

**Report of the visiting justices and superintending physician, of the County Lunatic Asylum, Forston, Dorset : Epiphany sessions, 1845 / Dorset County Lunatic Asylum.**

**Contributors**

Dorset County Lunatic Asylum (Forston, England)  
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REPORT  
OF  
THE VISITING JUSTICES  
AND  
SUPERINTENDING PHYSICIAN,  
OF THE  
COUNTY LUNATIC ASYLUM,  
FORSTON, DORSET.

EPIPHANY SESSIONS, 1845.

WEYMOUTH:  
PRINTED BY J. COMMINS, ESPLANADE.



REPORT

THE FIRST

REPORT

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R E P O R T  
*OF THE VISITING JUSTICES*  
OF THE  
LUNATIC ASYLUM, FORSTON.

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The Visitors have to report that the Buildings are now very far advanced towards completion, and it is hoped that every thing will be completed by the beginning of February. On Friday, December 27th, a meeting was held at the Asylum to inspect the whole of the alterations, which appeared to have been done in a very satisfactory manner. By the erection of the new Boiler of increased dimensions, the cooking of the provisions in the kitchen,—the heating of the whole of the extensive wards,—the drying of the linen,—and an ample supply of hot water for the washing,



as well as for the baths, night and day, can always be obtained from one fire. Mr. Harris, the Engineer of Hanwell, came down to inspect the whole, and having carefully examined every part of the Engineer's department, has reported that the works have been well and carefully executed. The Water Wheel to work the Pump is also nearly finished, and the Visitors saw it in operation for the first time on the 27th of December, and it appeared to act well.

The bills which had been previously examined and signed by Mr. Evans, were audited, and the Visitors have every reason to hope that the total expenses will not very much exceed the sum granted, viz. £5000, but until every thing is completed, it will be impossible to lay all the accounts before the Sessions.

In consequence of the increase of the buildings, the Visitors have ordered that the Insurance be increased from £5000 to £8000.

The Asylum during the past year has been healthy, and no epidemic disease has prevailed.

The Visitors have also the pleasure to report that the management of the Asylum during the past year has been conducted by Dr. and Mrs. Button very highly to their satisfaction.

The sum of £100 having been placed by the bounty of an anonymous individual, given through Lord Ashley, at the disposal of the Visiting Justices for such uses as they thought best, it was ordered that the said sum be added to the Charitable Fund for discharged Patients, and invested



in the Savings Bank as principal, in the names of the Visiting Justices, and the interest accruing therefrom to be applied to the same charitable purposes as the rest of the said Fund has hitherto been applied to; which is for assisting Patients on their recovery with small sums to enable them to support themselves until they can obtain work. And that the signatures of any two of the Visitors be in future sufficient for withdrawing any part of the said Fund, except the £100 aforesaid; which should be permanently invested as a foundation for future donations; and the Visitors at the same time especially recommend to the Magistrates, and the County at large, the great value of this excellent fund, which is wholly supported by the contributions of individuals.

The Visitors report that James Baker, convicted of robbing the mail and sentenced to transportation for life, has now been well for the last *six months*, the period required by the Secretary of State before the removal of a Lunatic Prisoner, and they have therefore directed that a letter should be written to the Secretary of State, and a certificate of the fact sent, in order that he may be removed to undergo his punishment.

The Clerk of the Peace having acted as Provisional Clerk since the death of his Father, the Visitors recommend that the Salary should be continued to him up to the 31st of December.

The expences of the last Quarter exceed the sum to be paid by the Parishes by £39, which sum the Visitors have ordered to be paid from the Contingent Fund. On the

whole year however the balance paid from the Maintenance Fund to the Contingent Fund has been £44.

The balance now on the Contingent Fund is £179 1s. 2d.

The rate of Maintenance is ordered to remain at Seven Shillings per Week.

JAMES A. TEMPLER,

*Chairman of the Visitors.*



A List of all Sums, for the Payment of which Orders have been made on the County Treasurer, during the last year:—

	£.	s.	d.
Commins, Printing . . . . .	11	1	0
Ensor, Stamps . . . . .	4	0	0
Northover, Bricklayer . . . . .	35	4	1
Munday, Wood . . . . .	21	5	$2\frac{3}{4}$
Warren, Fir Poles . . . . .	3	10	0
Tizard, Iron Work . . . . .	8	7	2
Farr, Plumber . . . . .	7	2	4
Assessed Taxes, Rates . . . . .	10	2	6
Galpin, Iron . . . . .	16	4	2
Gillingham, Iron . . . . .	17	11	1
Obbard, Lead . . . . .	3	11	6
	<hr/>		
	£137	19	$0\frac{2}{4}$
	<hr/>		



## FARM AND GARDEN ACCOUNT.

*Expenditure.*

	£.	s.	d.
To Hay .. .. .	15	0	0
— Barley Meal, Pollard, &c. .. .. .	17	3	9
— Garden Seeds .. .. .	5	2	6
— Manure from Eight Loads of Straw .. .. .	16	0	0
— Forty-Eight Quarters of Grains at 2s. per Quarter	4	16	0
— Gardener .. .. .	30	0	0

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£88 2 3

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## FARM AND GARDEN ACCOUNT.

		<i>Receipt.</i>						
		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
By 270 lbs. of Butter ..	.. at	0	1	0	per lb.	13	10	0
— 1513 Gallons of Milk ..		0	0	7	per gal.	44	2	7
— 157 lbs. of Veal ..	..	0	0	6	per lb.	3	18	6
— 93 Score of Pork ..		0	8	0	per score	37	4	0
— 87 Sacks of Potatoes ..		0	6	6	per sack	28	12	0
— 113 Bushels of Carrots ..		0	1	6	per bush.	8	9	6
— 28½ Cwt. of Parsnips ..		0	5	0	per cwt.	7	2	6
— 143 Bushels of Cabbage		0	0	8	per bush.	4	15	4
— 16 Bushels of Turnips ..		0	1	3	per bush.	1	0	0
— 19 Bushels of Onions ..		0	6	8	per bush.	6	6	8
— 14 Bushels of Peas, Beans ..		0	1	6	per bush.	1	1	0
— 13 Ton of Mangel Wurtzel		1	0	0	per ton	13	0	0
— 3 Quarters of Bone ..	..	1	2	0	per qr.	3	6	0

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£172 8 1

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## MAINTENANCE ACCOUNT,

*Receipts.*

	£.	s.	d.
Amount received from Parishes .. .. .	2071	6	0
Received from Mr. Browne's Benefaction Fund	135	0	0

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£2206 6 0

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For the year ending December 20th, 1844.

