

Twenty-fourth annual report of the directors of James Murray's Royal Asylum for Lunatics near Perth. June 1851.

Contributors

James Murray's Royal Asylum for Lunatics.
Malcolm, William.

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TWENTY-FOURTH
ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
DIRECTORS
OF
JAMES MURRAY'S ROYAL ASYLUM
FOR
LUNATICS,
NEAR
PERTH.

JUNE 1851.

PERTH:
PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTORS,
BY C. G. SIDEY.

MDCCCLI.



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LIST OF OFFICE-BEARERS, 1851-52.

WILLIAM PEDDIE, Esq. of BLACKRUTHVEN, *Chairman.*

DIRECTORS.

I.—EX-OFFICIO.

The Right Honourable the EARL OF KINNOULL, Lord Lieutenant of the County of Perth.

JAMES CRAUFURD, Esq., Sheriff of the County of Perth.

HUGH BARCLAY, Esq., Sheriff-Substitute of the County of Perth.

JAMES DEWAR, Esq., Lord Provost of the City of Perth.

DAVID ROSS, Esq., Dean of Guild of said City.

DAVID STUART, Esq., First Bailie of said City.

JAMES MILLER, Esq., President of the Society of Procurators.

ALEXANDER FRASER, Esq., Convener of the Trades of Perth.

The Rev. DAVID SMITH, Minister of the West Church, Perth.

II.—LIFE DIRECTORS.

WILLIAM PEDDIE, Esq. of Blackruthven.

ALEXANDER H. M. BELSHES, Esq. of Invermay.

JOHN BEATSON BELL, Esq. of Glenfarg.

ANDREW KELTY, Esq., M.D., Tayhill, Perth.

III.—ANNUAL DIRECTORS.

DAVID CRAIGIE, Esq., Banker, Perth.

ALEXANDER M'DUFF, Esq. of Bonhard.

LAURENCE CRAIGIE, Esq. of Glendoick.

WILLIAM THOMSON, Esq. of Balgowan.

DAVID HALKET, Esq., Surgeon, Perth.

Sir P. M. THREIPLAND, of Fingask, Baronet.

ROBERT KEAY, Esq., Jeweller, Perth.

NEIL FERGUSON BLAIR, Esq. of Balthayock.

ROBERT SANGSTER, Esq. of Springbank.

JOHN MARSHALL, Esq., Luncarty.

DAVID SCOTT, Esq., Surgeon, Perth.

WILLIAM SMYTHE, Esq. of Methven.

COMMITTEES.

I.—WEEKLY COMMITTEE.

WILLIAM PEDDIE, Esq.

ANDREW KELTY, Esq., M.D.

ROBERT KEAY, Esq.

JAMES DEWAR, Esq.

ROBERT SANGSTER, Esq.

DAVID CRAIGIE, Esq.

ALEXANDER M'DUFF, Esq.

Dr HALKET.

II.—HOUSE VISITING COMMITTEE.

WILLIAM PEDDIE, Esq. | D. CRAIGIE, Esq. | Dr HALKET.

WILLIAM MALCOM, Esq., M.D., Physician.

Dr PAUL PIERIDES, Superintendent and Resident Medical Officer.

Mr WILLIAM GLOAG, Commercial Bank, Perth, Treasurer.

Mr DAVID M'KENZIE, Writer, Perth, Secretary.

The Rev. WILLIAM MURDOCH, Chaplain.

Mr CHARLES WALSH, House Steward.

Mrs WALSH, Matron.

LIST OF OFFICE-BEARERS

1901-1902

WILLIAM WOODS, Sec. of Executive Committee

DIRECTOR

1-230-1000

The first meeting of the Board of Directors was held on the 1st day of July.

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REPORT.

It is now the duty of the Directors to present the Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Institution.

