

Eighth annual report of the Suffolk Lunatic Asylum : December, 1845.

Contributors

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EIGHTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Suffolk

LUNATIC ASYLUM.

DECEMBER 1845.

Woodbridge:

PRINTED BY J. LODER, BOOKSELLER, STATIONER, AND BINDER.

1846.

EIGHTH

ANNUAL REPORT

TRUSTING MASTERS

OF THE

Public

of the City of New York, and the County of New York, in the year 1845.

MUNICIPAL ASSYLUM.

DECEMBER 1845

Printed by J. B. Lippincott, 151 N. 2nd St. Phila.

Entered

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1845

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REPORT.

THERE must necessarily be a great sameness in the periodical reports of an institution like this, where a uniform tenor is kept up from day to day; and if the records of the past year embrace anything *internally* new, it is chiefly connected with the additional buildings. The whole of the work is satisfactorily completed, and the house now covers, or incloses, more than five acres of ground within the walls. The junction of the old and new galleries (left unfinished when the last report was made) is now very well arranged; and though we cannot lay much claim to an imposing appearance, beyond what must be seen in any large building, we certainly may to the possession of a comfortable asylum. All that remains unsettled is the more perfect warming of the galleries, and perhaps it will be well to leave this as an open question, till the expense and experience of the present

fire-places are tried another winter. We have succeeded in getting warmth into all the rooms at the back of these fire-places by flues, and they are a great comfort to some old patients and occasional invalids. There are partial preparations made for the admission of warm air generally throughout the house, if it should be thought advisable subsequently to adopt this mode; but the great difficulty seems to arise from the old building being colder than the new, and it might be an expensive process to introduce it where it seems to be the most needed.

With this exception, every thing is now done, (or nearly so) and provided for: and the first feature that presents itself on going over this extended institution is, the real necessity that existed for its recent enlargement. Every bed, on the female side, is now occupied, and there are only twelve vacancies on the male side; so that however desirable it might be to retain a few vacant places, in cases of emergency; we can, even now, hardly calculate upon being able to do so.

There are, in the county, perhaps about three hundred and sixty insane paupers, *i.e.* lunatics and idiots; but if we deduct those who may safely remain in Union Houses, (as Thingoe,

where there are now idiotic patients of the several ages of seventy-nine, seventy-four, seventy-eight, and seventy-eight;) others, belonging to non-contributory boroughs, and those whose relatives contrive to keep them from actual chargeability *as paupers*, and get them provided for elsewhere, our present accommodation will come very nearly up to our expected wants. There has been generally a gradual increase of patients, and more have been admitted this year than for the last ten preceding. While an asylum holds a creditable position, there always will be many seeking for admission, who are not, strictly speaking, its legitimate objects; and though such is the case with us now, it becomes almost impracticable to admit any who are not actually chargeable to county parishes. There have been but two instances (on the female side) in which this rule has been departed from, and they were both such very urgent cases, and presented such peculiar claims, that it would have been cruel to refuse either of them. The *one*, was a very old patient, the subject of occasional mania, whose frequent residence here had become so much a matter of choice, that she herself asserted almost a right of admission, declaring at the time of her last attack, that she ought not to be *sent*, and would not *go*, any where else. She has been a known inmate for sixteen years.

The other, was the case of a female, whose reception was sought for under very gratifying, but certainly very extraordinary circumstances. Some years back her father applied for her admission, but the application could not be entertained for want of room. He kept her at home till his death, which took place a short time since, but he left a special clause in his will, that after his decease, she was to be removed to the Suffolk Asylum, under its existing management. To refuse a patient so singularly applied for, was hardly possible : without compliance, the executors were not able to carry out the purposes of the will ; she was therefore received, but only to afford proof amongst too many others, of the necessity of treating insanity in its early development, or the time for effective treatment is lost. Remedies delayed make cases irremediable. Acting under the impression made by the unjustly indiscriminate condemnation of private lunatic asylums, her father had a nurse for her from London, who brought her into this house crippled and confined, and a strait waistcoat, as a companion, in her box. *This humane nurse should certainly have had it on herself.* She has never been restrained here, nor has there been any necessity for it ; she has gradually recovered the use of her limbs, and the other day was dancing to the organ.

