

The fifty-sixth annual report of the Murray Royal Asylum Perth / [James Murray's Royal Asylum for Lunatics].

Contributors

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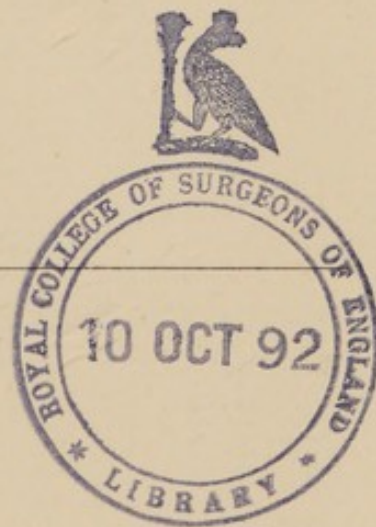
THE

Fifty - Sixth

Annual Report

OF THE


Murray Royal Asylum
Perth.



PERTH:

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1883.



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MURRAY ROYAL ASYLUM,

1883.

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WILLIAM ROSS, Esq., Perth.

Directors Ex-Officio.

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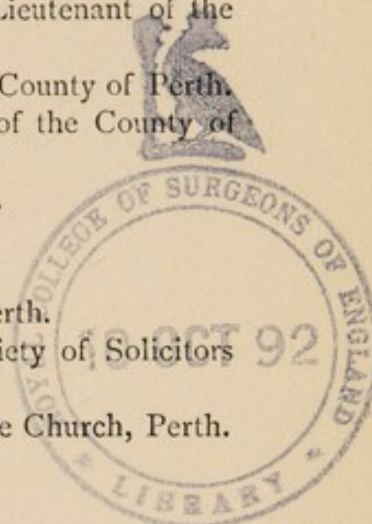
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MESSRS. J. & R. MORISON, Accountants, Perth.



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Chaplain.

REV. W. D. KNOWLES, B.A., Perth.

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MISS GIDDINGS.

Assistant Matron.

MISS CRICHTON.

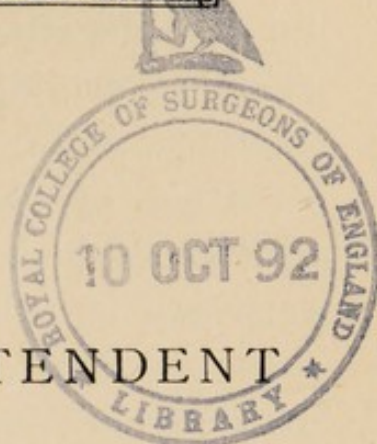
NOTE.

The Directors do not consider it necessary to publish a separate Report, in addition to that by the Physician, as such would lead to needless repetition.



REPORT
OF THE
PHYSICIAN SUPERINTENDENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 10TH JUNE, 1883.



HAVE the honour to submit the Fifty-sixth Annual Report of Murray's Royal Asylum for the year ending 10th June, 1883. *General Statistics.*

On the 11th June, 1882, there were 81 persons on the Registers of the Asylum, and of these 2 males and 3 females were voluntary patients.

Twenty-four cases were admitted during the year, of whom 14 were males and 10 females.

The total number under treatment was 105.

Sixteen were discharged during the year—7 males and 9 females.

The average number resident was 79.

The lowest number, 75, occurred on the 27th December, 1882; and the highest, 84, on the 6th June, 1883.

There now remain on the books of the Institution 39 males and 45 females—total, 84. One of either sex resides voluntarily in the Asylum.

The Admissions.

The number of admissions is four more than last year, and compares satisfactorily with previous statistics. The admissions have been very unequally distributed over the twelve months now past, 17 having been received since the first of January, and only seven before that date.

Five of those admitted have had previous attacks of insanity. Four have been treated to recovery in other Asylums, and one here. All these are females. Twelve have been more or less mentally affected for years, and five were transferred from other Asylums.

Three were re-admitted, one after an interval of two years and a half; one after seven months' residence in the neighbourhood, in the hope that a change of surroundings might ameliorate her mental condition; and one transferred from the Register of Lunatics to the Register of Voluntary Patients.

Thirteen of the admissions may be considered curable; but few have as yet been restored to health, on account of the recency of their reception. There is, unfortunately, only a very small number in the Asylum, beyond those admitted during the past year, for whom recovery can be hoped.

The Asylum as an Hospital.

It is encouraging to be able to report that ten cases were received within three months from the onset of the malady, for of these eight are now recovered or are already convalescent. Two gentlemen induced their friends to send them to the Institution under certificates. One of them told me, on admission, that he sought to be treated here for the same reasons that would have prompted him to call in a surgeon had he broken his leg. I

may add that I had a letter from him lately, in which he says that he is getting on very well, and is sustained by the knowledge that he can find refuge here when necessary. Such results are both cheering and encouraging; for, however valuable the Institution may be in affording a home to those who need a resting-place for life, it cannot be doubted that its higher purpose is to restore its inmates to health and work.

