

**Twenty-sixth annual report of the directors of James Murray's Royal Asylum for Lunatics, near Perth. June 1853.**

**Contributors**

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**TWENTY-SIXTH**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

OF THE

**DIRECTORS**

OF

**JAMES MURRAY'S ROYAL ASYLUM**

FOR

**LUNATICS,**

NEAR

**PERTH.**

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JUNE, 1853.

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PERTH:  
PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTORS,  
BY J. MORISON, JUN.

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1853.

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1883-84

WILLIAM WARDEN, Sec. of Board of Education

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James Baxter, Esq. Sheriff of the County of Perth  
David Baxter, Esq. Sheriff of the County of Perth  
William Baxter, Esq. Sheriff of the County of Perth  
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The Rev. James Baxter, Minister of the West Church, Perth

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James Baxter, Esq. Sheriff of the County of Perth  
Hugh Baxter, Esq. Sheriff of the County of Perth  
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# LIST OF OFFICE-BEARERS,

1853—54.

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### I.—EX-OFFICIO.

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Mr CHARLES WALSH, *House Steward.*

Mrs WALSH, *Matron.*

## REPORT

It is now the duty of the Physicians to present the Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Institution.

It appears by the last Annual Report that there were then in the House, one hundred and sixty-two Patients, thirty-one Males and seventy-one Females. There have been since admission, one hundred and twenty-two Patients, twenty-two Males and ninety-two Females. There have been discharged, one hundred and thirty-two Patients, thirty-two Males and ninety-two Females. There now remain in the Asylum, one hundred and sixty-seven Patients, eighty-nine Males and seventy-eight Females. For the principal causes of death reference is made to the Physicians' Report hereto appended.

During the past year, nothing of a marked or special character has occurred connected with the Institution. It will be observed that thirty-two Patients were admitted during the past year, a number which exceeds by eleven, the admissions of the previous year. Fifteen Patients have been cured, and the number would have been greater, but for the circumstances which have been often noticed by the Physicians and the Physicians, that in an establishment like the present, which has now existed for more than a quarter of a century, there is, of necessity, a considerable accumulation of cases which must be regarded as incurable. But



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It appears by the last Annual Report that there were then in the House, one hundred and sixty-two Patients, ninety-one Males and seventy-one Females. There have been since admitted, thirty-nine Patients, seventeen Males and twenty-two Females. Fifteen have been dismissed cured, six Males and nine Females. Seven have been removed by their friends or parishes, more or less benefitted, three Males and four Females. Thirteen have died, ten Males and three Females. There now remain in the Asylum, one hundred and sixty-seven patients, eighty-nine Males and seventy-eight Females. For the principal causes of death, reference is made to the Physician's Report hereto subjoined.

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even the cases referred to, though limited in number, give a pleasing tribute to the system of treatment pursued in this institution; and must have imparted no small happiness to the domestic hearths of the persons restored.

If it be true of the poor, that they are always with us, so as to require that their necessities be provided for, the same holds true as regards the insane. As no time, or age, so no rank in society, and no country, can claim entire exemption from insanity. The advancement of the arts and sciences, and of civilization, does not operate to prevent considerable numbers falling victims to its attacks; nay, it has been supposed, that countries comparatively rude, where the people are not obliged to enter into the keen competitions and rivalries of a more civilized community, stand, in this respect, in a more favorable position. How important then, that the best means should be adopted for the cure or alleviation of a malady, which from its nature, so sadly affects man in his dearest and proudest birth-right, and to which in the Providence of God, all are liable. Hence the establishment of Asylums like the present, which, whether we will or not, is a necessity for a common affliction.

The system of treatment followed in this Institution is varied with the circumstances of almost every individual Patient.—Success in effecting recovery will mainly depend on the care taken to discover the peculiar condition mental and physical of each individual Patient, so as to prescribe accordingly.

Besides the more strictly medicinal prescriptions of the Physician, every Asylum must, or at least ought to, possess the advantages of a healthy situation, beautiful scenery, retirement, and ample grounds for gardening, and for sport and recreations of different kinds. In these respects the present Institution is surpassed by none in the Kingdom. Every encouragement is held out to the Patients to engage in such occupations as may be congenial to their natures. To those in the humble ranks, spade



labour, or any other work in the garden is found highly conducive to health and recovery. To others, reading, walking, playing at bowls, music, and other recreations, afford a pleasing variety. In seeking to "minister to a mind diseased," both moral and physical means must be employed, and neither will succeed without the other; and accordingly no pains are spared to let the Patients enjoy the benefit of both to the fullest extent of which they are capable.