<i>Payments.</i>		£.	s.	d.
Meat, Suet, &c. ....	.....	411	2	7
Bread .....	.....	239	9	6
Flour,.....	.....	35	2	0
Milk .....	.....	4	17	5
Butter .. ..	.....	28	1	0
Eggs .....	.....	0	17	4
Rice, Oatmeal, and Peas .....	.....	29	14	9
Drugs, Surgery, &c. ....	.....	58	19	7
Cheese .. ..	.....	67	5	2
Soap and Soda .....	.....	21	17	3
Grocery .. ..	.....	66	18	8
Candles .....	.....	9	17	3
Coals.....	.....	144	0	6
Hay, Corn, Straw, and Pollard .. ..	.....	76	6	5
Garden seeds, Potatoes, &c. .. ..	.....	48	2	6
Wine, and Spirits .....	.....	28	10	0
Malt, and Hops.....	.....	167	19	4
Brooms, Brushes, Cooperage, &c... ..	.....	23	17	1
Linen, Clothing, and Bedding .....	.....	137	0	3
Tin, Earthenware, Ironmongery, &c. ....	.....	49	9	6
Stationery, Postage, and Carriage .....	.....	17	1	3
Sundries .....	.....	8	12	5
		<hr/>		
		1675	1	9
Officers' Salaries and Servant's Wages .....	.....	486	15	0
		<hr/>		
		2161	16	9
Balance paid to Contingent Fund .....	.....	44	9	3
		<hr/>		
		£ 2206	6	0
		<hr/>		

FOURTH REPORT  
OF THE  
*SUPERINTENDING PHYSICIAN.*

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MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

From the accompanying tables, which I beg leave to present, it will appear that there were

	Males.	Females.	Total.
In the house on the 31st of } December, 1843 . . . . . }	46	60	106
Admitted since . . . . .	15	29	44
Discharged Cured . . . . .	7	18	25
—————Relieved . . . . .	0	1	1
Died . . . . .	4	6	10
Remaining 31st Dec., 1844	50	64	114

Patients Admitted, Discharged, and Dead, during the Quarter ending 31st of December, 1844.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
In the Asylum, 19th Sept.	48	66	114
Admitted . . . . .	4	4	8
Discharged . . . . .	2	3	5
Dead . . . . .	0	3	3



	Males.	Females.	Total.
Admitted since the Asylum was opened in 1832 . . . . .	201	254	455
Discharged . . . . .	93	123	216
Died . . . . .	59	65	124
Escaped . . . . .	0	1	1

ADMISSIONS.—The number of patients admitted into the Asylum during the year ending 31st of December, 1844, has been 44, viz., 15 males, and 29 females. This is a larger number than has been received in any previous year, since the opening of the Institution. Of this number, 16 were received within 3 months of the first accession of the disorder; 9 had been insane during a period of 3 months and of 1 year, and 10 upwards of 1 year; 8 were cases of relapse; of these 5 had been previously in the Asylum. The re-admissions have taken place at the following intervals, viz.—

1	within . . . . .	7 months
1	. . . . .	2½ years
2	. . . . .	8 years
1	. . . . .	8½ years

The re-admission mentioned, as occurring within the period of 7 months, was the case of A. R. On his return home, after his recovery, he found that many articles of furniture were missing from his house, and, in reply to his inquiries, his wife informed him that sheer necessity had obliged her to pledge them. He soon observed a great alteration in his wife's behaviour towards him; she was evidently careless about his comfort, and frequently annoyed him with such observations as, "Oh, you have been



mad; you had better go back to the Asylum." He was altogether unable to account for her conduct; and though his neighbours told him she had been unfaithful to him during his absence, he resisted the idea, until the fact was too clear to admit of further doubt. His domestic comfort being destroyed, home was hateful to him, his mind became agitated and depressed, sleep forsook him, and in an agony of despair, he suspended himself with a rope in an outhouse, where he was discovered just in time to save his life.

Cases sometimes occur in which, although the excitable character of the patient is known, and some fears may be entertained of a relapse, yet it is almost impossible to resist the entreaties of the patient and of his friends to liberate him. The assurance of those who knew him best, that he is as well as he was before the attack, added to his rational behaviour, continued, perhaps, for some months, and the fact that the delusions under which he laboured have passed away with the maniacal paroxysm, render his further detention apparently almost unjustifiable. It, however, too often happens that when removed from the regularity and discipline of an Asylum, and subjected to various exciting causes, from the influence of which the friends of the patient are not sufficiently careful to guard him, the mind loses its equilibrium, and a recurrence of the disease is the result.

Of the number discharged this year, one has been known to have relapsed, although he has not returned to the Asylum. His first attack was brought on by anxiety about pecuniary affairs, having involved himself in too



much business. After remaining in the Asylum a few months his delusions passed away, and his health was re-established. He was frequently visited by his wife, and considered by her perfectly recovered for some time previously to his discharge. She was cautioned to check the first appearance of extravagance, and to prevent him from engaging in more business, until he should be quite able to undertake it. Unfortunately this caution was disregarded, and, with the sanction of his wife, he commenced pulling down an old house, and re-building it. This proved too much for his mind, and a relapse into his former state followed.

