

Eighth annual report of the medical superintendent / Provincial Hospital for the Insane, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Contributors

Provincial Hospital for the Insane (Halifax, N.S.)
DeWolf, James R.

Publication/Creation

Halifax, N.S. : Printed by A. Grant, 1866.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/dudgsh3s>

License and attribution

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.

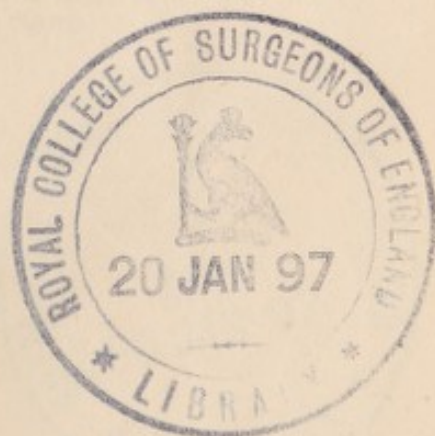


Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

PROVINCIAL
HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE,
HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA.

EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT.

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF WORKS.



HALIFAX, N. S.:
PRINTED BY A. GRANT,
PRINTER TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
1866.

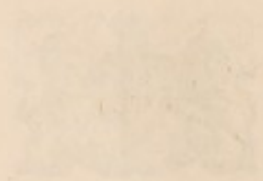
PROVINCIAL

HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

PRESENTED AT ORDER OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS



PRINTED BY J. G. BROWN
FOR THE BOARD OF MANAGERS

1880

PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE,

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA.

1865.

Commissioners of Public Works.

F. BROWN, Esq., Chairman.

W. B. FAIRBANKS, Esq.

JOHN PUGH, Esq.

Visitors, ex officio.

The GOVERNOR, The CHIEF JUSTICE, The PROVINCIAL SECRETARY, The
PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, The SPEAKER OF
THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, and the heads or authorized
representatives of all Christian Churches in the
Province.

Treasurer.

Hon. JAMES McNAB, Receiver General.

Medical Superintendent.

JAMES R. DeWOLF, M. D., EDIN., L. R. C. S. E.

Pres. of the Med. Society of Nova Scotia.

Storekeeper.

MR. GEORGE DOWNIE.

Housekeeper.

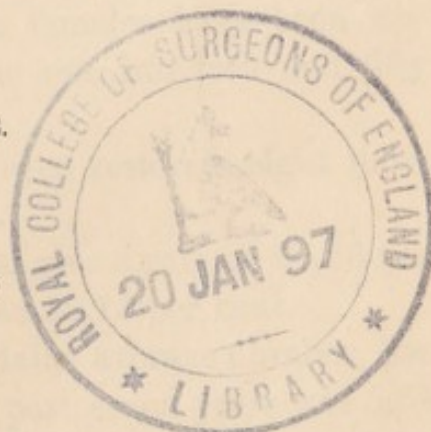
MRS. R. D. DICKSON.

Supervisor.


MISS SANDIFER.

Engineer.

MR. R. D. DICKSON.



PROVINCIAL
HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE
DARTMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
1883



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

ANNUAL REPORT
OF
THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT.
1865.

TO THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF PUBLIC WORKS :

GENTLEMEN,—

I have the honor to submit the Annual Report of the Provincial Hospital for the Insane for the year 1865.

The number of patients on the first day of the year was one hundred and fifty-four.

The admissions in 1865 have been forty-six, twenty-four males and twenty-two females, making the whole number under care during the year, two hundred.

The average daily number for the year was one hundred and fifty-five.

Twenty-seven males and twenty-three females have been discharged, leaving at the end of the year one hundred and fifty patients.

Of those discharged, twenty-eight have been restored, eight more or less improved, and fourteen have died.

The recoveries, reckoned on admissions, give a rate of 60.86 per cent. ; the average of seven years has been 39.13 per cent.

The mortality rate, reckoned on the daily average number, has been nine per cent. The average of the past seven years was 5.64 per cent. The average mortality rate since the opening of the Hospital, *reckoned upon the whole number treated* in each year, has been 4.58 per cent.

The total number admitted to December 31, 1865, has been three hundred and seventy-five, of whom two hundred and twenty-eight have been discharged, including three now absent "on trial."

