

First annual report, for 1865 / Newcastle-upon-Tyne Borough Pauper Lunatic Asylum.

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NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE

BOROUGH

Pauper Lunatic Asylum.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT,

FOR 1865.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE :

PRINTED AT THE DAILY JOURNAL OFFICE, GREY STREET, BY A. AND J. M. CARR.

1866.

90

A LIST
OF THE
COMMITTEE OF VISITORS
FOR THE YEAR 1865.

Committee :

1. THOMAS HEDLEY, Esq., CHAIRMAN.
2. RALPH DODDS, Esq.
3. ANTHONY NICHOL, Esq.
4. ROBERT PLUMMER, Esq.
5. JOSEPH POLLARD, Esq.
6. JOHN BLACKWELL, Esq.
7. EDWARD NATHANIEL GRACE, Esq.

Clerk to Committee :


JOHN ATKINSON, SOLICITOR, 86, PILGRIM STREET, NEWCASTLE.

Medical Superintendent :

J. CRICHTON BROWNE, M.D.

Chaplain :

REV. J. J. DAY, M.A.



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TO HER MAJESTY'S JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

FOR THE

Borough and County of Newcastle-upon-Tyne,

IN SPECIAL MEETING ASSEMBLED,

At the Clerk's Office, on Thursday, the 4th day of January, 1866.

THE Committee of Visitors of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Temporary Borough Pauper Lunatic Asylum, at Bensham, have, in obedience, and pursuant to the Statute 16th and 17th Vic., c. 97, sec. 62, to make their first Annual Report to the Bench, upon the following points, viz. :—

1st.—As to the state and condition of the asylum.

The Committee have to report that, as the Committee of Visitors of the Durham County Asylum refused to renew the Contract for the accommodation of the Borough Patients in their Asylum, at Sedgefield, they, with the sanction of the Commissioners in Lunacy, and of the Court of Quarter Sessions of the Borough, agreed with Mr. Frederick Glenton, to take the Bensham Asylum on lease, under the 11th sec. of the Lunacy Acts Amendment Act, 1862, as a temporary asylum for the Borough, at the yearly rental of £400, until the proposed new asylum is erected.

The Committee had then to consider the appointment of the superior officers of the asylum, and the salaries which should be attached to each office, and as the Commissioners recommended that the staff to be appointed should, if possible, be organized so as to be the future officers of the proposed new asylum, they determined that there should be a resident medical superintendent, whose salary should be £200 a year; with furnished apartments, &c. ; a matron at £25 a year; and a clerk and steward at £60 a year salary, with furnished apartments, board and washing.

After advertising in the usual manner for candidates, the following appointments were made, viz. :—James Crichton Browne, M.D., Assistant Physician to the Warwick County Lunatic Asylum, to be resident medical superintendent; Miss Emma Chapman, of Northampton, to be matron and housekeeper; and Robert Scott, to be clerk and steward. The Rev. John J. Day, Incumbent of Bensham, was afterwards appointed non-resident chaplain, with a salary of £25 a year; and the other necessary attendants, nurses, and domestic servants, were also subsequently appointed by the medical superintendent.

The Committee entered upon the asylum in May last, and immediately commenced to have the premises put into a habitable state of repair, and also to procure the furniture, clothing, and other household effects, requisite for the reception of the patients, on the 24th day of June, on their discharge from Sedgefield Asylum.

The cost of the furniture and clothing has necessarily been considerable, but not more than was expected to supply the requirements of so large an establishment; the furniture procured is all good and substantial and will be removable to the new asylum.

The asylum was ready for the reception of patients on the 24th June last, on which day 26 males and 28 females (54 patients) were received from Sedgefield Asylum, and on the 18th day of July, 21 males and 21 females (42 patients) were received from Mr. Garbutt's Asylum, at Dunston, and the number of patients has continued increasing, and there are now 56 males and 54 females, in all 110 patients in the asylum

2nd.—As to its sufficiency for the proper accommodation of the number of lunatics for whom it may be requisite to provide accommodation.

The asylum will only accommodate about 90 patients, and it is now much over-crowded, the Committee are therefore altering the Farm Buildings on the site purchased for the proposed new asylum at Coxlodge, so as to provide accommodation for about 30 patients, and thus relieve the over-crowding of the asylum. Only the harmless chronic cases will be selected, and sent there under the charge of experienced attendants, and be visited by the medical superintendent daily, the male patients will be usefully employed in the cultivation of the land, and laying out of the grounds, and the females in the laundry. And we consider that the asylum, with this additional building, will be sufficient for the proper accommodation of the number of patients, in every respect, until the new asylum is completed.

3rd.—As to the management of the asylum.

The asylum has been managed by Dr. James Crichton Browne, the medical superintendent, and the officers under him, and we have every reason to be satisfied with their services, and we consider great credit is due to Dr. Browne, for the energy he has displayed in the management of the asylum, and in the organization of the staff of attendants, under very great disadvantages, owing to the defective nature of the premises. The house and all the apartments are clean and orderly, and the inmates are employed according to their several tastes and abilities. The asylum has been also conducted to the satisfaction of the Commissioners

in Lunacy, who visited the institution on the 13th day of November last, as will be seen from their report, which is appended hereto.

A set of rules, for the government of the asylum, are being prepared, and will shortly be submitted to the Secretary of State for his sanction.

The committee visit the asylum once a month, to examine the state and condition of the premises, see, as far as practicable, every patient confined therein ; examine the orders for the admission of all patients received since the previous visitation, and also examine the food, and take in the supply of provisions by tender, and also examine the medical and general books of the asylum, as required by the Act of Parliament.