One Criminal Lunatic has been received this year from the County Gaol, an agricultural labourer, age 21. He became acquainted with several men of depraved character, with whom he commenced his guilty career by stealing fowls from the neighbouring farmers. He soon assisted his wicked companions to commit more daring acts. At length they planned and executed the robbery of the mail cart, and he presented a pistol at the driver's head. This took place within a hundred yards of the village, to which they immediately returned, and were the foremost in offering their services in searching for the robbers. For some days no clue could be obtained; at length he confessed his participation in it, and informed against one of his accomplices, who was also charged with housebreaking, to which he pleaded guilty, and was transported for 10 years. He himself was sentenced to be transported for life, but soon after he became insane, and was sent by an order of the Secretary of State to the Asylum. From the



day of his admission he has manifested no symptoms of insanity. He is of weak intellect, and might be easily induced to become the tool of a designing person.

**HEREDITARY PREDISPOSITION.**—Hereditary predisposition to insanity was ascertained to exist in 36.36 per cent of the cases admitted. In case No. 5 of the table of Admissions, the Father, two Brothers, and a Nephew of the patient suffered from the disease; No. 11, the Father and Mother; No. 19, the Mother and Sister; No. 21, the Mother and Cousin; No. 25, the Father; No. 26, the maternal Grandmother, Mother, and Sister; No. 35, the Mother and two Sisters; No. 37, the Father and Sister; No. 39, the Father and Mother; Nos. 12, 20, 27, 31, 33, 42, and 43, the Mothers; and in 3 cases the disorder displayed itself in collateral branches of the families of these several patients. This subject, which is of great practical importance, as well as of the greatest interest, has not yet obtained that attention which it imperatively demands.

In the above cases, the causes of constitutional peculiarity must be considered congenital, or as having an hereditary origin, as, in several of them, eccentricities of conduct were observable from birth. That mental, as well as physical, diseases are transmitted from parents to their offspring, is evident from the fact that many children exhibit, in early infancy, symptoms of the distressful malady under which the parents have suffered. Whether the disease prevails to a greater extent on the maternal or paternal side, is difficult to state, perhaps it exists in both



to nearly an equal degree: however, as yet no statistical data exist, upon which to base a sound conclusion.

**SUICIDAL PATIENTS.**—In 10 cases a suicidal disposition had exhibited itself, previously to admission; and, in 4 instances, attempts at self-destruction have been made during the year. Two male patients attempted to hang themselves, and two females endeavoured to accomplish the same object by strangling. One of these attempts was made in the presence of two nurses, who were sitting up with the patient. She had tied the string of her night dress tightly round her neck, and, on its being removed, she said she was commanded to do it, and must do it. To effect her object, and lull all suspicion, she threw the bed-clothes over her head, as if she were going to sleep, and thus for the moment eluded the vigilance of both her attendants.

**REFUSAL OF FOOD.**—The average daily number of those who have refused their food, or have required to be fed, has been 3. This refusal has, in most cases, been the result of delusions, varying in almost every individual. One female would not take it from an idea that she was immortal; another conceived the food passed up into her brain; a man was brought to the Asylum who had taken nothing but liquids for six weeks; he imagined himself possessed of the devil; some think themselves unworthy, and others that their food is poisoned. In many of the above cases considerable disorder of the digestive organs existed, and on these being restored to a healthy state, the morbid phenomena disappeared.



There are two cases of an opposite character to the above. In one of them the voracious appetite returns periodically with the maniacal excitement; during its continuance the patient will devour all the food he can lay his hands on, and break open the cupboard in which the food is kept to satisfy his morbid craving. This state of repletion is succeeded by an attack of diarrhœa.

Depraved appetite exists in six cases at present in the house. In this form of disease human nature appears degraded to the lowest possible state; and such patients, if not prevented, will indulge in the most revolting and disgusting practices. The longer these habits are allowed to continue the more inveterate they become. The most vigilant and unremitting attention to the cultivation of cleanly habits must be strictly enforced; if these means fail they must be mechanically restrained, or they will sink into the lowest state of degradation. No quantity of food which may be given them, either during the day or the night, will satisfy this diseased propensity. In fact, they will sometimes avow, that they prefer any filth they can pick up, rather than the best food.

#### CHARACTER OF THE CASES ADMITTED.—

By a reference to the table of Admissions, it will be seen, that a decided improvement has taken place in the state of the patients, when received at the Asylum. It is to be hoped, the observations submitted in former reports have, in some degree, contributed to awaken the attention of the parochial authorities on the subject. It also appears from the table of Recoveries, that those parishes which have



sent their insane patients at an early period of the malady, have benefitted in a pecuniary point of view, by the more speedy recovery of their patients.

This, however, has not been the uniform practice of all; and it is with regret that the attention of the Committee is again invited to a consideration of the state of several patients, admitted during the year. From among them the three following cases are selected.

S. B. when admitted was a most frightfully savage looking being. His long black hair hung matted down his back and over his face; his beard had not been removed for a long time; the saliva drivelled down his chin; and to aggravate the terror which he inspired, he frequently burst into a loud unmeaning laugh, scarcely human. His gait was unsteady, his speech and language muffled and incoherent. He was formerly an industrious labourer; but whilst employed in threshing, he received an injury in his head from the machine, and soon after became insane. He was for fifteen months permitted to wander about the streets and lanes, an object of derision to idle boys, who would blacken his face and follow him with tin kettles, &c. During this time two parishes were disputing as to his settlement! When he was removed, his disease had reached the incurable stage, and he had been rendered a permanent burden upon his parish for life.

J. C., aged 80, was formerly a baker. From bad debts he became greatly reduced in his circumstances. He was placed by the parish under the care of his daughter, who was allowed, for the support of him and his wife, 4s. 6d. a week. As old age advanced, he became childish, and



would frequently wander about without knowing whither. He eventually became perfectly helpless, and so dirty in his habits, as to require the constant attendance of one person. Application was made for an increase of the weekly allowance; when he was taken into the Union: whence, however, he was, in consequence of his helplessness, soon removed to Forston. When brought to the Asylum, he was in a state of great weakness; his vision and hearing were nearly gone, and he was totally unable to assist himself in any way. By the use of a generous diet and wine, he gained strength, and, to a certain degree, habits of cleanliness were superinduced. After a few months residence in the Asylum he was seized with paralysis, from which he recovered, but soon after experienced a second and more aggravated attack, which speedily terminated his existence.