With these, our admissions, discharges, and deaths, this year, have been as follow :—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Admitted	42	40	82
Discharged, cured.....	22	16	38
„ relieved	3	0	3
Died	13	12	25
Escaped	1	0	1
	39	28	67

We heard of the patient who escaped, very shortly after his absence ; he was taken to Bury gaol for petty larceny, and would have been sent back here, but on a renewed representation to the Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State, of the insecurity of this asylum for criminal lunatics, he was removed to a more secure abode.

This return is equal to that of any previous year in its satisfactory results ; and is encouraging as the effect of one undeviating plan of *reciprocal association, uniform kindness and forbearance, and the entire absence of personal restraint*. Though the last of these has sounded louder in a humanity cry, it is on the former that a reputation should *really* be *built*. It is a positive truism in treatment, that while you may do almost everything by soothing and kindness, you can rarely do anything but *mischief* by force. The cases that ever require restraint are

very few, and as far as our lengthened experience of nearly thirty years gives any warrant for the public expression of opinion, it is, that very much more has been made of this "*vexata quæstio*" than there was any necessity for. The endeavour to sweep away old abuses, has led to the establishment of new *theories*,—for *theories* only, at present, beyond a certain limit, they undoubtedly are; and as long as sane life is to be protected, and insane life sheltered from injury, there will be patients who need restraint. It was only on the day of the last quarterly meeting, when the visiting committee were going round the house, two women became impulsively violent, and were on the point of doing serious injury to those who only came to protect *them*. Though this outbreak might not justify personal restraint, it demanded, in the opinion of all who witnessed it, immediate and somewhat instructive seclusion, and an entry was accordingly made, directing the removal of these persons from unguarded visits, and their confinement, as visitors go round.

One of these women is the well-known heroine of Waterloo, who with an extraordinary perversity, is always more outrageous when any strangers see her, and declares her determination to be so. She is universally kind to the other

patients, never attempts to return a blow or to quarrel with *them*; she behaves quietly and well to the nurses, and they all like her; she is generally well conducted to the officers, but is universally ungovernable and dangerous to every one else that comes near her.—Still such instances are happily very rare. We have not had occasion once to use even our India-rubber rooms for any other purpose than as ordinary dormitories, though, when they were put up, their appearance almost led one to anticipate a necessity for their use for violent patients, but we have not yet found out their practical utility in this way. Here, *again*, is something of theoretical contrivance.

The patients have been employed throughout the whole of the past year to a very considerable extent, and we are not far from encouraging the notion, that in conjunction with sane oversight, if they had time enough and money enough, they would build themselves a very good dwelling. They have assisted all the workmen in the different employments of each; they rendered very valuable help to the erectors of the steam engine; they have laid out their own airing grounds in garden plots, and carried on that best of all employments for the labouring man, agricultural labour. Through well adapted and varied employment, we obtain cheerfulness by

day and quietness by night, and have, not unfrequently, such a voluntary confession as was made lately by a returned patient, "the manners of the place suit me." The more influential operatives, who were particularized in the last report, might again be specially referred to, and the King in the airing grounds, and the Queen in the laundry, are still very profitable instances of the practical bathos. Throughout the whole of this busy year, the women have been almost ceaselessly employed, and in addition to their ordinary occupations, they have made all the bedding for the new buildings.

We are very seldom disturbed at night, and on going round, as the medical officer occasionally does at all hours, he has never found the necessity for a night watch. Insane persons sleep very lightly, a foot-step wakes them, and building very much on the testimony of recovered patients themselves, who have been in institutions where it is always adopted, we feel rather inclined to the opinion that the necessary disturbance more than neutralizes the expected good. We have found great advantage from a moveable bed chair, placed at the head of any room where a patient is likely to do mischief. Each of the attendants can sleep as well outside, and be as alive to any noise or disquiet within. In this way we have lately guarded a very determined suicide, who was impatient at being

watched, and yet it was needful to *watch* him. The plan succeeded very well, and in conjunction with general treatment, and regular outdoor occupation, the man is now recovered, and will very shortly be proposed for discharge.