TABLE OF MONTHLY ADMISSIONS FROM JANUARY, 1859, TO DECEMBER, 1865.

1859 to 1864.	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Admitted.....	29	27	13	25	31	36	31	23	35	21	36	22	193	136	329
Discharged.....	15	10	8	17	16	16	10	18	17	18	12	18	111	64	175
1865.															
Admitted.....	2	3	2	3	4	13	5	1	1	3	5	4	24	22	46
Discharged.....	2	3	3	1	3	6	7	3	7	5	5	5	27	23	50
Remaining.....	154	154	153	155	156	163	161	159	153	151	151	150	79	71	150

The number of admissions in 1865 is the same as in the previous year, the applications continuing far beyond the accommodation at disposal. Owing to various causes the discharges have been unusually numerous, leaving us, for the first time, with a smaller number on our list at the close than at the commencement of the year.

No less than nine of those admitted in 1865, have, at some former period, been inmates of the Hospital. This fact will serve to answer the objections of those who assert that we retain patients under care that ought to be at home. The probationary plan of discharge enables us to send away all doubtful cases, and out of twenty-four thus conditionally discharged this year, only two relapsed while "on trial." Another returned voluntarily for treatment of a bodily disorder, from which he soon recovered, and, fortunately, continues well. Two others who had formerly been patients here were anxious for re-admission, showing their appreciation of the advantage of Hospital residence.

There is to this day, in many of the rural districts, a surprising lack of information as to the means to be adopted to obtain admission of a patient to the Hospital. Directions on this point are given at the end of every Annual Report of late years, and these are freely distributed wherever information is sought. Letters of enquiry are continually being received, and an impression appears to prevail that when a selection has to be made, a preference is given to the wealthy class of patients. This, however, is not the case. Those who are likely to be benefitted have legally the first claim, and paupers (other things being equal) have the precedence, since the rich can afford to send their friends to other institutions.

Even when crowded to the utmost, we have never refused to admit cases of recent occurrence, whatever may have been their pecuniary circumstances ; and it is scarcely necessary to add that when it has become requisite to postpone the reception of comparatively hopeless cases, it has been most unwillingly done. The knowledge of the sufferings of the insane in jails and elsewhere throughout the country, often prompts us to admit patients who have very little prospect of ever being restored.

ALLEGED AGES OF ALL ADMITTED.

	1865.	1859-64.	Total.
From 5 to 7 years		3	3
" 10 to 20 "	3	17	20
" 20 to 30 "	13	88	101
" 30 to 40 "	15	72	87
" 40 to 50 "	8	65	73
" 50 to 60 "	4	33	37
" 60 to 70 "	2	20	22
" 70 to 80 "	1	12	13
" 82		1	1
Unknown.....		18	18
Total	46	329	375

The foregoing table merely serves to indicate the ages, as nearly as could be ascertained, at the time of admission. The previous duration of their insanity has varied, from less than a month up to nearly twenty years. Of this latter class, comparatively few are now admitted.

FORMER RESIDENCE, AS STATED ON ADMISSION.

	1865	1859-64	Total.	Population 1861
Halifax City and County	20	106	126	49021
Colchester County.....	2	21	23	20045
Cumberland	3	12	15	19533
Pictou	7	31	38	28785
Antigonish		6	6	14871
Guysboro'	1	6	7	12713
Inverness.....		2	2	19967
Richmond		4	4	12607
Victoria		2	2	9643
Cape Breton	1	15	16	20866
Hants	4	21	25	17460
King's	3	16	19	18731
Annapolis		7	7	16753
Digby		3	3	14751
Yarmouth	1	6	7	15446
Shelburne		2	2	10668
Queen's	1	10	11	9365
Lunenburg		13	13	19632
Newfoundland		2	2	.....
New Brunswick		10	10	.....
P. E. Island		2	2	.....
Barbadoes		1	1	.....
United States.....	1	10	11	.....
England.....		1	1	.....
Ireland.....		2	2	.....
Scotland		1	1	.....
Germany.....		1	1	.....
India		1	1	.....
H. M. Service		6	6	.....
Unknown	2	9	11	.....
Total	46	329	375	330857

The admissions from the respective counties of the Province, as shewn above, would lead to erroneous conclusions unless explained. The numbers tabulated do not indicate so many separate cases of insanity, but merely the greater frequency of admission from the nearer localities, the same patient having, in many cases, been admitted twice, and in some instances four times.

