th March, 1854, stating that the issues, directed by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council on the 28th ultimo, would be forthwith placed to the credit of the Governors, to be drawn by them as usual.

Moved by John Sharman Crawford, Esq., and William Dunville, Esq.,

Resolved—“ That in acknowledging the receipt of the communication of the Clerk of the Council, dated February 28th,

1854, and the lodgment in the Bank of £1,935 : 11s. 9d. to the credit of the Governors, the Board feel called upon to say that their opinions on the subject of the appointment of Chaplains remain unaltered, and that they will not cheque for, or in any way take part in paying the salaries which have been allocated to the gentlemen who are designated as "Chaplains," and the amount of whose salaries, as it appears, has been included, without the application or wish of the Governors, in the sum now remitted."

Question put, and Meeting divided—

Majority—AYES, 7, viz.:

MOVER,
SECONDER,
MARQUIS OF DOWNSHIRE,
MR. R. B. BLAKISTON HOUSTON,

MESSRS. CLARKE,
" TENNENT,
" GRIMSHAW.

Minority—NOES, 2, viz.:

BISHOP DENVIR, and MR. SINCLAIRE.

Ordered—That a copy of the above Resolution be transmitted to the Clerk of the Council, to be laid before the Lord Lieutenant in Council.—Adjourned.

Board of Governors held in the Asylum, on Wednesday, March 29, 1854.

PRESENT:

Bishop DENVIR in the Chair.

SIR ROBERT BATESON, BART.,
C. B. GRIMSHAW, ESQ.,
JOHN CLARKE, ESQ.,

JOHN S. CRAWFORD, ESQ., J.P.,
JOHN SINCLAIRE, ESQ.,
WILLIAM DUNVILLE, ESQ.

The Resident Physician also present.

Read—The following communications from the several Grand Juries of the district, assembled at the late Lent Assizes:

" Secretary's Office, Downpatrick, 21st March, 1854.

"SIR,—I am directed by the County Down Grand Jury assembled at Lent Assizes, 1854, to transmit herewith a copy of a resolution, adopted

by them, with regard to the appointment of Chaplains to the District Lunatic Asylum at Belfast, and request that you will lay it before the Board at their next Meeting.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed),

“R. GORDON, Secretary of Grand Jury.

“Robert Stewart, Esq., M.D.”

“*Grand Jury-Room, Down Spring Assizes, 1854.*

“*Resolved*—That the Grand Jury of the County of Down, after due and mature consideration of the question involved, in the appointment of Chaplains to the ‘District Lunatic Asylum,’ at Belfast, are of opinion, that after the decided convictions expressed by the Medical Officers of the Institution, as to the injurious effects of collective religious ministrations on the patients, any assent to the measures ordered by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council would be most inadvisable, and against the restoration of the mental health of the patients; and as it appears, at the same time, by the resolutions of the Board of Governors, of the 2d of January last, that all requisite facilities, compatible with their unfortunate condition, have been ordered for the spiritual welfare of the inmates, the Grand Jury feel themselves called upon to express, in the strongest manner, their entire approval of the measures taken by the Board of Governors, to prevent what they consider an injurious establishment of Chaplains being forced upon the Institution.

“The Grand Jury consider themselves further called upon to record, though with all due respect for the Government, their great regret at the measure of coercion, adopted in a presentment for the salaries of the Chaplains, being forced upon them by the law, after they had declined to approve of the same, and they are of opinion, that, considering this presentment has not virtually received the consent of the County represented by them, the Governors of the Institution will act most properly in declining to draw checks for the payment of the salaries of the Chaplains; and, should the Governors adopt this suggestion, the Grand Jury will fully and cordially approve of their so doing, as, by such a proceeding, they conceive all responsibility will be removed from the Governors, and remain where justly due, should they be further constrained by law to pay the said salaries.

(Signed),

“WM. B. FORDE, Jun., Foreman.”

“*Belfast, 21st March, 1854.*

“SIR,—I have been directed by the Grand Jury of the County of the Town of Carrickfergus, to forward you the following copy of a resolution, passed by that body at the present Assizes.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant, (Signed), “ROBERT FORBES, Secretary, *pro tem.*

“Robert Stewart, Esq., M.D., Resident Physician,
Lunatic Asylum, Belfast.”

"*Resolved*—That this Grand Jury, having read and considered both the published minutes of the Board of Governors of the Belfast Lunatic Asylum, and the replies to the circular of the Lord Bishop of Down, are of opinion, that the appointment of Chaplains to that Institution, would be prejudicial to the patients therein, and for that reason, we decline to make a presentment for the salaries of such Chaplains, unless we are legally bound to do so.

(Signed), "JAMES BARNETT, for Self and Fellows.

"*Grand Jury-Room, Belfast, 29th March, 1854.*"

—
 "*County Court-House, Belfast, March 28th, 1854.*

"SIR,—Referring to your letter of the 16th instant, requesting me to lay before the Grand Jury of the County of Antrim, the copies of communications from the Government, and of the transactions of the Board of Governors accompanying it, I beg to say, that I complied with the request, and that the Grand Jury have declined making any presentment for the salaries of Chaplains for the Lunatic Asylum.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant, (Signed),

"JOHN COATES, Secretary to the Grand Jury, County Antrim.

"To Robert Stewart, Esq., M.D., Resident Physician,
 Lunatic Asylum, Belfast."