It appears, by the last Annual Report, that there were then in the House, one hundred and sixty-eight Patients—ninety-one Males and seventy-seven Females. There have been admitted during the past year, forty-two Patients—twenty Males and twenty-two Females, making two hundred and ten Patients under treatment during the year. Forty-one Patients have been discharged, leaving now in the Asylum, one hundred and sixty-nine. Of those discharged, nineteen appeared cured—four Males and fifteen Females. Twelve were removed by their friends, more or less improved—five Males and seven Females; and ten have died—five Males and five Females. For the principal causes of death, reference is made to the Physician's Report.

When this Institution was first opened in 1827, a set of Regulations and Bye-laws was prepared, in terms of the Royal Charter, which, though excellently suited in every respect to the then existing state of the Asylum, were recently considered as requiring amendment, more especially in the Medical Department, in consequence of an Act of Parliament, passed many years subsequent to their enactment, rendering it imperative that there should be a Resident Medical Officer in every Asylum containing one hundred Patients or upwards. It was accordingly remitted to a Special Committee to revise the Regulations and Bye-laws, and to report to a meeting of Directors what changes and improvements they would recommend to be made thereon. The Committee spared no pains in complying with the terms of

the remit. Besides exercising their own judgment and discretion, and ascertaining the practical working of the old Regulations from those best informed on the subject, they availed themselves of the experience of other similar Institutions, as appearing from their printed Regulations. The result of the Committee's investigations was submitted to the Directors, and the new Regulations and Bye-laws proposed by them met with the unanimous approbation of the Special General Meeting of Directors, and now form the existing Laws of the Institution.

By these Regulations, the office of House Steward, which was formerly merged in that of Superintendent, was created a separate and distinct office, to which appropriate duties were assigned; and the duties formerly discharged by the Superintendent were transferred to the Resident Medical Officer. Besides this, the province of the latter was enlarged in the Medical Department. This officer has now, therefore, not only the general superintendence of the House, but, in conjunction with the Physician, especial charge of the Medical Department. Dr Pierides, from the experience acquired by him in the Institution as House Surgeon, during a residence there of many years, was considered peculiarly eligible to discharge efficiently the duties of the combined office of Superintendent and Resident Medical Officer, and was accordingly unanimously elected to it. Before entering on its important duties, the Directors considered it due not only to the Institution, but to Dr Pierides himself, that he should have an opportunity of visiting other Asylums in this country and on the Continent, to ascertain the latest improvements which experience and science have introduced in the treatment of the insane. He accordingly made a tour, and visited many of the Asylums of highest repute, not only in Scotland and England, but in France; and on his return, gave an interesting account of his journey, and of some of those things which had particularly attracted his attention, in a Report to the Directors.

It is not doubted that the new Regulations, by the changes

referred to, and other minor improvements, will be attended with the happiest results in the future management of the Institution.

During the past year, the Institution has been deprived, by death, in the Providence of God, of no less than three Directors, —one of these, Major Wm. Moray Stirling, a Life Director, and Col. Balmain, and Wm. Hugh Hunter, Esq., Annual Directors. The places of the two first have been supplied, that of the latter remains to be so by the Special Meeting which takes place to-day.

The law has shown particular jealousy towards those who profess to care for the insane, and to keep houses for their cure. This is no more than what is necessary. The law cannot be too vigilant in attending to the interests of those unhappy members of the community who, by being bereft of reason, are especially exposed, in many instances, to the rapacity of keepers of houses for the insane, or to the selfishness of interested friends. Publicity and inspection are the grand safe-guards against such evils; and second to these, are the respectability and disinterestedness of the Board of Management. A reference to the list of Directors of this Institution will show that it is fortunate in having in the Management persons of high rank, station, and respectability; and their disinterestedness is guaranteed by a provision of the Royal Charter, that no one who holds any office of emolument connected with the Institution, shall be eligible to be chosen as a Director.