Too much care cannot be taken to prevent an Asylum being regarded either by the Patients or their Friends as a prison. The objects of both are very different, and the internal and external arrangements and management must be also different. The one is a place of punishment, and of positive restraint and abridgement of personal liberty, on account of crime. The other is intended for those who are deprived of sound reason, who have not broken the laws of their country, and towards whom a measure of restraint is applied for their personal benefit, and as a means to their recovery, and not as punishment. There is only one common aspect in which they must resemble each other, that is, as places of confinement. In every other respect they should be very different. In the Asylum, as its very name implies, every thing must be adopted which humanity can devise to comfort, to sooth, to cheer, to unburden the unhappy sufferers, and to endeavour, with the help of the Almighty, to woo reason to resume her former sway in the inner man. And even as regards that point in which the Asylum and Prison resemble each other, as being places of confinement, no exertion ought to be spared to deprive the former, in the eyes of the inmates, as far as possible of this aspect, and to bring them to regard it as a retreat, which the state of their health has called them to seek, and from which it is the desire of their friends, and of all the attendants that



they should retire as soon as their health is restored. In short, the beau ideal of an Asylum should, as far as possible, resemble a well-ordered home; and this it is always the aim of those connected with the Perth Asylum that it should become. It is gratifying to them to think, that, in attempting this, they have not been altogether unsuccessful. Many instances might be mentioned of Patients who felt most thankful for the attentions received while in this Asylum, and who have ever after regarded its attendants and officers in the light of personal friends; and the Report of the Physician for the present year presents an example of this kind in a young man recently cured.

The Directors of this Institution have always successfully resisted any attempts which have been made to send criminal Lunatics to the house. The very strongest reasons exist for acting on this principle, the justice and reasonableness of which have often been shown, and which might even be gathered from what has already been noticed as distinguishing the Asylum from the Prison. Besides, do men cease to think and feel when struck with insanity? Alas, No! In too many cases, the feelings become morbidly keen and sensitive; and such persons would resist with indignation, the proposal to class them with the criminals of society, or even that they should inhabit the same house. But even supposing this could be overcome by keeping the Patients in ignorance of the character of their companions, (which is not always easy), is there no danger of moral contamination from the harmlessly insane associating with the criminally insane? And, besides all this, is nothing due to the friends of the Patients, who, if this were permitted, must be obliged to regard their unfortunate relations, not merely as the subjects of insanity, but as exposed to the scarcely less evil of moral contagion, with all its ruinous consequences. There can be little doubt that the



Government of the country will soon become fully alive to the importance of establishing separate Asylums for criminal lunatics, and, in the meantime, the Directors of this Institution are happily possessed of the power of preventing the evil referred to.

The attention of scientific, and especially of medical men, is now particularly directed to the subject of insanity and its treatment; and it is therefore to be expected that various improvements will be recommended on existing practice from time to time. The medical men connected with this Asylum are fully alive to this; and the Directors will ever be forward to second their efforts in introducing any changes, which, on mature consideration, are deemed beneficial to the Patients, so as to keep the Establishment on an equality with others throughout the kingdom.

During the past year nothing has occurred to interfere with the efficient management of the Institution. The different officers have been assiduous in the discharge of their onerous and responsible duties, for which they merit the approbation of the Directors. For a variety of Statistics and other interesting details connected with the Institution, reference is made to the Report of the Physician.

In conclusion, the Directors trust that the Institution may, as heretofore, command the services of Noblemen and Gentlemen in the Town and County of Perth, who will give the benefit of their judgment and experience in its management, and exert their influence for its success and welfare; so that, through the Divine blessing, it may long continue to confer important benefits on the community.



# APPENDIX

## ANNUAL REPORT BY DR. MALDON

### REPORT OF THE JAPANESE MEDICAL MISSION FOR 1873

1873 JUNE 1873

From the Annual Meeting, there have been received into the Hospital, since January, consisting of eighteen Males and twenty-two Females; fifteen have been dismissed cured, six Males and nine Females; seven have been removed, three Males and four Females; twelve have died, nine Males and three Females.