We hope by such increased accommodations as we now have, work-rooms, shops, and perhaps some attachment of machinery, turning lathe, &c. to the steam engine, and the retention of the land for cows, as suggested and acceded to last year, to be able to employ the patients yet more; so that whatever charge may be brought against either head or members, it will not be that of residents of an *idle* household, but with enlarged machinery we hope to embrace extended usefulness.

The alacrity and cheerfulness with which all their employments are engaged in, is a very interesting feature, and increasingly so, the more constant the association is with them. Many an instructive lesson may be learnt by daily intercourse, and the most insane patients we have will not only return the most pertinent answers, but give frequently such flashes of genuine wit, that shew plainly, if one or more organs are obtuse or perverted, there are others most keenly and actively acute.

One of the most insane men in this house was a short time ago repairing a defective drain, and he dug so large an opening that he was told it must be filled up again. He objected to this, saying, that he intended to have trees planted along the course of it, and thus fulfil the order to "sow beside the still waters." A man of the name of Underwood was being taken to the bath; another patient saw him, and described it as the usual pursuit of the house to try to do impossibilities. "How," said he, "can you put *Under-wood under-water?*"

Such records as these might be multiplied greatly, but enough is apparent to shew that for any effective treatment of the insane, their several *dispositions must be studied, their characters ascertained, and their feelings treated.* Though the corporeal dial-plate may be darkened, there still is a mental index which points to occasional lights in the intricate pathway of endeavour, and directs to the removal of erroneous impressions, and the conveyance of more correct ideas. Much more certainly even than *functional* disturbance can be physically treated may perverted feelings be soothed and controlled. Perhaps the best labourers are the most insane patients, but they are men of *feeling*, and by acting *on* their feelings, and ascertaining their

motives, they become the most willing workers of a house. A donkey has been the source of inexpressible delight to many of them, but the one who claims him almost as his exclusive possession, is a man, who, for a fancied injury, shot at another. He thought the other was robbing his master, and recognising this undercurrent of integrity, we can engage him with ordinary oversight on the most trust-worthy matters. He never betrays a trust, or shews anything beyond the most quiet disposition when regularly employed, but under the least idea of being suspected, he becomes irascible and dangerous. Such susceptible feelings (and some of a very painful nature,) are the characteristic marks of many of our incurable patients. Retentive faculties with wounded feelings are too acute and fine to allow of forgetfulness, and while in the moral treatment of such patients, nothing is so bad as deception, nothing requires more caution than the conveyance of the unpalatable truth, that the particulars of their case are known. We never deceive them, even on the most trivial affairs, believing, that with the actual knowledge possessed, that matter acts upon the mind, we *may* fail to recognise the action of mind upon matter, and in the urgency of tracing all to a corporeal origin, may have been led occasionally to take consequence for *cause*.

“While fully admitting that all mental and moral manifestations are effected through the medium of a special organization, and therefore dependent for their exercise on the health and integrity of the instrument, we have felt conscious that the agency of mind upon matter was virtually, though not always nominally, disregarded, and that the actual increase of our knowledge, resulting from cranioscopical examination, is really much less than what is confidently assumed.”* This enhances the value of, and justifies a much greater reliance being placed on, *moral* treatment. “We do not attribute the increasing prevalence of juster impressions so much to the progress of science, as to clearer apprehensions of revealed truth. It is the stern standard of moral responsibility which christianity inculcates, enlightening our internal experience, which makes man acquainted with his compound and mysterious nature, and prevents his descent to the level of a shallow materialism. No man can doubt, if deducing his conclusions from the knowledge of his own heart, that his mental aberrations from what is right, are *moral*, not *cerebral* delinquencies, and if so, why should we shrink from admitting the possibility of morbid manifestations, sometimes originating in a perverted spiritual principle, as well as in diseased organization?”*

* Dr. Cowan.