4th.—As to the conduct of the Officers and Servants thereof.

The conduct of the officers has been generally satisfactory, and we think that Dr. Browne has made a very judicious selection of his officers and attendants.

The chaplain appointed, owing to his other clerical duties, is not able to perform Divine Service at the asylum on Sundays, but about 15 of the patients are allowed to attend the service at Bensham Church every Sunday, and prayers are read by Dr. Browne, in the asylum, and the chaplain attends at the asylum every Wednesday, and performs service

5th.—As to the care of the Patients therein.

The medical superintendent has full care and charge of the patients. And we have found that he is very kind and attentive to all the patients, and we consider that he, and the attendants, and officers, have performed their duties in this respect in a very satisfactory manner.

6th.—General.

A Report from the medical superintendent is also to be laid before the Bench, prepared at our special request.

The Committee have to report that, owing to the death of Mr. E. N. Grace, there is a vacancy in the Committee, and it will be necessary to have the vacancy filled up.

THOMAS HEDLEY,

Chairman of the Committee of Visitors.

Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy.

NEWCASTLE BOROUGH ASYLUM,

13th November, 1865.

This house was opened, as a temporary asylum for the Borough of Newcastle, on the 24th of last June, and on that day 54 patients were removed to it from the Durham County Asylum. Since then 42 patients have been sent from Dunston Lodge, and 12 new cases have been admitted, making the total number of patients received since the opening 108, viz:—55 of the male, and 53 of the female sex.

Only one patient, a man, has been discharged, and one woman has died of hemiplegia.

Five patients managed to escape, but all were retaken within a short period.

The numbers in the house to-day, are 54 males, and 52 females, all of whom we personally examined. They were generally quiet and orderly, and no one was restrained, or in seclusion. Restraint, indeed, is not employed, but it appears from the register, that one man was secluded on two occasions, and that amongst the women, there have been six instances of seclusion. In every case, the seclusion was for very short periods.

The general health is good. Diarrhœa was prevalent during the summer months, but did not prove fatal in any case.

Two men were in bed to-day, suffering from bodily illness, and 2 males and 4 females are under medical treatment.

We are informed that about 30 patients of each sex are employed in various ways. The men work in the garden, and 3 are employed as tailors, and 2 as shoemakers, with one exception these men have been instructed in the trades since they have been in the asylum. Seven women are regularly employed in the laundry.

A fair stock of books and periodicals seems to be provided, and praiseworthy efforts are made, as far as the defective nature of the premises will permit, to promote the recreation and amusements of the inmates. A dance is held weekly in the room attached to the workshops, or in the large male day room, at which, on an average, 50 patients of both sexes are present.

Nearly the same number are taken beyond the premises for exercise, and 2 men go out unattended on their parole.

With regard to the performance of Divine Service, it appears that a Chaplain has been appointed, at a salary of £25 per annum, but as his other clerical duties occupy the whole of his time on Sunday, prayers, of necessity, are read by Dr. Browne on that day, and the Church Service is only given on Wednesday. From 12 to 15 of the inmates, however, are taken to the Parish Church.

It would of course be unwise to incur any but the most necessary expense upon the improvement of these premises, some few judicious changes have been made, and the wards were in very fair condition. The furniture which has been obtained is all of a suitable description, and the bedding throughout of excellent quality.

The wards were clean, but all the dormitories, and more especially on the women's side, were much over-crowded, and some means should, if possible, be adopted to diminish this evil. It seems to us, that, at a trifling expense, the three unoccupied rooms in the women's yard might be thrown into one, or connected together by openings, and by changes, similar to those in the house-keeper's apartment, be rendered suitable for the use of patients.

The personal staff consists of Dr. J. C. Browne and the following officers :—

A clerk and steward acting also as head attendant, at a salary of £60 ; a matron and house-keeper, salary £25 : Five male attendants, at wages from £25 to £30 ; four nurses, at wages from £12 to £16, and a tailor who is paid 10s. weekly, with board, &c.

The weekly charge has hitherto been 14s.

The dietry is liberal, and we are glad to find that beer is given to all daily.

Rules for the management of the asylum, are, we understand, in preparation, and will shortly be submitted for the approval of the Secretary of State.

Great credit is due to Dr. Browne for his exertions in bringing the establishment into its present efficient state, a task of great difficulty, owing to the very defective nature of the premises.

Having been informed by Dr. Browne that, with a view of providing some additional accommodation pending the erection of the new asylum, some improvements and enlargements were in progress at the farm buildings upon the estate, we visited the spot.

The alterations were commenced about the middle of last August, and were to have been completed in about six weeks, we found them to-day in a most unfinished state, the greater portion being still unroofed, and without flooring, and only four men at work.

When completed, the buildings will probably provide accommodation for from 15 to 18 patients of each sex, and thus relieve the over-crowding at Bensham. The necessity for more room is very urgent, and we hope that the visitors will insist upon the contractor completing the work without further delay.

In the division intended for women, it is proposed to construct a water-closet up-stairs, but no provision of this or any other kind has yet been designed for the men. We think that for the class of women who will occupy this house, a water-closet up-stairs will not be needed, and, if the one proposed were omitted, the whole of the space at the back of the house might be left as one apartment, and thus afford increased space for beds. We are of opinion that the best position for a water-closet in the females, division, would be in the passage leading from the day-room to the laundry.

When the buildings are occupied by patients, it is proposed that Dr. Browne shall visit them daily, and in case of urgency, the assistance of a medical man residing at the village of Bulman will be obtained.

