

Report of the Committee of Visitors for 1852 / Littlemore Asylum.

Contributors

Littlemore Asylum.
Hamersley, Hugh.
Pulling, Edwin W. R.

Publication/Creation

[Place of publication not identified] : [publisher not identified], [1853?]

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/zqwsd84e>

License and attribution

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

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



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

LITTLEMORE ASYLUM.

R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE OF VISITORS

FOR

1852.

BALTIMORE ASYLUM

REPORT
OF THE
COMMISSIONERS OF THE
BALTIMORE ASYLUM
FOR THE YEAR 1853

THE
BALTIMORE ASYLUM
FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB
AND FOR THE INSANE

BALTIMORE ASYLUM

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE

BALTIMORE ASYLUM

FOR THE YEAR 1853

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE

BALTIMORE ASYLUM

FOR THE YEAR 1853

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE

BALTIMORE ASYLUM

FOR THE YEAR 1853

LITTLEMORE ASYLUM.

[*comprising an union of the Counties of Oxford and Berks, the City of Oxford, and the Boroughs of Abingdon and Reading, for the maintenance of their Pauper Lunatics.*]

At the Monthly Meeting of the Committee of Visitors of the PAUPER LUNATIC ASYLUM at LITTLEMORE, OXFORDSHIRE, held at the Asylum on Wednesday the 22nd day of December 1852—

PRESENT

HUGH HAMERSLEY Esquire, <i>Vice-Chairman</i> ,	}	Justices of Oxfordshire.
and HENRY EDWARD FRANCIS LAMBERT Esquire,		

SIR ROBERT GEORGE THROCKMORTON Baronet,	}	Justices of Berkshire.
HENRY PHILIP POWYS Esquire,		
JOSEPH ARNOULD Esquire, M.D.		
EDMUND CURRIE Esquire,		
EDWARD TULL Esquire,		
and WILLIAM MORLAND Esquire,		

WILLIAM THORP Esquire,	}	Justices of the City of Oxford.
and GEORGE HENRY WARBURTON Esquire,		
and		

EDWARD MICKLEM Esquire,	}	Justices of the Borough of Reading.
and		
EDWARD HODGES Esquire,		

MULYBA 20MAY1911

The Committee agreed to the following

REPORT

to be presented respectively to the ensuing Courts of Quarter Sessions of the Counties of Oxford and Berks, to the next Meetings of the Councils of the City of Oxford and Borough of Reading, and to the ensuing Quarter Sessions of the Borough of Abingdon.

The value of this Institution, under its judicious Medical superintendence, has continued to manifest itself during the past year. The routine of duties has been observed by the Committee of Visitors themselves, and the general Rules of the Asylum, and the incidental Orders of the Committee, have been uniformly complied with by the several Officers and Servants of the Establishment, with the slight exceptions of neglect of duty in the instances of two or three of the Attendants, whose conduct (for the sake of discipline and example) was strictly marked, even by summary dismissal.

The number of Patients now in the Asylum is 369; (namely 161 Males and 208 Females.)

Up to this date in the present year, 27 Males and 13 Females have been discharged cured, and 19 Males and 23 Females have died.—The age of the oldest of the deceased Persons was 78, and the youngest 19 years; and the average age of the whole number was 49 years.

The number of Patients admitted since the commencement of the year has been 106* (of which number 57 were Males and 49 Female Patients; and of whom 6 Males and 5 Females had previously been confined in this Asylum.) The greatest number of Patients in the Asylum at any one time in the year 1851, was 353; whilst in the present year such greatest number has been 382.—An accession of Patients then, beyond the number for which the House was built, has led to some inconvenience; but this will be obviated in the Spring of the ensuing year, when the extension of two of the Wings of the Asylum and its enlargement and additional accommodation in other respects, (duly sanctioned, as will be re-