A much larger proportion of our inmates are of foreign birth than would here appear, one year's residence being sufficient to gain a legal settlement.

CIVIL CONDITION OF ALL ADMITTED.

	Married.	Single.	Widowed.	Unknown.	Total.
1859-64— { Males.....	68	109	4	12	193
{ Females	62	60	13	1	136
865— { Males.....	12	11	.....	1	24
{ Females	9	12	1	.....	22
1859-1865— { Males.....	80	120	4	13	217
{ Females.....	71	72	14	1	158
Total.....	151	192	18	14	375

While of the total here stated, the number of males preponderates largely, yet on reference to the number remaining in hospital at the end of the year, as elsewhere stated, the two sexes are found to be more evenly balanced, namely, males seventy-nine, females seventy-one.

FORMER OCCUPATION, SO FAR AS ASCERTAINED.

	1865		1859-64		Total.		Male Pop'lotion 1861.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
Barrister.....			1		1		147
Blacksmiths and Wives.....		1	3	1	3	2	1518
Barbers.....			3		3		18
Basketmaker				1		1	
Carpenters and Wives	2	1	4	1	6	2	4463
Clerks, Bookkeepers, & Wives			4	1	4	1	494
Collector of Customs.....			1		1		61
Cabinetmaker and Daughter...		1	1		1	1	147
Coopers	1		2		3		1145
Coachman and Wife.....			1	1	1	1	
Dressmakers				2		2	
Engineer.....			1		1		22
Farmers and Sons, Wives and Daughters	5	4	36	23	41	27	37897
Fishermen and Wives			8	1	8	1	7659
Gentlemen and Gentlewomen..		2	4	2	4	4	
Governess				1		1	
Grocer's Wife.....				1		1	
Hotel-keepers	1		1		2		139
Hostlers			1		1		
Laborers & Wives & Servants..	6	6	22	29	28	35	9306
Masons and Wives.....	1		5	1	6	1	636
Minister and Daughter.....			1	1	1	1	385
Miller and Widow.....			1	1	1	1	592
Miners.....			3		3		665
Merchants and Wives.....			8	2	8	2	1472
Miliner				1		1	
Physician & Wife & Student...			2	1	2	1	298
Priest			1		1		
Printers		1	2		2	1	115
Painters			3		3		208
Pensioners and Wives			2	4	2	4	
Paperfolder			1		1		
Pedlers			2		2		16
School Teachers and Wives...	1	1	6	2	7	3	864
Ship Captains, Wives, and Stevedore.....			3	2	3	2	
Seamen and Wives.....	3		16	4	19	4	5242
Soldiers and Marines.....			6		6		
Shoemakers and Wives.....	2	1	4		6	1	1976
Saddler			1		1		157
Seamstresses				3			
Tanner's Wife.....				1		1	
Wool Sorter			1		1		
Wheelwright			1		1		173
Washerwomen.....				4		4	

The numbers embraced in the foregoing table are too small, and the period of time too limited, to admit of any correct generalization. The re-admissions, too, being counted here as separate cases, would lead to conclusions not borne out by actual facts. As tending to correct erroneous calculations, the figures from the last census have been once more introduced.

TABLES SUGGESTED BY HER MAJESTY'S SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES, 1864, FOR PUBLICATION IN REPORTS OF ALL COLONIAL ASYLUMS.

Table 1.—ADMISSIONS AND DISCHARGES 1865, WITH RESULTS.

	Numbers remaining on Jan. 1, 1865.	Admitted during the year.	Average inmates 1865.	Died	Discharged.			Average stay of those discharged 1865.	Number who, having entered before 1865, still remain.
					Cured.	Relieved.	Unimproved.		
Males ...	82	24	81	9	12	5	1	y. m. d. 1 3 23	69
F'males	72	22	74	5	16	2	.....	1 1 28	57
Total	154*	46	155	14	28	7	1	1 2 25	126

* Four were absent on trial—two males and two females.