A well has been sunk to the depth of thirty-one feet, without obtaining water, and it is now proposed to secure a supply by contract with the Newcastle Water Works.

Nothing seems to have been done towards the erection of the proposed new asylum, nor has the planting, which we recommended, as yet been undertaken. We are informed however, that the Justices have accepted a contract from Mr. Scott, of Newcastle, for the building, for the sum of £27,000. This sum is no less than £8,500 in excess of the architect's estimate, and thus confirms the opinion which was expressed by us, when the plans were before our Board, viz:—"that the building could not be erected for the sum named in the estimate."

W. G. CAMPBELL, } *Commissioners*
JAMES WILKES, } *in Lunacy.*

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMITTEE OF VISITORS

OF THE

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Borough Lunatic Asylum.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—In laying before you the report of the present condition and history, up to this time, of the Newcastle Borough Lunatic Asylum, which you have requested, I must, in the first place, guard against misconception, by explaining that it must be necessarily an imperfect and partial summary of events, and must by no means be regarded as an indication of the future progress of the institution. The peculiar and disadvantageous circumstances under which the establishment was organized, the hurried manner in which the elements composing it were brought together, the insuperable structural defects of the buildings at present occupied, which partake more of the character of the typical mad-house of the last century than of the modern hospital for the insane poor, the shortness of the time which has elapsed since the opening of the asylum, and the nature of the cases as yet admitted, are all sufficient reasons why the results here recorded, should be exceptional, and not fairly comparable with those obtained in other asylums.

The asylum was opened for the reception of patients on the 24th of last June. The appointment of the staff, the repairs of the house, the purchase of furniture and fittings, and the arrangement of contracts for the supply of provisions, having been conducted within one month previous to that date. Great difficulty was, of course, experienced in compassing so much within so limited a period, but it does not appear that efficiency in any department has been sacrificed in consequence of the haste which circumstances rendered necessary. Constant efforts have been made, both before and since the opening, to bring the asylum as far as possible into harmony with modern views, and not withstanding the innumerable obstacles which have presented themselves, substantial progress has been made. It is matter for great congratulation, that the Commissioners in Lunacy, in the report

of their inspection of the asylum, on the 13th of November last, expressed their approval of much that has been done, and their appreciation of the exertions which have been directed towards the improvement of the institution.

A large portion of the premises now occupied, having been uninhabited for about two years, a number of repairs were absolutely necessary, while various alterations were also called for to ensure comfort, safe-custody, the separation of the sexes, and other objects.

The locks belonging to the house being of the most ponderous and prison-like appearance, and being besides of doubtful security, were removed, others supplied by Mr. George Monk, specially adapted for asylum use, being substituted for them.

The furniture provided is all of a plain, strong, and serviceable kind, and is, as well as locks, baths, and other fittings, to be removed to the new asylum at Coxlodge. Cheap ornaments, busts, and pictures, have been distributed through the wards, and afford an amount of pleasure to the inmates wonderfully disproportioned to their price.

Dr. Smith, of the Durham County Asylum, kindly undertook to procure the clothing for the Newcastle patients under his own care, and on a misunderstanding arising as to the clothing of those transferred from Dunston Lodge, he promptly forwarded a second supply for their use, which has since been supplemented by the work of the patients themselves, during their residence here. The clothing is all of a useful and economical description, similar to what is now most generally provided for the pauper insane.

The diet-table has been constructed on a liberal, though by no means extravagant, scale, and has received the sanction of the Commissioners in Lunacy.

The great obstacles to the management of the asylum have arisen out of the structure of the house, and the over-crowding which has prevailed since within a short time of the opening. The first of these has rendered any attempt at classification impossible; has interfered with that vigilant supervision which should always be maintained; has harassed the patients and disheartened the attendants. When it is mentioned that there is only *one* single room upon the female side of the house, and two upon the male side, the usual proportion being at least a third of the sleeping accommodation, it may be conjectured what perplexities have occurred. It has been impossible to separate the excited and dangerous from the quiet and inoffensive, and a train of unpleasant consequences has been thus produced. The collecting together, too, of so large a number of lunatics within so narrow an area as our day-room accommodation affords, has certainly not

contributed to composure or comfort, while the accompanying crowding of the dormitories cannot but have been pernicious and dangerous. This over-crowding will, however, be very shortly relieved, by the opening of the farm-buildings at Coxlodge, now in course of preparation for the reception of 30 to 40 patients. The additional accommodation thus provided, will probably meet the requirements of the borough until the completion of the new asylum, and the farm buildings will then be eminently useful for various purposes. They might be well applied to the reception of stores. They would be invaluable, should an epidemic visit the asylum, for the isolation of the infected ; and the time will, I am confident, come, should the prosperity of the town continue, when they will avert the necessity for another block of building, or another wing to the main house.

ADMISSIONS.