E. B. Third attack. She had been six weeks insane, and was attended by the Surgeon of the Union, and *2s. 6d.* a week was allowed for her. She resided with her daughter. Being quite aware of her calamity, and having an irresistible desire to destroy herself, she requested that every knife might be kept out of her reach. One evening, however, she contrived to elude the vigilance of her daughter, and threw herself into a river. A labouring man who was passing discovered her in the water, and dragged her ashore, apparently lifeless, but by the persevering efforts of her friends she was restored. Three days after she was sent to the Asylum in an exhausted, and, to all appearance, in a dying condition. After lying in a very precarious state for three weeks, and requiring the



most unremitting attention, she slowly regained strength; but there is scarcely any hope of her ultimate recovery.

These statements must not be dismissed with a hasty glance, but require to be examined in detail. The agony endured by some of these poor creatures, during the period they are detained at their own homes, where no efficient medical nor moral treatment can be adopted, must not be forgotten. Their friends have, in general, hardly any idea how such cases should be managed, and no means at their disposal to afford the requisite assistance to the medical attendant; much less can they devise means of diverting the diseased train of thought, or of providing the mind with any kind of healthful exercise. The consequence is, there is in each case an amount of suffering, which, if properly known, cannot but awaken the most painful feeling in every generous bosom.

The above case of S. B. illustrates the privations, to which some of the insane poor are subjected, from a delay occurring in obtaining an order of settlement when a dispute concerning it arises between two parishes. The present law seems to require so many proofs of settlement, that it is in some instances difficult for even competent persons to form any clear opinion upon the subject, and great inconvenience is frequently the result. It is highly desirable that, in reference to the insane, some measures should be adopted to remedy this evil, which sometimes falls with overwhelming weight on the unhappy victim. The patients themselves are incapable of giving unexceptionable information respecting their parishes, and their friends are in many cases ignorant where application ought



to be made. Had this case been sent at once to the Asylum, a cure might probably have been effected, and the poor man been restored to society: the parish would have been relieved of the double burden of supporting him for the rest of his life, and maintaining his wife and children. If the officers of the parish, in which a person becomes insane, could at once administer the necessary relief, by removing the pauper lunatic to an Asylum, and would become chargeable for his support until the settlement could be ascertained; much misery and suffering, to say nothing of useless expense, might be spared; but, unfortunately, the law at present appears to prohibit the removal of the pauper lunatic, until it can be decided to what parish the individual belongs.

**CAUSES OF DISORDER.**—Among the exciting causes, distress, in its varied forms, predominates. In several cases, the malady has been the result of diseases which had deranged the digestive functions, and impaired the assimilative powers, which diseases were the consequence of the privations and disadvantages to which poverty is exposed. In four of the cases admitted in the past year, the exciting cause of the malady was stated to be Intemperance. The subjects were all males. This is a larger number than usual from this cause, but it should be observed, that one of these laboured under congenital imbecility, and in two others there was hereditary predisposition to insanity. In many cases two causes were assigned, one physical, the other moral.



DEATHS.—The mortality has been less than the usual average, being, on the number daily resident, 8.79 per cent. Of these, being 10 in the whole, 2 deaths were from Consumption; 3 from General Paralysis, complicated with Epilepsy; 2 died of Apoplexy; 1 of Bronchitis; 1 of Old Age; and 1 of Typhus Fever. This last case was unfortunately mistaken for one of insanity. She lived only five days after her admission. The nurses who attended on her, and the Medical Superintendent, suffered slightly from the contagion; but the prompt measures had recourse to were happily effectual in arresting its further progress.

The average age at the time of death was 54.55 years; and the average duration of the disease 4 years.

One died after a residence of 5 days; one of 12 days; one of 5 weeks; three within 5 months; one within 10 months; and three had resided 5, 7, and 9 years respectively.

The general health of the patients has been extremely good throughout the year.

DISCHARGES.—25 Patients have been discharged recovered, of whom 17 were admitted during the year. This is a larger number of recoveries than has taken place in any one year since the opening of the Institution; and may be attributed to a greater number than formerly being admitted in the incipient stage of the disorder. Of 16 received within 3 months of the first attack, 13, or 81.25 per cent, have been restored to reason. In those cases of relapse in which the disorder had been of more than 3, and of less than 12 months' duration, 58.29 per cent have recovered.



M. T., a female, respecting whom a letter was received from the Overseer on the 9th of May, stating, that the necessary forms were filled up, and that, in the opinion of the medical officer, she ought to be sent to the Asylum. This letter was replied to, and on the 17th of May another note was received from the Overseer, announcing, that the health of M. T. was improved, and that, should she continue to improve, she would not be sent to the Asylum. In answer to this communication, the Overseer was informed, that, by detaining an insane pauper out of the Asylum, after the necessary warrant for removal had been signed by two magistrates, he subjected himself to a penalty of £10, on an indictment at the Quarter Sessions; and that the subject must, at the next meeting, be laid before the Committee, who had publicly expressed their determination, in such cases, to avail themselves of the punitive power of the law. On the 21st of May, the woman was sent to the Asylum; the warrant having been signed on the 8th of May, with the following certificate from the medical officer attached: "I have been acquainted with M. T. about three years, during the whole of which time she has been the subject of Hypochondriasis, with great derangement of the digestive organs. Her intellect never appeared to be very quick, and her disposition reserved and sullen. Her bodily ailments, which her melancholy disposition has tended much to magnify, together with the loss of a child, and the perversion of religious ideas, have now brought her to that state, that, if not remedied by proper care, and above all, by removal from her present associations and habits, I have no doubt



but she will be the subject, and that speedily, of confirmed, if not incurable, insanity." The overseer stated, that the delay in sending her was occasioned by the Board having taken a lodging for her for a month, at the end of which time, if she continued in the same state, it was intended to send her to the Asylum.