It is such remembrances as these, and the thorough conviction of their truth, that should impress those that have the charge of the insane with their *great* responsibility. In this view the questions of restraint or non-restraint, seclusion or non-seclusion, sink very low; but as records of these are now demanded by new legislative rules, it is well to state the higher principle on which this house, before their introduction, has been always conducted. With what effect will be apparent on this statement of round numbers. There have been, since the asylum first opened in January 1829,—seventeen years:—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
* Admitted	637	638	1275
Discharged, cured ..	249	272	531
„ relieved ..	78	67	145
	327	339	676

Whatever may be the result of the new Lunatic Act, upon asylums which were in active operation before its introduction, we may thankfully refer to this retrospective table, to shew that something HAS been effected, and that money has not been expended, or efforts made, in vain; and a renewed assurance is given at another closing period, and an eventful one, as far as asylums are concerned, that whatever

* Vide page 20, Table of Admissions, &c.

external changes may arise, all our feelings and our best interests are wrapped up in the present and future well-doing of this house, and as we have been enabled to establish it, so we hope, through God's blessing, still to preserve and keep it, in a condition really and permanently advantageous to its inmates, satisfactory to its committee, and creditable to the County of Suffolk.

JOHN KIRKMAN, M.D.

M.S. S.L.A.

APPENDIX.

PATIENTS ADMITTED, DISCHARGED, AND DEAD,

From 1st. January to 31st. December, 1845.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Patients in the House, 31st. December, 1844.	109	115	224
Admitted since	42	40	82
	151	155	306
Discharged—cured	22	16	38
Discharged—relieved	3		3
Died	13	12	25
Escaped	1		1
	39	28	67
Remaining in the Asylum, 31st. December, 1845.....	112	127	239

TABLE OF ADMISSIONS, DISCHARGES, AND DEATHS,

In the whole Seventeen Years since the Asylum opened,

Years.	MALES.				FEMALES.				TOTAL.				In the House at the end of each year.						
	Admitted.	Discharged.			Escaped.	Admitted.	Discharged.			Admitted.	Discharged.			Escaped.	Males.	Females.	Total.		
		Cured.	Relieved.	Total.			Cured.	Relieved.	Total.										
1829	72	11				70	9	2	11	4	142	20	2	22	15	50	55	105	
1830	48	12				34	12	3	15	7	82	24	12	36	18	66	67	133	
1831	42	8				45	19	3	22	10	87	27	7	34	26	80	80	160	
1832	42	21			2	25	20	2	22	8	67	41	6	47	25	78	75	153	
1833	34	18			1	31	14	5	19	8	65	32	9	41	22	75	79	154	
1834	32	16				32	18	5	23	8	64	34	12	46	17	75	80	155	
1835	39	18				40	15	8	23	6	79	33	17	50	14	79	91	170	
1836	30	11				26	11	16	27	9	56	22	29	51	16	78	81	159	
1837	30	13				46	17	1	18	16	76	30	6	36	27	79	93	172	
1838	35	16				31	21	2	23	7	66	37	4	41	20	82	94	176	
1839	29	15			1	53	27	9	36	6	82	42	14	56	16	80	105	185	
1840	31	14			1	38	23	3	26	13	69	37	4	41	20	89	104	193	
1841	35	16				29	16	1	17	9	64	32	3	35	22	93	107	200	
1842	27	10				34	14	2	16	11	61	24	4	28	21	98	114	212	
1843	33	9				34	17	5	22	16	67	26	11	37	29	103	110	213	
1844	36	19				30	13		13	12	66	32	2	34	21	109	115	224	
1845	42	22			1	40	16		16	12	82	38	3	41	25	112	127	239	
Total.	637	249	78	327	192	6	638	272	67	349	162	1275	531	145	676	354	6		

ADMITTED—IN THE YEAR 1845.

Cases not exceeding three months' duration and first attack.	Cases not exceeding twelve months' duration and first attack.	Cases not exceeding two years' duration and first attack.	Cases of more than two years' duration.	Cases of those who have had previous attacks.
30	6	2	10	34
DISCHARGED—IN THE YEAR 1845.				
Cases cured, not having been Insane more than three months before admission, and discharged within six months.	Cases cured, not having been Insane more than twelve months before admission, and discharged within two years	Cases cured, having been Insane two years and upwards, before admission.	Cases cured, having had previous attacks.	Cases not cured, discharged by desire of Friends, and by order of the Magistrates, as improper objects.
15	9	3	11	3

AGES OF PATIENTS ON ADMISSION IN 1845.