* Namely—

Oxfordshire Patients	42
Berkshire ditto	45
Oxford City ditto	13
Abingdon ditto	5
Reading ditto	1
TOTAL	106

membered, by the several Bodies in union,) will be completed for occupation. The Contract with Mr. Castle, the Builder, amounted to £2997 9s. 6d.; towards which sum he has already been paid £2350.—The amount of this Contract however, will unavoidably be exceeded by £550 in effecting an improvement well worth that expenditure, in building out Recesses to contain the Staircases in the new Wings, whereby additional rooms for Patients will be gained, and the requisite Bath Rooms will be added for these Wards within the area of the Recesses;—they being also usefully adapted for Ventilating Shafts, and Water Tanks.—And the expense of extending the Warming and Ventilating Apparatus to the new Wings, and then of furnishing them, will so add to the sum at present voted by the several Bodies in union that it will become necessary next year to apply to them for a further vote of money,—probably £1500 in the aggregate.

The subject of the unfitness of the Asylum to receive Criminal Lunatics, having pressed itself upon the attention of the Committee, they, at the commencement of the last Session of Parliament, presented, through the medium of their Chairman, a Petition to the House of Commons on the subject; and it may be useful here to embody the allegations and Prayer of that Document:—

“ That there are now in confinement in this Asylum four Patients who were, up to the days of their admission, Prisoners in Gaols within the County of Oxford or of Berks, under sentences for Criminal Offences of various degrees, who, having become insane whilst undergoing such sentences, were transferred, by a provision of the Statute Law, to this Asylum, by Warrant under the hand and seal of the Secretary of State of the Home Department.

“ That this Asylum was not originally built and is not adapted for the charge of this class of Patients, commonly known as ‘ Criminal Lunatics ;’ and that, practically, the care of them is found to interfere with the discipline and order of the Establishment.—And your Petitioners are of opinion that, with reference not only to this Institution, but to similar Institutions in the Country at large, it is important that a Building should be provided, under proper management, for the sole and exclusive custody of the class of Patients in question.

“ Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray your Honorable House to take the matter into your consideration, and to pass a Law in the present session of Parliament for providing,—at the National expense,—in such convenient locality as may be determined upon,—an Asylum for the custody and care of Criminal Lunatics.”

No Legislation has yet taken place upon this subject; but it is believed that it has been under the consideration of suc-

cessive Governments, and that the Commissioners in Lunacy are anxious that a National Establishment for the custody of Criminal Lunatics should be provided.

The Idiotic portion of the Patients (who however, are not numerous,) have, from the commencement of this Asylum, been distributed in the various Wards, associating with Persons of different degrees of mental alienation; and the Committee, entertaining a doubt whether a separate Ward should not be assigned to the Idiots, directed their serious attention to the question, but (under the advice of the Superintendent) the Committee did not think it requisite to interfere with the original arrangement of classifying the Idiots with the demented Patients.

This subject leads to the suggestion that Idiots,—or Persons originally and naturally without any mental power,—ought not perhaps, in strictness, to be admitted into an Asylum established for the maintenance and cure of those whose fatuity or defective intellect has been produced by disease; but the Committee conceive that they are best consulting the interests of humanity

and the common object of those who founded and now support this Institution, by avoiding too strict an examination of this question. And it should be understood that, practically, the Idiots sent to this Asylum are either epileptic or violent.

As to the Patients generally, a classification is discreetly observed by the Superintendent;—separating the quiet and timid of each sex from the noisy and violent.

The weekly charge for the maintenance of the Patients has been reduced in this year from eight shillings, to seven shillings and eight-pence; and, notwithstanding the recent rise in the price of Provisions, the Committee are enabled further to reduce the charge to seven shillings and sixpence, commencing on the 1st of January next.

The Annual Report of the Chaplain is appended to this; and will be read with interest.

On behalf of the Committee of Visitors,

HUGH HAMERSLEY

Vice-Chairman.

Littlemore, 22nd December 1852.

APPENDIX.