On the 24th of June last, the day of opening, 54 patients—26 males and 28 females were received from the Durham County Asylum, at Sedgefield. On the 18th of July, 40 patients—19 males and 21 females—were transferred from Dunston Lodge Asylum ; and on the 31st of July, 2 males, who had been detained at Dunston, at the former date, one being a criminal, to allow time to procure a Secretary of State's warrant for his removal, and the other on account of ill-health, were also admitted—making the total received from other asylums 96. Since the opening, 18 new admissions have taken place, so that in all 114 patients have been under treatment. The 96 patients received from other asylums, presented the ordinary aspect of the stock population of an asylum, except that they were unusually excitable and unmanageable, and exhibited criminal propensities of a strength and activity rarely encountered amongst chronic lunatics. In the group brought from Dunston Lodge, this was remarkably apparent, and indeed the late proprietor of that establishment informed me, that after an experience of lunatics from every district in the North of England, he had no hesitation in giving the palm to the Newcastle patients, for noise, insubordination, and destruction, and that, apart from other considerations, he must have refused to renew the contract for their reception, because these characteristics made even the high rate of maintenance which was then paid for them unremunerative. It may be, that that spirit of striving, that restless energy, those changeful impulses which penetrate every class of the busy community from which the inmates of this asylum are derived, continue to perturb the disordered mind, to the overthrow of which they have perhaps contributed ; and it may be that the sturdy independence of the northern

temper still lives in the darkened intellect and frets itself against the petty restraints and discipline of an asylum. It is at any rate certain, that the lunatics in this asylum are more turbulent and less amenable to control than those in other asylums, peopled from agricultural counties, with their placid pursuits. It is also to be remembered, that the retention, in the meantime, of the harmless insane in the Newcastle Workhouse, leaves us with an accumulation of the worst cases at Bensham—cases that have, in many instances, been tried and found wanting in the workhouse—that have been sent to an asylum because they were unsafe elsewhere, and that are now gathered together without that dilution by quiet and useful lunatics, which helps so much to the tranquility and comfort of most large asylums.

The length of time which many of the patients received from other asylums have been insane (as exhibited in a table appended) is worthy of observation, as it tends to show the great prolongation of lunatic life which has taken place in recent times.

Another table shows the duration of the insanity in the cases newly admitted, and with reference to these, I must call attention to the length of time which the disease had existed in several before removal to an asylum was thought necessary. It is a mistaken kindness and a short-sighted policy that detains the lunatic at home, at the outset of his malady, when it is in a curable condition, and that thus sacrifices his best chance of recovery to a mere postponement of his separation from home, and that for a trifling present saving, converts into a permanent burden, what might have been merely a temporary charge. The well established fact, that speedy removal to a suitable asylum, where remedies can and will be employed, is the kindest and wisest course to pursue, in most cases of mental derangement, cannot be too forcibly impressed upon the public mind. The bodily health of the patients newly admitted has been generally deplorable. Three were brought to the asylum in an almost dying state, two being instances of mental weakness, of many years standing, suddenly lighted into activity by the supervention of severe bodily ailment; and the other being an instance of melancholic abstinence, where no food whatever, except one Bath-bun, had been taken for fourteen days prior to his reception here, and where life was unquestionably saved, by the administration of nourishment by the stomach-pump, which was regularly used twice a-day for a week, before food was voluntarily taken. The new admissions also included one case of Bright's disease, one of advanced consumption, and two cases of the general paralysis of the insane, a very intractable and fatal form of mental disease, the growth of the age in which we live, and the distorted reflection of many of its

follies—one of the penalties we pay for our high civilisation. General paralysis seems to be very common here, as we have six illustrations of it in the house at present.

I have had four applications for the admission of patients just above the pauper class, for whom there is no provision whatever in the north of England at present, and to whom any additional accommodation, beyond the immediate wants of the borough, which the new asylum may afford, will be an inestimable boon.

RECOVERIES.

Only two patients (both males, convalescent after mania) have been discharged during the half-year. This is a small proportion, but it is not surprising that it is so, when it is considered that of the 54 patients brought from the Durham Asylum, not one was regarded as curable by Dr. Smith; that of the 42 brought from Dunston Lodge, I could only place 5 in this category; and that of the 18 new admissions, among whom recoveries might be looked for, only 2 were admitted prior to the 13th of September, so that sufficient time has not yet been allowed for the development of the effects of treatment, or for the establishment of recovery, in those who are to benefit by it. Although the general character of the patients now in the Asylum, cannot be said to be promising, there are still several who are steadily improving, and who will soon be entitled to discharge; and, I have no doubt that, in future years, I shall be able to report more favourably under this head.

DEATHS.

Notwithstanding the very feeble state of many of the cases under care, during the half-year, only two deaths have as yet occurred. These two were referable to two of the most prevailing causes of mortality amongst the insane—pulmonary consumption and chronic disorganisation of the brain. Phthisis terminated the life of a young woman, who had fostered the growth of an inherited germ of disease by intense religious excitement, and hemiplegia and coma were the concluding stages of the case of a woman, who, though represented as having been only nine months insane at the date of her death, had probably been deprived of reason for above ten years. Before her insanity was officially recognised, she had been in the habit of escaping from home, and living in solitude in the woods, feeding upon wild fruits, or what she could occasionally beg at a cottage, and sleeping amidst the brushwood. She had frequently lived in this manner for a fortnight at a time, seeking no converse with human beings. While upon one of these expeditions she was delivered