It was but too evident that she had suffered much from long continued and violent disturbance of the digestive functions, especially the liver, and concomitant with which mental disease had supervened. Her mind was depressed with gloomy and distressful apprehension, that she was possessed with the devil, and was about to die every moment. As her general health improved, and the functions of the liver regained their healthy tone, the mental depression, and the sullen reserved disposition gave way to cheerfulness, and a lively flow of spirits. Indeed, so great was the alteration in her appearance and deportment, that the medical gentleman who had previously attended her, could not, on visiting the Asylum, at first recognize her. She evinced much sensibility, and often expressed her gratitude for the kindness shown her while in the Institution. It is to be feared, that the harsh treatment she had received from her husband's mother, had the effect of producing much of the depression of spirits, &c., alluded to by the medical officer. She recovered, and was discharged two months after her admission.

E. P. became insane after a severe attack of rheumatic fever. She remained with her friends about a fortnight, when, in consequence of her violent and destructive propensities, she was removed to the Union. Here she



remained nearly a month, her violence still increasing, when application was made for her admission to Forston. On the Visiting Justices making inquiry relative to her detention for so long a period, the reply returned by the Board of Guardians was, that as soon as she was considered dangerous, steps were taken for her removal. Her recovery took place in about five months. A singular circumstance connected with this case is, that her mother had suffered from an attack of insanity at the same age, and the disease assumed the same form. Previously to her becoming insane her memory was very defective, but after her recovery it became most tenacious.

From this last case it would appear, that the delay was occasioned by the wording of the Act, which mentions "Dangerous Lunatics, Insane Persons, and Idiots;" and it is to be apprehended, many have, from this cause, been detained, until some positive instance of danger to the life of some one has occurred, and the disease has thus been suffered to attain such a stage, as to render the patient irrecoverable by any subsequent treatment.

Two individuals have been received who had supposed themselves, or were thought so by their friends, to be bewitched: recourse was accordingly had to the "Cunning or Wise Man," as such a person is popularly termed. One of these cases, a sailor, aged 40, may be mentioned.

By industry and care he had saved a considerable sum of money, which he lent out on interest to different individuals. Having formed an acquaintance with a female whom he proposed to marry, he wished to call in his money to enable him to engage in some business. On



applying to the persons to whom it was lent he found they were not prepared to repay him, and his principal debtor proved insolvent. The marriage was consequently delayed, and there was the prospect of his losing the greater portion of his money. These circumstances so affected his mind that he became insane. He was placed under medical treatment, but not receiving benefit so speedily as his friends desired, it was determined other advice should be sought; and as he entertained the notion that he was bewitched, a "wise man" was to be consulted, who had acquired considerable notoriety in the neighbourhood, on account of his pretended influence over witches, and his power to foretell future events. When he went to this man's house, he was received by a young woman, who informed him the "doctor" was from home, but was shortly expected, and conducting him into a room, across which hung a screen, she entered into conversation with him, and induced him to relate to her his complaints, presently in came the "doctor," booted and spurred as if from a journey, and accosting the poor fellow with "Ah young man! I see what is the matter with you," proceeded to recount his misfortunes, which he, of course, had overheard behind the screen. The patient was astonished at the prescience of the doctor, and promised implicitly to follow his directions. These were, to suspend a small linen bag, which he gave him, round his neck, and on no account to let it drop on the ground, or to open it, by doing either of which the charm would be destroyed. On his return home, he was to procure a quantity of white thorn, black thorn, rusty nails, and pins, to put these



together into an earthen vessel with some water, which was to be placed over the fire, and be allowed to boil for a certain time. He was then to dig a hole in the garden, into which he was ordered to pour the contents of the pot, and as these rotted, the witch, the cause of all his sorrows, would pine away and die, and he would gradually regain all he had lost.

Although he rigidly observed the directions prescribed, he nevertheless got worse, and an attack of mania coming on, he was sent to the Asylum. The bag on being opened was found to contain an oblong piece of dirty red sealing wax, in several envelopes of brown paper. On his recovery, which took place in about four months, the absurdity of the proceeding was pointed out to him, and he frankly confessed, that he had been the victim of a gross imposition, as the doctor had not forgotten to extort his fee.

Insanity sometimes betrays itself in a feeling of suspicion. In some instances this feeling is directed against one individual, in other cases, it extends to almost every one the person happens to meet with. The idea prevails that different persons, perhaps members of their own family, have entered into a conspiracy against them, and that their domestic comfort is broken up. They will relate their supposed grievances to a distant member of their own family, or to some friend, with an accuracy and minuteness, which leave little or no doubt as to the correctness of their tale; they obtain sympathy in their imaginary wrongs; the parties complained of are looked on with coolness; and not unfrequently serious misunderstandings and family dissensions are the result. Insanity



often exists without being suspected. The altered character of the individual is unnoticed, or is attributed to the unkind treatment he is supposed to be receiving, or to bad temper. At length, some crowning circumstance takes place, and then the state of the person is no longer considered doubtful. He is pronounced to be insane, but alas! the disease, from length of time, &c., has become confirmed, all favourable opportunities of cure having been neglected, and, in but too many cases, the sufferer is confined for life.

J. S., aged 36, was for many years servant in a gentleman's family, in which situation she had saved some money. This was placed in the Isle of Wight Bank, which failing, she was deprived of all her savings. Her unfortunate loss brought on a depression of spirits, she became reserved and melancholy, and manifested a feeling of suspicion towards her fellow-servants. She accused them of having entered into a conspiracy against her, and of spreading reports prejudicial to her character. Her peculiarities were considered only as the result of an irritable temper, and no further notice was taken of her conduct. The result, however, was that the disease increased, and an accession of raving mania suddenly exhibited itself. Matters were now brought to a crisis, and she was sent to the Asylum. Previously to her admission, she was subjected to copious venesection, with a view of subduing her violence, but a contrary effect was produced, and the cerebral excitement was greatly aggravated. On the subsidence of the maniacal symptoms, she sunk into a state of alarming exhaustion, accompanied



with low typhoid symptoms. After some weeks she gradually recovered, and was discharged in about four months.

The indiscriminate resource to copious venesection in all cases of mania cannot be too strongly condemned, and it is hoped, that medical men, whose attention has not been peculiarly directed to the treatment of the insane, will never resort to it until after the most serious deliberation; all experience being unfavourable to its indiscriminate application, and demonstrative of the fact, that idiocy and death are occasionally the result.