From Ten to Twenty.		Twenty to Thirty.		Thirty to Forty.		Forty to Fifty.		Fifty to Sixty.		Sixty to Seventy.		Seventy and upwards.		TOTALS.		
M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	TOTAL.
5	2	11	9	10	7	8	6	5	12	2	4	1		42	40	82

AGES OF PATIENTS DIED IN 1845.

From Ten to Twenty.		Twenty to Thirty.		Thirty to Forty.		Forty to Fifty.		Fifty to Sixty.		Sixty to Seventy.		Seventy and upwards.		TOTALS.		
M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	TOTAL.
1		1	1	4	1	1	2	2	4	3	3	1	1	13	12	25

TABLE SHEWING THE NUMBER OF MONTHLY ADMISSIONS,

Through the Seventeen Years since the Asylum opened, with a Total of each Twelve Months, ending 31st. December, 1845.

Years.	1829.		1830.		1831.		1832.		1833.		1834.		1835.		1836.		1837.		1838.		1839.		1840.		1841.		1842.		1843.		1844.		1845.		TOTAL.														
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.													
Mons.																																																	
Jan.	26	39	65	2	4	10	3	13	5	3	6	5	1	6	2	7	5	12	2	5	7	2	3	5	2	2	3	5	1	7	8	72	78	150															
Feb.	5	2	7	2	4	6	3	7	3	3	3	2	5	7	3	5	1	6	2	3	5	2	3	5	1	2	3	5	1	4	4	43	43	86															
Mar.	4	3	7	5	3	8	7	4	3	1	3	4	2	8	2	4	3	2	1	3	4	2	5	9	1	2	3	2	1	3	6	53	42	95															
April	8	6	14	5	3	8	7	14	7	4	11	4	3	7	2	10	2	5	7	4	2	6	10	6	1	6	7	2	1	3	6	70	61	131															
May	3	3	6	4	2	6	1	4	3	1	4	2	4	3	7	2	3	4	7	3	4	3	7	5	1	2	3	6	1	7	57	34	91																
June	8	3	11	5	5	10	1	3	4	2	6	2	1	3	5	2	6	5	2	7	1	6	9	4	2	6	7	11	5	2	7	61	56	117															
July	3	1	4	9	1	10	4	6	10	3	6	6	4	10	3	6	2	5	8	14	3	6	9	3	6	7	1	8	2	4	6	5	66	135															
Aug.	3	5	8	5	1	6	3	4	4	1	5	6	1	5	2	4	2	6	1	2	2	4	6	2	2	4	1	2	3	4	7	40	54	94															
Sep.	4	2	6	4	3	7	4	1	5	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	2	8	1	2	3	1	2	3	3	5	8	4	8	4	43	49	92																
Oct.	5	7	12	1	5	6	5	2	7	2	4	6	3	5	1	1	4	5	2	7	4	3	7	2	2	1	3	4	2	2	9	36	53	89															
Nov.	1	1	2	3	3	6	5	3	8	2	2	4	4	6	3	2	3	5	2	8	3	5	8	1	6	7	5	2	3	1	7	54	47	101															
Dec.	2	3	5	3	4	7	7	10	7	1	1	2	3	5	2	1	4	6	1	3	4	1	5	6	2	5	7	4	3	1	7	39	55	94															
	72	70	142	48	34	82	42	57	34	31	65	32	64	39	40	79	30	26	56	30	46	76	35	31	66	29	53	82	31	38	69	35	29	64	27	34	61	33	34	67	36	30	66	42	40	82	637	638	1275

DEGREE OF EDUCATION TABLE OF THE 239 PATIENTS NOW IN THE HOUSE,

Ending December 31, 1845.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Well Educated.....	12	2	14
Can Read and Write	36	27	63
Can Read only	18	55	73
Can neither Read nor Write	32	33	65
Not ascertained	14	10	24
Total.....	112	127	239

TABLE OF MARRIED AND SINGLE.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Married	44	61	105
Single	68	66	134
Total.....	112	127	239

DIET TABLE OF THE SUFFOLK LUNATIC ASYLUM,

December 31, 1845.