of twins. At this time she was without attendance or help. She sought out a sheltered hollow for her delivery, and there, reverting to a primitive instinct, she actually gnawed through the umbilical cords with her teeth. The twins were alive when found two days after birth, but the mother was in a very exhausted state, having had no food or covering since her delivery. When brought to this asylum, she was the most perfect specimen of brutalized humanity that I have ever encountered. The most casual observers on seeing her, had powerfully suggested to them her striking resemblance to a wild animal. Her hair had all been cut or broken off short, while, over the summit of each parietal bone, the skin was quite denuded, owing to frequent rubbing, not with the fingers but with the inner side of the hand and wrist. The forehead was small, receding, and deeply wrinkled. The cheek bones were naturally prominent, and appeared even more so, in consequence of the emaciation of the face, which also strongly delineated massive temporal muscles. The eyelids were without lashes, and so opened as to expose a large rounded portion of the eyeballs, thus giving the countenance a staring appearance. The width between the eyes was considerable. The bridge of the nose was depressed, the alæ wide-spread, the nostrils forward, opening. The lips were thin, and always retracted so as to display a grinning set of teeth. The lower jaw was protuberant, and the chin was always held forward. The complexion was sallow, and the features exhibited no play of expression. The limbs were wasted and the fingers were fixedly contracted or flexed, and had the aspect of claws. The habits of this woman, as well as her bodily configuration, had many points in common with those of wild creatures. She was averse to a sitting posture, and preferred to lie upon the ground, or to run about in a half-stooping attitude. As she lay she drew up her legs, and twisted herself into the most singular contortions. When stared at she winked forcibly and repeatedly. She used her teeth for tearing and gnawing, as well as mastication, and she bit and licked the hands of those who fed her, as a mark of her fondness for them. She never expressed coherent thoughts, but used a few words strung together without apparently attaching any meaning to them. She constantly emitted undescribable gibbering noises. Her only attachment was for the nurses who fed her, from whom she would snatch the food brought with sudden avidity, turning away to devour it in secret. Her greatest pleasure seemed to consist in chewing a hard sea-biscuit. When awake she was invariably restless, picking, rubbing, rocking her body, and moving about. Sometimes for a whole night she would pace round her room sideways, placing her feet heavily down with the most rythmical regularity, and clasping a pillow in her arms. She was

destructive to furniture, especially to crockery, which she delighted in breaking; but she did not injure her own clothing. When out in the airing court, she would pull up the flowers and grass and toss them wildly above her head. And yet this woman, presenting so many animal traits, had been of average intelligence previous to her insanity, and had adequately discharged the duties of her station in life.

GENERAL HEALTH.

Although there has been a good deal of infirmity and sickness of a chronic kind, the general health of the Asylum has been tolerably good, as regards acute diseases. There was a slight epidemic of diarrhoea in the beginning of August, which I attributed to the overcrowding and the high temperature then prevalent. Both attendants and patients suffered from it, and the largest number of cases occurred on the female side, where the crowding has been always greatest. The epidemic never assumed a severe type, but yielded readily to appropriate treatment.

ACCIDENTS AND ESCAPES.

Only one accident, of any importance, has occurred. Two male patients quarrelled and closed in a struggle, in the presence of an attendant, who immediately interfered to separate them. Before he could do so, however, one had received a kick on the shoulder, which fractured the collar-bone. The injury was healed satisfactorily.

Escapes have taken place upon six occasions, but four of these have been directly due to the machinations of two incorrigible runaways, who have, again and again, baffled the precautions of better appointed houses than this, and who spend their whole time in devising ingenious modes of effecting their liberation.

MORAL TREATMENT.

It has hitherto been impossible to carry out the moral treatment of the inmates as fully, and with as much discrimination, as my own views, and the experience of others, would dictate, but that the agencies included under that designation, have not been altogether neglected will be seen, when it is mentioned that various trades and occupations are daily followed in the Asylum, with diligence and success; that we have had weekly balls, conducted with great enthusiasm, since within a fortnight of the opening; that we have had concerts, theatrical representations, and Christmas festivities; and, that games of all kinds, and numerous periodicals are distributed through the wards.

No tabular view of the industry of the patients can here be furnished, as much of it has been expended on the repair and adornment of the dilapidated and incongruous buildings that constitute the Asylum, or upon other items of work that cannot be conveniently set down. It may be stated, however, that on an average about 15 men have been daily employed in the garden, 5 as ward helpers, 2 as stokers, 3 as tailors, 4 as shoemakers, and 1 as a painter. Of the women—7 have been regularly employed in the laundry, 2 in the kitchen, 7 as ward-helpers and in household work, 10 in sewing, 6 in knitting, and 2 in fancy work. Hair-picking and other occasional occupations have also afforded employment to a few of the inmates, and an attempt has been lately made to teach knitting to three of the infirm and house-ridden males, in one case with gratifying success. The want of adequate occupation for the male patients, however, is now beginning to be seriously felt, and will only be relieved by the transference of the more industrious and safer patients to the Farm at Coxlodge, where an abundance of useful and healthy labour awaits them. The whole of the clothing for males and females, boots, shoes, &c., are now made in the Asylum, and it is curious to remark that of the five men who have at different times been engaged in shoemaking, only two originally belonged to the trade, and that of the three tailors, not one was trained to this calling before he became a resident in an asylum. Six patients have thus been instructed in trades, and have acquired powers which not only minister to their comfort and well-being in the meantime, but which may be of service to them should they be restored to the work-a-day world. The value of occupations as a branch of the general treatment of insanity can scarcely be over-rated. But in order to ensure the value of occupation, it must actually remain a part of treatment, and must be left entirely under the direction of the physician. If it is entrusted to attendants or officers, without scientific knowledge and insight, it degenerates into drudgery, or is injudiciously applied, and becomes positively mischievous. When carefully and thoughtfully managed it may fulfil many indications. It may, by its associations, call up happy memories of healthier days. It may, by its interesting variety, stimulate sluggish and dormant faculties, or, by its mechanical monotony, soothe and equalize those that are irritated and excited. And it may, by the concentration of consciousness, which it implies, give repose to those faculties which are damaged or disordered, and which tend to increase or confirm their own derangement by their continued activity. The old and generally accredited doctrine that it is unwise to refer to the delusion of a lunatic, is founded upon the conviction that you thus attract to a weakened part