It cannot fail to be a source of satisfaction to those who act as the Directors of this Institution, that they are contributing to secure to the unfortunate class for whose benefit it is intended, all the advantages which the highest medical skill, and the loftiest philanthropy, have yet devised, either for the amelioration or cure of their sad malady. The success which, year by year, attends the Institution, is very gratifying. As already shown, nineteen of our fellow-creatures have, through its means, accompanied with God's blessing, been restored to their friends and

society ; and other twelve have, although not cured, participated more or less in its restorative benefits.

For a variety of statistics, and other interesting details connected with the Institution, reference is made to the Report of the Physician, which is appended hereto.

The cures effected, and the benefits extended to a large class of the insane during the last twelve months, afford the strongest inducements to those in the management to persevere in the discharge of their important duties. The Directors are happy, in conclusion, to think that, during the past year, the Establishment has, in all its departments, been conducted with skill, efficiency, and success ; and they trust that, through the Divine blessing, similar prosperity may attend it in time to come.

APPENDIX.

ANNUAL REPORT BY DR. MALCOM, TO THE DIRECTORS OF JAMES MURRAY'S ROYAL ASYLUM FOR LUNATICS.

9th June, 1851.

It appears by the last Annual Report, that there were in the House, one hundred and sixty-eight Patients—ninety-one Males and seventy-seven Females. There have been admitted during the last year, forty-two Patients—twenty Males and twenty-two Females; making two hundred and ten under care during the year. There have been discharged, forty-one, leaving now in the Asylum, one hundred and sixty-nine; of those discharged, four Males and fifteen Females appeared to have been cured, five Males and seven Females were taken away by their friends, more or less improved, and five Males and five Females have died.

The principal causes of death were as follow :—Three died of general paralysis, accompanied with bed sores and general exhaustion of the constitution,—one died in an epileptic fit,—one from the effects of delirium tremens and the sequel of much hard drinking, he was nearly moribund on admission,—one of enlargement of the mesenteric glands, and consequent emaciation and exhaustion,—two from acute enteritis, one of whom came into the

House in the last stage of the disease,—and two from the effects of their malady.

The general health in the Institution has been remarkably good. We have not had any epidemic disease; and many of those who died had gradually approached the extreme limit of life, and ceased to exist, less in consequence of any organic lesion, than that gradual consumption of the vital forces which results from chronic insanity. As I have formerly remarked, this exhaustion as certainly conducts its victim to the grave, as colliquative diarrhœa closes a case of pulmonary consumption; and it is equally a false representation to say in either case, that diarrhœa, marasmus, or exhaustion, caused the death, because one or other of these disorders happened to be the last of a series of morbid changes, the first most efficient and characteristic of which had its seat in the brain.

Some of the cases which I have stated to have been removed, might almost, in fairness, have been stated as cured, but that their too early removal, and before convalescence was established, rendered the probability of a return of mania very great; and, in one instance, this actually did occur; the man, soon after removal, evinced symptoms of violent mania, was taken up, and finally again placed in the Asylum, where he died. Other cases were nearly (if not altogether) well; but in spite of all my remonstrances, the individuals were removed, and, I have no doubt, will soon be brought back, with the malady much aggravated, and with much less chance of cure. This often arises from economical principles, but is frequently the result of a mistaken and misdirected affection for their relations; for seeing that the Patient speaks and acts rationally, without making due allowance for the control resulting from the residence and prestige of the Asylum, they imagine that a cure is completed, when the sore is merely skinned over; nor will they take the opinion of the Medical man, who is best acquainted with the nature of the Patient's case, but trust to their own judgment, which is often fallacious.

The following Tables furnish statistics of the operations of the Asylum :—

TABLE I.

SHEWING THE GENERAL RESULTS OF ADMISSIONS, CURES, &c.,
SINCE 1827, UP TO THE PRESENT YEAR.