DAY.	BREAKFAST.	DINNER.	SUPPER.
SUNDAY.	Milk Gruel and 6ozs. of Bread each, Oatmeal 12lbs. & 6galls. of Milk for about 200 Patients.	Males, 8ozs. Bread, 1½oz. Cheese, and ¼-pint Beer. Females, same, except 1oz less bread.	Males, ½lb. Bread, ¾oz. Butter, and ½ pint Tea. Females, same, except 1oz. less Bread.
MONDAY.	Ditto.	Males, 6ozs. Meat, 4ozs. Bread, ¾- pint Beer, and Vegetables. Fe- males, same, with 1oz. less Meat.	Males, ½lb. Bread, 1½oz. Cheese, and ¾ pint Beer. Females, same, with 1oz. less Bread.
TUESDAY.	Ditto.	Soup from Monday, with additional Meat, and 6ozs. Bread each.	Same as Sunday.
WEDNESDAY.	Ditto.	Males, Suet Dumpling of 1lb. and Females, one of ¾lb. with ¾-pint Beer each.	Same as Monday.
THURSDAY.	Ditto.	Same as Monday.	Same as Wednesday.
FRIDAY.	Ditto.	Same as Tuesday.	Same as Tuesday.
SATURDAY.	Ditto.	Same as Wednesday.	Same as Thursday.

In reference to this Dietary, it may be well to remark, generally, that this Asylum is conducted very much on the principle of a large domestic family, and several Patients, especially when sick, are supplied from the Superintendent's table.

HEADS OF EXPENDITURE,

For the Year ending December 31, 1845.

	£.	s.	d.
Meat, lbs.	36973	700	2
Bread, loaves $4\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. each.	25436	530	0
Flour, sts.	990	85	9
Milk, galls.	3276	75	8
Butter, lbs.	3036	138	2
Eggs		21	6
Oatmeal, lbs.	3420	26	4
Tea, lbs.	398 $\frac{1}{2}$	84	8
Cheese, lbs.	7059	151	0
Soap, lbs.	5577	105	6
Grocery		181	7
Candles, lbs.	1167	28	6
Coals, tons	268	264	6
Wood, loads	18 $\frac{1}{2}$	18	6
Medicines, Wine, and Spirits		62	10
Beer		307	7
Clothing.		536	0
Sundries		82	9
Salaries and Wages		721	0
Total.	4123	10	0

TABLE SHEWING THE WEEKLY AND ANNUAL CHARGE FOR EACH
PATIENT, SINCE THE ASYLUM OPENED.

Years.	1st. Quarter.		2nd. Quarter.		3rd. Quarter.		4th. Quarter.		Annual Charges.		
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
1829.....	12	2	8	2	7	0	8	2	22	19	10
1830.....	7	7	6	5	5	3	7	0	17	1	3
1831.....	7	0	7	7	5	10	7	0	17	16	5
1832.....	6	5	5	10	5	10	5	10	15	10	11
1833.....	5	10	5	10	5	3	5	10	14	15	9
1834.....	5	10	5	3	5	10	5	10	14	15	9
1835.....	7	0	5	3	4	8	5	10	14	15	9
1836.....	5	10	5	3	5	10	5	10	14	15	9
1837.....	7	0	5	10	5	10	5	10	15	18	6
1838.....	6	5	5	10	5	10	6	5	15	18	6
1839.....	7	0	6	5	5	10	6	5	16	13	8
1840.....	7	0	6	5	6	5	7	0	17	8	10
1841.....	7	0	6	5	6	5	7	0	17	8	10
1842.....	7	0	6	5	5	10	6	5	16	13	8
1843.....	6	5	5	10	5	10	6	5	15	18	6
1844.....	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	5	16	13	8
1845	7	0	6	5	5	10	6	5	16	13	8

Finis.