that errant attention which is for ever hurrying to and fro in the mind, and which is always ready to fix upon an impaired power; and the modern belief as to the efficacy of occupation in the cure of lunacy, is founded upon the certainty that by taking advantage of the limited comprehension of the mind, you may withdraw its energy from the seat of disease, and give rest where rest is needed. I had recently an opportunity of observing a striking verification of all this, in a case of insanity which followed upon sudden shock, and which was characterized by intense nervous excitability, so that the slightest noise produced startling and painful alarm, by emotional disturbance, constant fear of preposterous dangers, and aural hallucinations. Here arithmetic was selected as a study, because it is foreign to feeling, and puzzles as an amusement, because they demand ingenuity, and, just as those were assiduously pursued, the malady, which had been previously on the increase, abated. I could compare the progress of this case to nothing better than that of a fractured bone, or torn muscle. The mind had suffered concussion, and some of the fasciculi of thought (probably not in the intellect,) had snapped asunder. Had the injury been left untouched a mental false joint would almost inevitably have been formed—a permanent defect nearly beyond the reach of treatment. But the course adopted secured tranquility to the affected powers by stretching them in repose, and by keeping the moving principle at work elsewhere, so that union took place, and the dismembered parts became again coherent.

Even in the short experience of this institution, the potency of occupation in mitigating madness has been amply manifested, and it is hoped that, as the system is further developed, still higher benefits may be found to accrue from it. It is intended, in the coming year, to form classes for the education of the patients in the rudiments of knowledge, and for the cultivation of their tastes, to augment the number of their employments, and carefully to guide their exertions into these, always remembering the fundamental principle, perhaps sometimes overlooked, that utility and profit are only secondary considerations, and must always be held subordinate to the alleviation of suffering, and the promotion of recovery.

Scarcely inferior to occupation is recreation, as an agent in the treatment of insanity; and its efficacy too has been exemplified in the results of the modest amusements of which our present position admits. As many as 76 patients have been present at one weekly ball, and the attendance, which is voluntary, has never fallen below 50. Concerts, fireworks, and theatricals have been equally popular. On an average, 45 patients enjoy a country walk in the vicinity

of the asylum once a-week, and as many as 58 have availed themselves of this privilege in one day. Small parties of patients have also been sent to the Newcastle Theatre, and to lectures in Gateshead. Four patients have been allowed to spend a day at home with their friends, and two others have gone out frequently on parole. It is perhaps well to add, that with reference to all amusements and indulgences of this description, the names of the patients who propose to take part in them, are submitted to the medical superintendent, and revised by him, so that those are excluded from participation to whom they would be prejudicial, or who might give trouble or annoyance. Except in cases of parole, trustworthy persons are, of course, always in charge when the insane go beyond the grounds of the asylum, so that every precaution is thus taken to secure the public safety.

Instead of the crowd of curious strangers who sometimes frequent the recreation hall of an asylum, I have preferred, where practicable, to admit the relatives of patients to their social gatherings, and I have found this practice to encourage healthy feelings in my patients, and to enhance their interest in their amusements, while it has inspired confidence in their relatives as to the system of treatment pursued.

I am indebted to friends in Newcastle and Gateshead, for assistance in the patients' amusements, and for contributions of periodicals, pictures, &c.

MEDICAL TREATMENT.

This is not the place to discuss the remedial measures of a strictly medical kind, which have been applied to the cases under treatment. It may be well, however, to intimate that insanity being regarded as, without exception, a sign of a tangible or intangible bodily disorder, is always treated as such, and that constant observations are made as to the influence of drugs upon its various forms and phases. Amongst the remedies which have been found most useful in this much-neglected department of therapeutics are—chloroform, opium, hyoseyamus, belladonna, canabis indica, hydrocyanic acid, biniodide of mercury, the bromide and iodide of potassium, cod liver oil, and the preparations of iron and bark. The first of these (chloroform) has been regarded with too much suspicion in asylum practice. Dr. Hitchman, of Derby, foremost in many good works in asylum matters, adverted to its use in mania, in one of his reports, many years ago, and the report of the Crichton Royal Institution for 1848 also contained some remarks on its psychical actions. But the general apprehension as to the dangers attending its inhalation has prevented it from being made a subject of experiment,

or from being adopted as a means of cure. I have here employed it in several cases with such advantage, that I cannot but consider it an important addition to my means of combating mental disease. In two cases of acute mania, in which I have resorted to it with a frequency and to an amount that might seem incautious to those who did not watch its operations, it certainly contributed to a rapid convalescence. The immediate effects were, firstly, a slight increase of mental excitement and bodily violence, with a change in the character of the delirium to a hilarious type; secondly, an interruption and cessation of the incoherent conversation and muscular restlessness, subsidence of the pulse, greater calmness, depth and regularity of breathing, placidity of countenance, general relaxation and tranquil sleep. The sleep continued but a short time after the first administration, but was more prolonged on a repetition of the inhalation, and on subsequent occasions. It was also kept up for some time by a continuous use of the anæsthetic. The more lasting effects of the inhalation are—greater mental peacefulness, more connected thought, and restoration of strength. It seems not merely to subdue the more prominent symptoms of mania, and thus cover its insidious progress, but really to diminish its intensity, arrest its advance, and oppose that exhaustion which is so often its fatal termination, by giving time for reparative processes. The two patients with whom it was here beneficial, became excessively fond of it, and early recognised its soothing influence. One of them, who has since been discharged recovered, used to lie down on his bed, even when much excited, and prepare himself for its administration. He used also to open his mouth and put out his tongue, the better to inhale it; and he has since told me that it gave him great pleasure, and transported him from suffering into ease.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

The Rev. J. J. Day, the chaplain, nominated by the committee, has held a weekly service in the asylum since the date of his appointment, at which about 60 of the patients have generally been present. The exhortations delivered have been specially adapted to the condition of those addressed, and have undoubtedly exercised most beneficial effects upon many of those who have listened to them. I have to acknowledge with gratitude the cordial co-operation and valuable and judicious aid which Mr. Day is every ready to afford me. A party of patients, which has been gradually increased from 6 to 16, is also sent weekly to the parish church, and I have heard no complaints whatever against their presence or demeanour there.