Table 2.—FORM OF DISEASE IN RELATION TO RESULT, 1865.

	Remained over from 1864.		Admitted 1865.		Discharged.				Died.		Average stay of those who died in 1865.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	Recovered.		Relieved.		M.	F.	M.	F.
					M.	F.	M.	F.				
Mania	24	22	8	9	8	8	2	1	1	2	d.	16
Melancholia	17	9	7	7	2	7	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	.....
Dementia	21	22	5	3	.....	.....	.....	.....	3	2	yrs. m.	4
General Paralysis..	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	.....
Epilepsy	6	3	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	1	2	.....
Other forms.....	10	14	4	2	2	1	3	1	1	.....	.....	.....
Total.....	80	70	24	22	12	16	5	2	9	5	.....	.....

Table 3.—OBITUARY FOR THE YEAR 1865.

Number in Register.	Sex.	Date of last Admission and of Death.	Age at Death, and Civil Condition before Admission.	Mental and Bodily state on Admission.	Duration and Cause of Disorder.	Assigned Cause of Death.	Post Mortem.
329	M.	December 31, 1864..	60. Widower.	Ordinary.	y. m. d. 1	Suicide.	Examinations made where practicable. Space in table inadequate to note results. The greater number of the deceased were interred by their friends.
271	M.	January 1, 1865.....	82. Widower.	Partial Paralysis—Feeble.	Loss of wife. 1 4 5	Senile Dementia.	
137	M.	November 4, 1863...	49. Married.	Paresis—Continually drowsy.	4 3 5	Paresis.	
299	M.	March 9, 1865.....	34. Married.	Mania.	... 11 26	Phthisis.	
103	F.	February 9, 1861 ...	50. Single.	Epileptic Mania.	Fright. 4 9 17	Epilepsy.	
346	F.	May 14, 1865	24. Single.	Completely prostrate from inanition.	... .. 18	Acute Mania.
309	F.	September 3, 1860...	23. Married.	Puerperal Mania.	Too close study. 1 ... 11	Enteritis.	
*40	M.	June 2, 1865.....	34. Single.	Mania.	Family Trouble. 6 2 13	Epilepsy.	
262	F.	July 13, 1865.....	— Single.	Dementia.	12 yrs. before adm'n 1 11 3	Phthisis.	
167	M.	May 7, 1859	44. Single.	Dementia.	4 1 22	Pulmonary Con- gestion. Fever.	
*251	M.	July 20, 1865.....	.....	Dementia.	10 yrs. before adm'n 2 5 7	Epilepsy.
243	M.	September 8, 1863...	21. Single.	Mania.	1 4 10	Fever.	
214	F.	August 11, 1865	62. Married.	Dementia.	Hereditary. ... 8 0	Perineal Abscess.	
340	M.	August 14, 1861	52. Married.	Dipsomania.			
		October 6, 1865.....					
		May 22, 1863					
		October 29, 1865.....					
		July 2, 1864.....					
		November 12, 1865..					
		July 15, 1852.....					
		December 8, 1865 ...					
		May 1, 1865					
		December 31, 1865..					

* Nos. 40 and 251 were Negroes.

The column "Duration of Disorder" contains in figures the period of Hospital residence.

DISCHARGED.

Of the two hundred under care in 1865, fifty have been discharged; being not only a larger number than in any previous year, but a greater proportion than usual of those under treatment.

The recoveries and deaths have both been in excess of the former average; the first, owing to the majority of those admitted this year having been less than a twelvemonth insane; the last, it is to be feared, attributable, in some measure at least, to the crowded state of the hospital.

Twenty-eight have been discharged restored, and after various periods of trial, have all continued well. Contrary to our usual experience, more women have recovered than men, namely, sixteen of the former to twelve of the latter.

Seven were discharged improved, and two of these relapsed, one of whom was re-admitted and eventually recovered. Three others were re-admitted; two for want of proper care at home, and one for a temporary bodily disorder.

One only was removed unimproved, and this an idiotic lad.

There are at all times a certain number on our list whom the Superintendent would gladly transfer to the care of their friends, provided these could be induced to give them a trial at home. They are so far restored as to be able to leave if judiciously and kindly treated, but would inevitably relapse if left to their own resources.