To the Committee of Visitors of the Littlemore Asylum.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg respectfully to present to you my Annual Report, which I trust you will consider as satisfactory as the Reports which I have had the pleasure of presenting to you on former occasions.

The number of Patients at present in the Asylum is 369, viz. 161 Males and 208 Females; and the average number attending Chapel in the course of the year, has been 218; viz. 84 Males and 134 Females. From the commencement of the year up to the present time, Divine Service has been interrupted on sixty-three occasions, by Patients being attacked with Fits; and one Female had to be removed in consequence of excitement.

During the first three weeks of last month serious indisposition prevented me from attending to my duties, and I was obliged on three Sundays to obtain professional assistance; but, with this exception, I have regularly performed the Sunday and Daily Services; and the numbers above stated, will prove that the Services have been well attended by the Patients.

I have also visited some, and frequently all the Wards daily, and have had much intercourse with the Patients, whom I usually find disposed and pleased to converse with me.

With the Superintendent's approval many of them have had the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered to them; and I have

always endeavoured to ascertain (as far as I could) that they understood the nature and purport of that Holy Ordinance.

It has been my custom to read Prayers to the sick Patients two or three times weekly throughout the year, and I have every reason to believe that my ministerial visits have been the means of affording them consolation; and some of them have said to me, that they thought they slept better on those nights, when I had visited them during the day.

Of this I feel convinced, that the Insane are capable of deriving much more comfort from the Religious Services in Chapel, and private Prayers in the Wards, than is generally supposed by those who are unacquainted with the different forms which insanity assumes.

Some who are full of delusions on a variety of subjects, are still sufficiently rational to attend, with all becoming seriousness, to their religious duties.

There are again others, who only have their periodical attacks, but in their lucid intervals are as well able to join in the Church Service, and understand the Sermon, as any of a similar grade in our agricultural districts. And, even in the worst cases, let us cherish the pleasing thought and hope, that the Almighty, through the ministration of His Holy Word, affords the afflicted Persons some inward consolation, although they may not be able to inform any one of it.

But I would here observe, that, be the Chaplain of an Asylum ever so cautious, it is impossible to prevent the Patients applying certain passages, either in the Prayers or Sermon, to themselves. For example,

one, at present in the Asylum, objects to the Prayers for the Royal Family, saying he is kept out of his property by them; and I have known several consider the 21st verse of the 74th Psalm,* "Look upon the covenant; for all the earth is full of darkness and cruel habitations," as having a special reference to Establishments of this description.

The majority of those who attend Chapel, are members of the Established Church; but there are several who belong to various denominations; namely, Wesleyans, Independents, and Baptists: and there is one Roman Catholic, and one a Member of the Society of Friends.

Having then, a Congregation composed of insane persons of different religious persuasions, it is my endeavour to address them in such a manner, as to give offence to none, but rather to please, instruct, and benefit all; and it is a gratifying fact to state, that, although I have now performed two thousand four hundred and fifty-nine distinct Services in Chapel, I have never known a single Patient manifest excitement, occasioned by any thing enunciated by me.

Since my illness, I have not been sufficiently well to resume my reading classes, but I hope to do so again shortly. 28 Males and 40 Females have been the average numbers attending these classes.

Many of the Patients are very fond of reading, and take great delight in perusing the Books belonging to the Asylum Library, which I am in the habit of lending to them from time to time.

* The Common Prayer Book version.

When not engaged in work, reading affords them the means of passing their time pleasantly and profitably; and it prevents them from brooding over their real, or imaginary troubles, which tends so much to retard their recovery.

I have the honor to remain,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient Servant,

EDWIN W. R. PULLING,

Chaplain.

Littlemore, December 22nd 1852.

Oxfordshire Epiphany Quarter Sessions 1853. Resolved that the REPORT of the Committee of Visitors of the LITTLEMORE ASYLUM be printed and circulated.

By the Court,

JOHN M. DAVENPORT

CLERK OF THE PEACE.

County Hall, 3rd January 1853.