As usual, the cases of Cholera continued among the recently admitted Patients, or those who had been only a short time in the Hospital. The great proportion of Patients in the Hospital consists of Cholera cases who have been for a series of years in it, and whose cure is absolutely hopeless. I mention this partly to account for the apparently small number of cures in so many Patients, and also to introduce to the notice of the Directors the circumstance that their House being filled with old and incurable Patients, necessitated the refusal of admission to numerous applicants, many of whom have been recently affected, and who in so far as I can judge from the history given to me, would be cured by the practice pursued in this Hospital.

# APPENDIX.

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ANNUAL REPORT BY DR. MALCOM,

TO THE

DIRECTORS OF JAMES MURRAY'S ROYAL ASYLUM FOR LUNATICS.

13TH JUNE, 1853,

SINCE last Annual Meeting, there have been received into the Asylum thirty-nine Patients, consisting of eighteen Males and twenty-one Females; fifteen have been dismissed cured, six Males and nine Females; seven have been removed, three Males and four Females; twelve have died, nine Males and three Females.

As usual, the cures in general occurred among the recently admitted Patients, or those who had been only a short time in the Asylum. The great proportion of Patients in the House consists of individuals who have been for a series of years in it, and whose cure is absolutely hopeless; I mention this partly to account for the apparently small number of cures in so many Patients, and also to introduce to the notice of the Directors the circumstance that their House being filled with old and incurable persons, necessitates the refusal of admission to numerous applicants, many of whom have been recently affected; and who in so far as I can judge from the history given to me, would become cured by the practice pursued in this Asylum.



The amount of horticultural employment afforded to Patients, has, I hold, been of infinite importance and benefit to them, both as a sanitary measure, and also as assisting largely in promoting a cure. To the recent case, it acts beneficially, not only in recruiting the health, but also in breaking down the morbid chain of ideas which constitute the malady, and to chronic mania, it is of the utmost importance in a sanitary point of view.

We have continued the same system of reunions among the Patients, at various times, in having balls or dances, when those who are musicians contribute their share of music for the amusement and delectation of those who are destitute of that accomplishment, yet are willing to join in the enjoyment of the dance, and contribute their share of good humour in order to make out a ball, and add to the happiness of those around them.

In whatever shape or variety bodily exercise comes, there can be no doubt that it contributes essentially to the cure of Insanity, and when this is not to be expected or looked for, it promotes the health and contentment of all. As the cures are the most agreeable portion of my report, I will begin with those which are become such during the past year in the Asylum. As I have already stated, there are fifteen in this category, and in the majority, the cure has been satisfactory. In one case especially, I am happy to record a cure, where at one time I was afraid I would have to state a death. Mrs M'L., a person obviously of decent and sober habits, was in a violent state of mania, which continued without intermission for some months. As it was obvious that life could not be sustained long under such violent excitement, it became with me a question, whether the malady or the constitution was soonest to yield. At length my poor Patient was prostrated unable to move, pale, thin, and emaciated; and I feared that death was at no great distance to close the scene. In these circumstances, I wrote to her husband advising



him of my opinion of the near termination of his wife's existence. He came down to see her, and to remove her if practicable, but she was so much spent that she could not be moved. It is worthy of remark that as the debility and sinking advanced, the mind became calm, quiet and sane. She was left of necessity by her husband in the Asylum,—gradually and slowly her bodily strength improved, nor did her mind ever deteriorate from what her first state of debility had induced, and in a few weeks thereafter she left this sound in body and in mind. This case is somewhat peculiar, as it too often happens that when the bodily powers give way and the mind returns to sanity, that death in a short time closes the scene. I was more than usually interested in this woman, as I felt convinced from the first time I saw her, that she was a woman of good moral and religious feelings, and I thought she would be cured.

G. B., a Compositor for a Newspaper, earning a fair wage, but with a large and increasing family, either from intense application or from the thralldom of his means, or from both, all at once became deliriously excited, and ran from his house into the Street almost in a state of nudity. In this state, he was brought here, and in a few weeks under treatment he became well. In this case also, I had it in my favour, that B. was a good man of steady and good habits, the violence of his malady had impaired his health, and on its restoration his mind gradually recovered. He was most grateful and sensible of the benefit and attention he had received here, and expressed in letters to me the sense of his obligation.

Two cases of puerperal mania were among those treated in the Asylum, and both made good recoveries.

I could enumerate several other cases of cure interesting in a medical point of view, but will abstain from doing so, as taking up the time of the Directors; and shall only say, that they are for the greater part satisfactory, and I hope safe cures. Seven