Fourteen deaths have occurred. One on the first day of the year from suicide, the day after admission. One, aged seventy-seven, died of Senile Dementia; one of Paresis; one of Acute Mania; one of Enteritis; one of Perineal Abscess; one of Pulmonary Congestion; two of Phthisis; two of Fever; and three of Epilepsy.

These are this year for the first time tabulated in an obituary, as recommended in the circular of January, 1864, from the Colonial Office.

Continued fever has prevailed in several of the wards, and among the domestics, attendants, and officers of the institution. These last suffered severely in the Summer from Common or English Cholera, from which the patients were fortunately exempt.

EXTENSION OF THE HOSPITAL.

Through the liberality of the Legislature, a grant was passed at its last session enabling the Government to add largely to the present building. Having in former years strongly advocated Hospital Extension, it affords your Superintendent great pleasure to be able to announce a satisfactory commencement of this important work.

The centre building and two sections of the North wing are under contract. The excavation for the basement has been begun, and materials are being actively collected on the grounds for early constuction on the opening of Spring.

The addition now being built will give room for ninety additional patients, besides affording more space for those already in Hospital by vacating the apartments at present occupied by officers of the institution.

The original plan is adhered to, except that a considerable portion in the rear of the centre building is omitted—the necessity for this portion being obviated by the present structure, in which the cooking, washing, baking, &c., are carried on.

It is anticipated that the work now commenced will be completed in two years.

IMPROVEMENTS.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee of Assembly on Humane Institutions, extensive improvements have been made on the grounds this past season.

A gravelled road of easy grade has been made from the Hospital wharf to the brow of the hill on the North boundary, and a brick drain of ample dimensions, about twelve hundred feet in length, has been constructed in the most substantial manner, leading from the rear of the boiler house to the harbour, opening at half tide. This will prove a most important addition to our former drainage, and will serve also for the new wing, and for further extension as well.

In close proximity to the Boiler House a new coal depot has been built, capable of holding nearly four hundred chaldrons. Besides protecting the coal from rain and snow, to which it was formerly exposed, this building affords space for storage of meat, flour, butter, and other supplies, and serves to shield from the weather all the vehicles in use about the establishment, besides giving room for workshops and for other purposes.

Further progress has been made this year in planting shade and ornamental trees, and otherwise improving the grounds. An unsightly precipitous bank on the harbour side has been sloped off and sown in grass. An additional piece of land has been prepared for cultivation in front of the Hospital and thoroughly trenched. The new field in the rear has also been much enlarged and effectually drained.

An orchard house for the cultivation of peaches, grapes, &c., has been built by your Superintendent on the slope overlooking the kitchen garden.

OCCURRENCES OF THE YEAR.

The Hospital has been honored by visits from His Excellency Sir R. Graves MacDonnell, who manifested a warm interest in its extension. He was accompanied on one occasion by E. A. Meredith, Esq., Chairman of Board of Inspectors of Prisons, Asylums, &c., Canada, who was pleased to signify his cordial approval of our arrangements and appliances. Medical officers of other Asylums have also favoured us with visits of encouragement. The practical sympathy and valuable advice of professional gentlemen versed in the specialty are of essential service.

Through kindness of Dr. J. Bernard Gilpin, and Dr. A. J. Cowie, of Halifax, in doing duty for your Superintendent, (which he desires publicly and thankfully to acknowledge,) he was enabled to attend the Annual Meeting of the Association of Superintendents of American Hospitals for the Insane, held at Pittsburg, Western Pennsylvania, in June last. The opportunity of visiting other similar institutions and of frequent consultation with leading men in the specialty, was highly appreciated; and the month's leave kindly granted by your Board for this purpose is gratefully acknowledged, as is also the uniform courtesy and support manifested on all occasions.

The American Institutions for the Insane are patterns of cleanliness, neatness, and good order, and are highly creditable to the several States in which they are situated. The late war, now happily at an end, does not appear as yet to have added to the number of inmates in their Asylums. Doubtless, this effect of so serious a conflict will be clearly manifest in future years.