**DIET.**—The beneficial effects mentioned in the last report resulting from the increased dietary continue to be experienced in the improved health of the old cases in the house. It is possible that it has in some measure contributed to increase the number of recoveries, and to diminish the extent of the mortality within the Institution. The great importance of this subject will be evident, when it is considered that a morbid condition of the body is induced, either by the want of a sufficient quantity of food, or by a long continued use of innutritious aliment. A degree of health may for a time be maintained on an irregular or precarious diet, but this cannot continue long, without producing unfavourable effects on the constitution. If disease set in under such circumstances, with the mind harassed and overwhelmed with anxieties, the constitution will frequently be found unable to resist its attacks. Of all the varied causes, which depress the vital powers and produce irritation of the mind, a constant state of mental anxiety is, probably, by far the most effective. In very



many instances, the only assigned exciting cause of the insanity is poverty. Such cases, on admission, are easily detected by the pale sallow countenance, emaciation of the whole frame, and the appearance of premature old age. The physical functions are, more or less, imperfectly performed, and the mind becomes dejected. Hence the necessity, in cases of derangement, of a nutritious diet, by which the physical and mental health may be improved, and recovery accelerated.

**EMPLOYMENT.**—Great benefit continues to be derived from the occupation of the male patients in gardening and out-door labour. They are not, however, so employed on an average more than six or seven hours daily, not including the intervals allowed for meals. It is of the utmost importance to provide healthy employment for the insane, and carefully to guard against their being idle or unemployed; the consequence of which would be, they would sink into irrecoverable indolence, inactivity, and unconcern; or they would become irritable, discontented, noisy, and violent. Regular, active occupation tends to prevent them sinking into a state of dementia on the one hand, and becoming the subjects of high maniacal excitement on the other.

Many alterations have been effected during the year, all tending to the benefit of the Institution, and the welfare of the patients. Among the improvements may be mentioned, the excavating of a reservoir for water, and laying down the pipes for conveying it upon the hill, by means of a pump placed at the bottom. Water is thus obtained for



the use of the cattle, and also a supply for watering a part of the hill, the good effects of which were experienced in the quantity of grass produced during the last dry summer. This, together with levelling and laying the turf on the hill, wheeling in dirt, which had for years been accumulating by the road-side, and spreading it on the land, has furnished the male patients with additional employment. For several weeks, during the excavations necessary for the buildings in progress, 14 patients were daily employed in removing the chalk and filling up a dangerous pit. Two of the men who had been used to work in the quarries, squared the large stones taken off the roof of the old offices, and set them round the walks in the kitchen garden. 150 pairs of Lancashire clogs for the gaol, and 20 pairs of shoes for the County Hospital have also been made by the patients.

The average number daily employed has been 37 males, and 53 Females.

The appearance of the Airing courts has been rendered more cheerful by forming gravel walks through the grass plats round the flower beds; and although shrubs and flowers are planted in the airing grounds for the refractory patients, hitherto no instance has occurred of the wilful injury of a single plant.

One young man, whose previous employment had been that of a plough-boy, was taken into the shoemaker's shop, with a view of teaching him the trade. He appeared much pleased, and was very thankful. With much industry he applied himself to the work, and in six weeks he was able to complete a shoe.



AMUSEMENTS.—The entertainments, mentioned in former reports, are still attended with much benefit as auxiliaries in the moral treatment of the insane. The patients highly estimate the privilege of spending a few hours together in social enjoyment, and the evening is looked forward to with much pleasure. The cheering effect of these entertainments was very evident in the case of a male patient, who had for years laboured under great dejection of mind. He was prevailed upon to attend the party, and, for some time, sat a silent spectator of the animating scene. He was observed after a while to take an interest in the proceedings, and at length, in a low tone of voice, asked if he might be allowed to play on the violin. He immediately commenced playing, while some of the other patients danced; his despondency gave place to cheerfulness, and, the remainder of the evening, he was one of the happiest of the party. A patient, who had been recently admitted, observed on one of these occasions, “If you were to tell people, out of doors, of the delightful manner in which the evening was spent in the Asylum, they would not believe it.”

Music forms, on the male side of the house, a source of daily amusement; the half-hour before they return to work, being generally spent in playing on the Violin or Accordion and singing. A male patient, who is generally at the stable, saved up the sixpences which had been given him by the visitors, and bought an accordion, on which he has learnt, without any assistance, to play with considerable skill. With his success, as may be supposed, he is not a little pleased, and is particularly delighted when he can



attract the attention of strangers, by playing on his instrument. Besides gratifying his love of approbation, of which he has no small share, his chief object is to gain an opportunity of informing them of his illegal detention at the Asylum, by the gentleman in whose service he formerly lived, and who, he conceives, has placed him where he is to save £100 a year. On these occasions his language and manner are sometimes incoherent and excited; and he soon betrays the necessity which exists for his confinement. It is often necessary to warn strangers against continuing long to listen to his tale, as the excitement produced does not soon pass off, but disturbs his mind for several days and nights afterwards. This man has a great antipathy to dogs. Useful as he is in the stable, he has, nevertheless, a strange fancy for trimming horses, and on one occasion a gentleman's horse, which had been left for a few hours in the stable, was brought to the door with its beautifully flowing mane and tail cropped. Of course he has since been strictly charged on no account to indulge his taste in this way; he continues occasionally, however, to throw out remarks which prove the propensity still exists. His plausibility is surprising, especially in blending falsehood with some little truth.

**CHARITABLE FUND.**—Means of temporary relief have been afforded by this fund to several unfortunate and destitute patients, who have recovered during the year; and although mention has been made of this most useful fund in former reports, yet the importance of its object requires that it should never be forgotten. Much



good has been done in the past year from this benevolent resource, but had the extent of the means allowed, the destitution and misery which have been presented, might have been more effectually relieved. To those who have so generously come forward in support of this charity, the warmest gratitude is respectfully and sincerely tendered. The blessing of those who are ready to perish will descend upon them, and they will have the reward promised to those, who from Christian feelings of humanity, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and pour the balm of consolation into the hearts of the distressed.