THE STAFF.

The conduct of the officers, nurses, and attendants at present in the asylum has been such as to merit my approval. It was not, of course, to be looked for that a body of officials hastily collected together should be devoid of serious imperfections. In the best asylums, with the ripest organizations, grave derelictions of duty are frequently happening amongst the nurses and attendants, and it is not, therefore, wonderful that in this inchoate establishment, without any written code of rules, I should have had many errors and transgressions to deal with. Against these, however, I have to place an amount of self-denial, self-control, unobtrusive benevolence, and quiet vigilance, which can only be properly appreciated by those who have been brought into personal contact with a colony of the insane. To Miss Chapman, the head nurse and housekeeper, my especial thanks are due for her activity in carrying out my wishes.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I beg to offer my most respectful thanks to the Committee of Visitors, for the confidence they have reposed in me, for the courteous attention with which they have received all my suggestions, and for the aid and encouragement which they have invariably extended to me, and which have helped to sustain me through the many difficulties and anxieties which have beset the commencement of the undertaking in which I am engaged. The amount of time and the unsparing trouble which they are prepared to bestow upon the affairs of the asylum cannot fail ultimately to make it what they desire it to be, a centre of good to the district, and a credit to the borough of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

I have the honour to be,

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. CRICHTON BROWNE, M.D. (Edin Univ.),

Medical Superintendent.

Bensham, Gateshead, Jan. 3rd, 1866.

TABLE I,
SHEWING GENERAL RESULTS.

	Male.	Female.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Admitted during the Half-Year—						
From other Asylums ...	47	49	96			
New Admissions	11	7	18			
Re-admitted .....	...	...	...
Total under care during the Half-Year ...				58	56	114
Discharged or Removed—						
Recovered ...	2	...	2			
Relieved ...	...	...	...
Not Improved...	...	...	...
Died ...	...	2	2			
Total Discharged and Died during the Half-Year ..				2	2	4
Remaining in Asylum December 31st, 1865 ...				56	54	110
Average Numbers resident during the Half-Year ...				47 $\frac{18}{11}$	48 $\frac{33}{11}$	96 $\frac{51}{11}$

TABLE II,

SHEWING DURATION OF INSANITY IN THOSE ADMITTED FROM OTHER ASYLUMS.

Duration of Insanity.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Under 1 Month ...	...	...	...
From 1 to 3 Months ...	1	1	2
" 3 to 6 " ...	2	2	4
" 6 to 9 " ...	1	1	2
" 9 to 12 " ...	2	1	3
" 1 to 2 Years ...	6	7	13
" 2 to 3 " ...	3	6	9
" 3 to 5 " ...	5	3	8
" 5 to 7 " ...	6	7	13
" 7 to 10 " ...	4	6	10
" 10 to 12 " ...	4	4	8
" 12 to 15 " ...	3	2	5
" 15 to 20 " ...	1	2	3
" 20 to 30 " ...	6	5	11
" 30 to 40 " ...	...	1	1
Unknown...	3	1	4
Total ...	47	49	96

TABLE III.,

SHOWING THE DURATION OF INSANITY IN THOSE NEWLY ADMITTED.

Duration of Insanity..	Males.	Females.	Total.
Under 1 Month	4	3	7
From 1 to 3 Months	1	...	1
" 3 " 6 " ... ..	...	1	1
" 6 " 9 "	1	...	1
" 9 " 12 " ... ..	...	...	...
" 1 " 2 Years	1	...	1
" 2 " 3 " ... ..	...	2	2
" 3 " 5 " and upwards	4	...	4
Unknown ... ..	.	1	1
Total	11	7	18

TABLE IV.,

SHOWING CONDITION OF ALL THOSE ADMITTED WITH REFERENCE TO MARRIAGE.

Condition with reference to Marriage.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Single	36	28	64
Married	16	18	34
Widowed	2	8	10
Unknown	4	2	6
Total	58	56	114

TABLE V.,

SHOWING AGE AT DATE OF ADMISSION HERE OF PATIENTS RECEIVED FROM OTHER ASYLUMS.

Age.	Males.	Females.	Total.
From 10 to 20	1	2	3
" 20 " 30	11	10	21
" 30 " 40	12	10	22
" 40 " 50	14	10	24
" 50 " 60	3	10	13
" 60 " 70	1	4	5
Unknown	5	3	8
Total	47	49	96

TABLE VI.,

SHOWING AGES OF PATIENTS NEWLY ADMITTED WHEN FIRST ATTACKED BY INSANITY.