We have admitted two voluntary patients this year on the male side; one whose insanity (in a legal sense) is very doubtful; and another who has been temporarily received pending the decision as

to his real mental condition. These are by no means desirable inmates of an Hospital, but it is not our province to exclude any because they are troublesome or disagreeable. Probably the doubt now hanging over these cases will eventually be removed by such unmistakeable evidence of insanity as will set the matter quite at rest.

Among the females, we have a case of moral perversion, scarcely eligible here, and yet with strong claims on our sympathy. The patient is cheerful, industrious, and well-behaved, manifesting no aberration here; but so outrageous in her conduct and language, both at home and at school, as to have been considered entirely beyond endurance.

The number of private patients bears a fair proportion to the total number of admissions. Every rank in society is liable to insanity, which, like death, is no respecter of persons. Our table headed "Previous Occupation," shows that we have been called to admit persons of every grade. It has been our aim to adapt the Hospital to the mixed character of its daily population.

One of the noteworthy occurrences of the year, was the short supply of water from Maynard's Lake during the hot months of Summer. It failed to rise to the hot water tank in the attic, and consequently we were for some time deprived of our usual supply for bathing purposes. The discovery and repair of a small leak near the Boiler House, had a marked effect in giving an increased pressure to the water, so that it rose to the cistern as before, and has continued to flow ever since.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

Year after year we have the gratification of returning thanks for the numerous kindly expressions of interest in the insane. Without attempting to give undue prominence to the claims upon public sympathy to which the helplessness of this class entitles them, we desire to record their lasting gratitude for favours bestowed, and their correct appreciation of generous acts.

The inmates have this year been favoured, for the first time, with an excursion to Windsor, a distance of forty-five miles. The Railway Commissioner, A. Longley, Esq., very kindly placed two passenger cars at their disposal; and John R. Handley, Esq., with his customary liberality, not only provided a steamer to convey the party to and from the station, but ordered a substantial dinner for the excursionists at King's Hotel. The treat was indeed a rich

one, and was enjoyed by a large number of the Household, no less than sixty having joined in the festivities of the day.

Several musical entertainments have been kindly given during the past year. The first by the "Rosebud Band of Hope"—singing and recitations; next by Miss Pilsbury (now Mrs. Bourinot) and friends; another by Miss Nordbeck and friends; and one by the celebrated Hoffer family. For these we desire to tender the gratitude of the whole Household.

An interesting lecture on the "Pilgrim's Progress," by Rev. John Lathern, and an enlivening reading (the "Wedding Breakfast" and other selections) by F. Sturges, Esq., also demand our thankful acknowledgment. We are likewise under obligation for recitations, &c., to Dr. J. Stewart of H. M. S. Sphinx, formerly of the Belfast District Hospital for the Insane.

We are indebted to the Lord Bishop for a donation of Prayer Books; and to James H. Thorne, Esq., Deputy Provincial Secretary, and Henry W. Johnston, Esq., for copies of the Revised Statutes, Journals of Assembly, and other public documents; and for Church's large Map of Halifax County.

John R. Handley, Esq., besides furnishing the treat at Windsor, already alluded to, has kindly continued to forward regularly the "Evening Mail," "Illustrated London News," and "Punch," with occasional copies of other papers.

We are under renewed obligation to the Press. The "Presbyterian Witness," the "Christian Messenger," the "Provincial Wesleyan," the "Acadian Recorder," the "Morning Journal," the "British Colonist," the "Morning Chronicle," the "Evening Express," the "Sun and Advertiser," the "Halifax Reporter," the "Halifax Citizen," the "Abstainer," the "Eastern Chronicle" (New Glasgow), and the "Colonial Standard" (Pictou), are regularly received as heretofore. To these the "Western Record" (Bridgetown), "Ross's Weekly" (Charlottetown, P. E. I.), and recently the "Acadian" (Wolfville), have kindly been added. As stated in former reports, this continued attention on the part of the Press is very highly appreciated. The papers are eagerly enquired for, and the greatest interest is shown in learning the news of the day, domestic and foreign.

To James Wilson, Esq., late of Newfoundland, we are indebted for a young seal, a most interesting object, (kindly conveyed by Capt. Gulliford); and to C. D. Boggs, Esq., of Boston, for two pairs of Gold Fish, with Globe.