The following cases are selected from among those who have this year been assisted from the fund.

S. V., a married woman with one child. After a continuance of unkind treatment, her husband deserted her, and she had to support herself and her child. For a time she was able to do this by dress making, but her spirits sunk, her bodily health became greatly impaired, and she was ultimately seized with an attack of mania, in which state she was brought to the Asylum. After about twelve months she was discharged cured, and, on her return home, the small sum given her from this fund, enabled her to support herself until she could obtain work. But for this timely relief, she must, on leaving the Asylum, have gone to the Union. She was subsequently visited, and expressed her deep feeling of gratitude for the comparatively comfortable circumstances, in which she had been able to place herself through the aid afforded.

P. B., a married man with four children. Not being able to procure work in the place where he resided, he



travelled in search of employment, but not meeting with success he returned home in a state little short of starvation. He was assessed to the poor rate, and not paying, was summoned before a Magistrate. He expressed his willingness to pay, but stated so great was his poverty, that he had parted with his last blanket to provide the means of support for himself and his family, without applying to the parish. Distress and anxiety, acting on a mind strongly predisposed to insanity, brought on an acute attack of mania, during which he cut his throat, but fortunately it did not prove fatal.

R. P. She had three previous attacks, and when admitted, had been insane about three weeks, occasioned by the sudden intelligence of her eldest son having fallen under the wheel of a cart, and having his thigh fractured. Her husband was a labourer with 7s. a week. Her eldest son had 1s. 6d. a week. With this they had to pay house rent, &c., and to keep a family of four children. On the wife's being removed to the Asylum, her husband not being able to procure attendance for the children, applied to the parish, and was received, with his children, into the Union. On her recovery, she found her husband had just left the Union with two of the children, and the little clothes she possessed before her illness had been parted with for food. She was supplied with a suit of clothing, and a small sum for her immediate necessities.

M. T., was discharged in 1843. A few weeks since she visited the Asylum, with a view of begging a few old clothes of the Officers and Servants. She was in a state of great wretchedness, and so destitute of clothing, that she



had to borrow a gown and cloak to enable her to undertake the journey, 14 miles. She was formerly employed in a factory, and by an accident her right hand was so injured that she was quite unable to use her needle, or indeed to do any kind of work except feed the carding machine. From the time of her discharge, a period of 18 months, she had not been able to procure even this kind of employment. She was allowed by the parish for the maintenance of herself and her child, 2s. in money, and two 4lb loaves a week. This was insufficient to procure the necessaries of life, but her condition was in some slight degree alleviated by her residing with her widowed mother, who was allowed 1s. 6d. and a loaf a week; making a total of 3s. 6d. and 12lbs. of bread a week, to provide rent, fuel, washing, food, and clothes, for the three persons. Of the last named article, she had not been able to obtain any since leaving the Asylum. The sum given her at that time had been laid out with rigid economy; a small additional sum was given her on her visit, and several of the domestics, taking a deep interest in her case, gave her some clothes and shoes. She appeared to feel truly grateful, and joyfully observed, "Now I shall be able to go to Church."

It must be a source of great gratification to every well-wisher of his fellow creatures, to know that at the present moment the feeling is daily becoming more general among the higher and influential classes of society, that the truest economy in the treatment of the insane, is to act towards them with the utmost delicacy and humanity, and to believe that they are, in many instances, capable of perfor-

ming duties and of appreciating the benevolent exertions of others towards them, to an extent which is hardly dreamt of by those who have no experience among them; in confirmation of which it is only necessary to refer to the recent most valuable Report of the Metropolitan Commissioners in Lunacy, (although perhaps some of the suggestions are not altogether unexceptionable,) together with their highly important Statistical Tables, more recently printed, and the mass of evidence, collected last year by the Lord's Committee, in their Report on the state of Pauper Lunatics in Ireland. These most important documents, encourage the hope that the period cannot be very remote when an uniformly enlightened and humane system of treatment shall be acted upon throughout all the Asylums in the British Empire, and thus not merely throw additional light upon the treatment of Insanity, but also lead to the discovery of some means by which its frightful increase may be checked, if not materially averted, especially as regards old and chronic cases, too often the results of neglect of all proper treatment and care at the very outbreak of the disease.

G. P. BUTTON.



TABLE OF ADMISSIONS.

No.	Sex	Age	Assigned Cause of Disorder.	Duration of Disorder when Admitted.	No. of Attacks.	Form of Disorder.
1	M	37	Conjugal unhappiness	1 month	2	Melancholia
2	F	70	Long continued ill health	1 month	2	Melancholia
3	F	50	Poverty	13 years		Mania
4	M	21	Disappointed views	9 months		Mania
5	F	71	Poverty, hereditary	3 weeks		Mania
6	F	68	Poverty	2 months	4	Melancholia
7	F	35	Fear	3 weeks	4	Mania
8	F	37	Loss of Property	1 month		Mania
9	M	40	Loss of Property	3 months		Melancholia
10	M	45	Anxiety	3 months		Mania
11	F	19	Fever, hereditary	2 months		Mania
12	F	47	Conjugal unhappiness, hereditary	20 years		Melancholia
13	F	33	Conjugal unhappiness	3 months		Mania
14	F	26	Remorse	15 months		Mania
15	F	40	Long continued ill health	2 months		Melancholia
16	M	25	Intemperance	1 year		Mania
17	F	55	Fear	2 weeks	3	Mania
18	F	37	Conjugal unhappiness, hereditary	6 months		Mania
19	F	47	Fear, hereditary	1 month		Mania
20	F	21	Reverses	9 months		Dementia & Paralysis
21	M	42	Injury of head, hereditary	6 weeks		Melancholia, Refuse Food
22	M	57	Intemperance	3 months	2	Mania
23	F	69	Senility	1 month		Mania
24	M	25	Remorse	2 months		Mania
25	M	33	Anxiety, hereditary	2 months		Mania
26	M	37	Intemperance, hereditary	6 weeks		Mania
27	F	50	Disappointed affections, hereditary	30 years		Dementia
28	M	71	Intemperance	6 months		Mania
29	F	45	Grief	1 month		Mania
30	M	72	Reverses	1 month	2	Mania
31	F	19	Congenital imbecility, hereditary			Mania
32	F	26	Remorse	16 months		Mania
33	F	40	Idiotcy, hereditary			Idiotcy
34	F	50	Typhus Fever	7 months		Mania
35	F	50	Anxiety, hereditary	sever. years		Melancholia
36	F	50	Fear	3 weeks		Mania
37	M	68	Domestic trouble, hereditary	6 months		Melancholia
38	F	32	Injury of head	1 year		Mania
39	F	50	Long continued ill health hereditary	6 months		Melancholia
40	M	42	Excessive use of mercury	unknown		Mania, General Paralysis
41	F	56	Unknown	sever. years	2	Mania
42	M	45	Disappointed hope, hereditary	3 months		Melancholia and Epilepsy
43	M	23	Long continued ill health hereditary	6 months		Mania
44	F	29	Typhus Fever	2 weeks		