				Males.	Females.	Total.
Total Admissions from June 1827, to June 1850, - - - - -				408	386	794
Discharged during same period,—						
	Male.	Fem.	Total			
Recovered, - -	153	185	338			
Improved, - -	42	43	85			
Unimproved, - -	47	32	79			
Died, - - - -	75	49	124			
	317	309	626	317	309	626
Remaining in Asylum, in June 1850,				91	77	168
Admitted from June 1850 till June 1851, - - - - -				20	22	42
Total number of Patients treated during the past year, 1850, and 1851, - - - - -				111	99	210
	Male.	Fem.	Total.			
Discharged,—						
Cured, - - -	4	15	19			
Improved, - -	2	1	3			
Unimproved, - -	3	6	9			
Died, - - - -	5	5	10			
Total discharged du- ring the year,- -	14	27	41	14	27	41
Remaining in June 1851, - - -				97	72	169

TABLE II.
AGES OF THOSE WHO DIED.

Ages.	Males.	Females.	Total.
From 30 to 35,	1	1	2
„ 35 to 40,	1	1	2
„ 40 to 50,	2	2	4
„ 60,	1	0	1
„ 76,	0	1	1
TOTAL,	5	5	10

TABLE III.
EXHIBITS THE FORM OF MENTAL DISORDERS IN THOSE WHO DIED.

Mental Diseases.	Males.	Fem.	Total.
Amencia, from Epilepsy,	1	0	1
Demencia, from Paralysis,	1	2	3
Acute Mania, from Drunkenness,	1	0	1
Acute Mania,	0	2	2
Chronic Mania,	1	1	2
Melancholia, combined with extreme Hypochondriasis,	1	0	1
	5	5	10

The principal modes of employment of the Male Patients have, as usual, been in gardening and working in the fields, together with other agricultural labours. This is found, in an especial manner, to contribute to the general health, and strongly tends to produce cures. Care and selection is required in apportioning to each individual that species of labour most conducive to his tastes; and indulgences are granted, together with extra food

and beer, as they may require it. Besides these, men who are tradesmen work at tailoring, &c.; and several are engaged in assisting at cleaning in the Cook-house, and carrying articles for the use of the House. One man has constantly acted as having charge of the cows, and in summer another is employed as cow-herd. Most of the messages to town are conducted by a Patient, who is most punctual and correct in all matters of business entrusted to him; and another performs most assiduously the duties of door-keeper or porter. The women are employed in sewing, embroidering, spinning, and in the washing-house and kitchen,—these are never idle; nor is any one allowed to loiter away their time, as they have constantly something to do from morning to evening. There are, however, numbers of both sexes who, being in a state of fatuity, cannot work, their minds not suffering them to connect two ideas together; also those who, being violent and dangerous, are not trusted with implements by which they might injure themselves or others.

Since the first opening of the Asylum, we have endeavoured, as much as possible, to combine cheerful amusements as a mode of cure, and as a solace to the wearied spirit of the dull and melancholy. With this view we have weekly balls and concerts. We have numerous musical performers, and of considerable acquirements in that science, besides others who sing tolerably well, and all are most happy to contribute their quota of accomplishments to the general fund of amusement. I, along with my family, have frequently attended the balls. I have always been much gratified by the order, cheerfulness, and perfect good breeding evinced by every one, both Male and Female. There are several bagatelle boards, and they are much used, this being a favourite amusement among the higher class of Patients; and although only two can play at one game, the rest looking on, I have never heard of any quarrelling or disturbance among the Patients while engaged in this recreation.

The *Perthshire Courier*, and the *Times* London Journal, are

regularly received at the Asylum, at the expense of the Institution, and numbers of the Patients receive from their friends various weekly and daily newspapers. This keeps all in a state of information of what is going on in the world ; and many take much interest in the politics of the day, and the wonders of the Great Exhibition. There are also, by the desire of the Directors, two subscriptions to the Perth Library, by which a double number of books are regularly received and well used. The Patients, under a proper supervision, are allowed to select from the catalogue such books as they think most likely to contribute to their amusement or instruction.

WENTWORTH

ANNUAL REPORT

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EDUCATION.

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