Age.					Males.	Females.	Total.
Under 20 Years	...	...	...	...	3	...	3
From 20 to 25	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
" 25 " 30	...	...	...	...	..	3	3
" 30 " 35	...	...	...	...	..	2	2
" 35 " 40	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
" 40 " 45	...	...	...	...	3	...	3
" 45 " 50	..	...	...	...	1	...	1
" 50 " 55	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 55 " 60	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
Total	...	...	...	...	11	7	18

TABLE VII.,

SHOWING CAUSES, WHERE ASCERTAINED, IN CASES NEWLY ADMITTED.

					Males.	Females.	Total.
PHYSICAL :							
Injury to Head	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
The Puerperal State	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
Moon-stroke and Exposure to Cold	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Typhus Fever	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Hepatic Derangement	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Ovarian Irritation	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Intemperance	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Heredity	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
Not ascertained	...	...	...	...	5	2	7
Total	...	...	...	...	11	7	18
MORAL :							
Fright, when a Child	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Excitement	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Anxiety about Business	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Religious Excitement	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Domestic Anxiety	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
Distress	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Not ascertained	...	...	...	...	7	4	11
Total	...	...	...	...	11	7	18

TABLE VIII.,

SHOWING FORMS OF MENTAL DISEASE IN CASES NEWLY ADMITTED.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
MANIA :			
Acute	2	...	2
Recurrent	1	...	1
Alternating	1	...	1
Chronic ... ..	...	1	1
Puerperal ... ..	...	2	2
Hysterical ... ..	...	1	1
MONOMANIA OF PRIDE	1	...	1
" SUSPICION ... ..	...	1	1
MELANCHOLIA :			
Hypochondriacal	1	1	2
Religious ... ..	...	1	1
FATUITY :			
Simple... ..	1	...	1
Consecutive	1	...	1
Epileptic	1	...	1
GENERAL PARESIS	2	...	2
Total	11	7	18

TABLE IX.,

SHOWING CAUSES OF DEATH.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Organic Disease of the Brain	1	1
Pulmonary Consumption	1	1
Total	2	2

TABLE X.,

SHOWING SUICIDAL TENDENCIES OF CASES NEWLY ADMITTED.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Have Attempted Suicide	1	2	3
Have Meditated Suicide ... ..	...	1	1
No Suicidal Tendencies	10	4	14
Total	11	7	18

DIET TABLE.

	DINNER 1·0 P.M.										SUPPER 6·0 P.M.																								
	MALES.					FEMALES..					MALES.		FEMALES.																						
	Bread.	Butter.	Coffee.	Cocoa.	Oz.	Pts.	Bread.	Beer.	Cook'd Meat	free rmbone	Oz.	Pts.	Cook'd Meat	free rmbone	Oz.	Pts.	Cook'd Meat	free rmbone	Oz.	Pts.	Cook'd Meat	free rmbone	Oz.	Pts.	Bread.	Butter.	Tea.	Oz.	Pts.	Bread.	Butter.	Tea.	Oz.	Pts.	
Sunday.....	8	1	1	...	6	12	4	1	6	12	...	4	1	5	12	...	4	1	5	12	...	4	1	4	1	8	1	6	1	1	8	1	6	1	1
Monday.....	8	1	...	1	6	...	4	...	6	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	4	...	8	1	6	1	1	8	1	6	1	1
Tuesday.....	8	1	...	1	6	...	4	...	6	...	...	4	...	5	12	...	4	...	5	12	...	4	...	4	...	8	1	6	1	1	8	1	6	1	1
Wednesday.....	8	1	...	1	6	...	4	...	6	...	...	4	...	5	12	...	4	...	5	12	...	4	...	4	...	8	1	6	1	1	8	1	6	1	1
Thursday.....	8	1	...	1	6	...	4	...	6	...	20	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	4	...	8	1	6	1	1	8	1	6	1	1
Friday.....	8	1	...	1	6	...	4	...	6	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	4	...	8	1	6	1	1	8	1	6	1	1
Saturday.....	8	1	...	...	6	...	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	4	...	8	1	6	1	1	8	1	6	1	1
WEEKLY TOTAL.....	56	3½	4	3	42	3½	28	3½	24	48	16	20	1	20	1	1	28	3½	20	48	14	18	1	56	3½	7	42	3½	7	42	3½	7	42	3½	

Tea for 100 persons to contain 1 lb. of Tea, 4 lbs. of Sugar, and Two Gallons of Milk.
 Coffee for 100 persons to contain 1½ lbs. of Coffee, ¼ lb. of Chicory, 4 lbs. of Sugar, and Three Gallons of Milk.
 Cocoa for 100 persons to contain 3¼ lbs. of Cocoa, 6½ lbs. of Treacle, and Three Gallons of Milk.
 Meat and Potato Pie to contain, for 100 persons, 28 lbs. of Meat uncooked and with Bone.
 Irish Stew to contain, for 100 persons, 30 lbs. of uncooked Meat, free from Bone, Six Stones of Potatoes, Seasoning, &c.
 Soup for 100 persons to contain Liquor of Meat cooked the previous day, with 14 lbs. of Leg or Shin of Beef, 7 lbs. of Peas, 6 lbs of Rice, 3 lbs. of Barley, 5 lbs. of Onions, with Bread Crumbs, Salt, Pepper, and Herbs.
EXTRA DIET for Workers—2 oz. of Bread, 1 oz. of Cheese, and Half-pint of Beer for Luncheon
DIETARY occasionally varied by Fruit and Fish Pies, Bacon and Beans, &c., as circumstances will permit.
EXTRA DIET for Sick and Debilitated—According to Medical Order.

Approved by the Committee of Visitors.—J. CRICHTON BROWNE, M.D. (EDIN.), Medical Superintendent.