TABLE OF DISCHARGES.

No.	Sex	Age	Duration of Disorder when Admitted.	No. of Attacks	Assigned Cause of Disorder.	Form of Disorder.
1	M	35	1 month	2	Disappointed hope	Mania
2	F	66	7 months	2	Hereditary	Melancholia
3	F	45	1 month	2	Depraved conduct	Mania
4	F	70	1 month	2	Long continued ill health	Melancholia
5	F	71	3 weeks	2	Poverty, hereditary	Mania
6	F	45	3 months	3	Anxiety, hereditary	Mania
7	F	43	1 year	2	Long continued ill health	Mania
8	F	40	2 months	2	Long continued ill health	Melancholia
9	M	40	3 months	2	Pecuniary losses	Melancholia
10	F	44	1 year	2	Fear, hereditary	Melancholia
11	F	44	1 month	2	Conjugal unhappiness, hereditary	Mania
12	F	33	3 months	2	Conjugal unhappiness	Mania
13	F	37	1 month	2	Pecuniary losses	Mania
14	F	26	15 months	2	Remorse	Mania
15	M	45	3 months	2	Anxiety respecting a livelihood	Mania
16	F	47	1 month	2	Fear	Mania
17	F	19	2 months	2	Rheumatic fever, hereditary	Mania
18	M	37	6 weeks	2	Intemperance, hereditary	Mania
19	M	30	4 months	2	Distressed circumstances, hereditary	Mania
20	F	55	2 weeks	2	Fear	Mania
21	F	35	3 weeks	3	Fear	Mania
22	F	33	2 months	3	Anxiety respecting a livelihood, hereditary	Mania
23	F	37	months	2	Domestic unhappiness	Mania
24	M	42	6 weeks	2	Injury of head	Melancholia
25	F	45	1 month	2	Grief	Mania
26	M	26	2 months	2	Remorse	Mania



OBITUARY TABLE.

No.	Sex.	Age.	Assigned cause.	Cause of Death	
1	M	61	Poverty	General Paralysis with Epilepsy	This was a case of confirmed Dementia, with General Paralysis and Epilepsy. He was perfectly helpless and inattentive to the calls of nature. When admitted he had been insane two years.
2	F	86	Intemperance	Old Age	This individual gradually sunk under the infirmities consequent on extreme old age. She had been insane eleven years, and had suffered from two previous attacks. She attained her 86th year.
3	M	50	Injury of Head	General Paralysis with Epilepsy	When admitted he had been insane two years. He suffered from General Paralysis, and as the disease progressed he became destructive and uncleanly. He was seized with Epileptic fits which increased in frequency and violence until he died.
4	F	51	Apoplexy	Apoplexy	She was suddenly seized with Apoplexy of an aggravated character, which speedily terminated in death. Her insanity, 8 years previously, supervened on an Apoplectic seizure.
5	M	80	Senility	Apoplexy	This was a case of Senile Dementia. He had been for years afflicted with Chronic Bronchitis. Death was occasioned by Apoplexy. He was in his 80th year.
6	F	21	Reverses	Consumption	This individual was reduced to a state of perfect idiotcy. She had suffered from a Paralytic seizure, which had deprived her of the use of her right side, and she could neither feed or dress herself. She was attacked with violent hæmorrhage from the lungs and expired instantaneously.
7	M	28	Hereditary	Consumption	The subject of this case had laboured under Mania. Pulmonary Consumption developed itself, and he gradually sunk. He had been insane five years.
8	F	58	Unknown	Bronchitis	Second Attack; insane many years. She laboured under Chronic Bronchitis, which was aggravated by exposure, during her journey, to the Asylum. She died in 12 days after her admission.
9	F	50	Fear	Paralysis	Within a period of 3 months she was the subject of four Paralytic seizures; the last of which terminated fatally within 19 hours after its accession.
10	F	30		Typhus Fever.	This patient, when admitted, was suffering from Typhus fever. She died within 5 days after her arrival.

# OBITUARY TABLE

Case of Death
<p>of Paralysis and Epilepsy. He was perfectly helpless and incontinent          ten inside ten years.</p>
<p>consequent on extreme old age. She had been inside eleven years          confined her fifth year.</p>
<p><b>ERRATA.</b></p>
<p>suffered from General Paralysis, and as the disease progressed he          seized with fits which increased in frequency and violence.</p>
<p>ated character which speedily terminated in death. Her insanity</p>
<p>for years afflicted with Chronic Bronchitis. Death was occasioned</p>
<p>erty. She had suffered from a Paralytic seizure, which had deprived          either food or dress herself. She was attacked with violent hiccups.</p>
<p>Lung Consumption developed itself, and he gradually sunk.</p>
<p>under Chronic Bronchitis, which was aggravated by exposure,          12 days after her admission.</p>
<p>from Paralytic seizure; the last of which terminated fatally within</p>
<p>plus four. She died within 5 days after her arrival.</p>