As usual, in the great majority of cases, a distinct history of hereditary tendencies to mental disease was obtained. Fourteen were members of families in which insanity or allied disorders of the nervous system had occurred. These persons having fallen on evil days—having become the prey of disease, harmful habits, grief, or anxiety—readily succumbed to exciting causes that would, in all probability, have made but little impression on more healthily constituted individuals. Ill-treatment of the body, by overwork and tipping, caused insanity in one case; grossly intemperate habits, and their concomitants, in another: neither of these had any hereditary predisposition so far as can be ascertained. The climacteric period, and a disappointment in a love affair, each caused one case. The puerperal condition was responsible for two in previously healthy individuals. Sun-stroke was the assigned cause for two others, and two were of unknown origin.

Those admitted came from the following localities:—Six from Perthshire, four from Edinburgh, four from Glasgow, two from Inverness, six from other parts of Scotland, and one from

*Causes of
Insanity*

*Former
Residences of
Admissions.*

England. No application for the admission of a patient from Perth was received, and all those from the County were admitted.

The Recoveries. All the recoveries took place after a short residence in the Asylum. None were detained for more than six months. The percentage of recoveries on the numbers admitted is 30·76 for males. No female was discharged recovered; the mean, therefore, is only 16·6.

The Removals. Of those discharged unrecovered six went out relieved, and three not improved. Three are now in Pauper Asylums, and seven were removed to private care. One has already returned, as before indicated. Three were discharged in consequence of the inability of their friends to pay the minimum board rate; none of these, however, belonged to Perth.

The Deaths. Five deaths occurred during the year. Two males and one female died of organic diseases of the brain; these were of advanced age, and had resided in the Asylum for periods of 46, 36, and 13 years respectively. One young lady died of empyœma after a long illness. A voluntary patient died of typhoid fever. The average age at death was 55; the average length of residence 20 years; and the percentage of deaths on the average numbers resident 5·71 for males, 4·81 for females—a total of 6·32. This is a higher mortality than usual, but compares favourably with the general statistics of Scotch Asylums.

Typhoid Fever. During the summer months of last year we

had three cases of typhoid fever in the male division. They occurred almost simultaneously, were at once removed to the cottage, and there treated. As above stated, one died. In February, we had another case, which fortunately did not lead to a fatal issue. All those so attacked were young men, and had lived in different parts of the house. It is well known that persons suffering from insanity of a chronic type are peculiarly liable to such diseases, and this was exemplified in these cases. Often, too, remarkable improvement, either temporary or even permanent, takes place in the mental condition of insane persons suffering from fever. Unhappily, I can record no such result in the experience of the past year.

Every endeavour was made to ascertain the source of the disease, and the subject formed the basis of a special report. I was unable to discover any defective sanitation within the Asylum, nor can I learn that there has been a similar epidemic for the last 19 years. The means used to promote the hygiene of the establishment will be found briefly described under the heading of structural improvements.

There was a good deal of nursing of sick and feeble folk during the winter; but it was not necessary to feed a patient by the stomach-pump or other contrivance throughout the year. *General Health*

The diet is as varied as possible, and it is always endeavoured to have the meals served in a home-like way. But, while no one can be more alive to the value of an abundance of nourishing *Diet and Stimulants.*

and easily assimilated food in the treatment of insanity—a malady that is so often accompanied by impaired nutrition—I am not of those who decry the use of alcohol in every case of mental disease. I do not refuse a patient a glass of beer if he has been in the habit of using it, and not to his detriment. Moreover, I am satisfied that several elderly patients, mostly suffering from recurrent mania, have been much better of a carefully regulated allowance of whisky or other stimulant, with a little bread and butter, at bed-time. This, like every other point of management, must be decided by the individual result, and a universally applicable theory guarded against, lest, by treatment *en bloc*, the individual should suffer. Although we can state positively that the use of alcohol by some patients will be harmful, we are unfortunately not in a position to say precisely in what particular case a stimulant will prove beneficial, and too often have to prescribe it empirically.

*Suicidal
Patients.*

The number of patients who have attempted suicide before admission has been larger than usual, and the anxiety to those charged with their care has been great. Two have endeavoured to destroy themselves by precipitation, two by poison, and one by drowning. Such cases demand an amount of absolutely unremitting vigilance that is most trying to the staff, and it is with gratitude that I am again able to report that there has been no serious accident during the year.

*Open-door
System.*

We have now more than half the house conducted on the open-door system, and that without involving the troubles and dangers that might

have been expected. It is right to add that this arrangement is highly prized by the patients, and does not press unduly on the attendants. To-day, out of 84 patients, 15 are recorded as being on parole beyond the grounds, and 32 on parole restricted to the grounds—47 in all. It is rare that such liberty requires restriction, except in the case of patients suffering from recurrent excitement. Two escapes were made during the year, but neither by patients on parole. One, in a working party, eluded his attendants and scaled the boundary wall; the other wandered away from the house at Carnoustie “because he thought he was required at the Institution.”

It seldom happens that we have no patients away on pass. To-day one gentleman is staying with friends at St. Andrews; a lady is spending a few weeks at home; while another gentleman is preparing to go to London on a visit to his brother.

Patients on Pass.

At present seven ladies are at Carnoustie; sixteen gentlemen were there during last month; and I hope that about thirty patients will be able to take advantage of this pleasant change before our lease expires.

Seaside House.

Various lengthy excursions have been made during the year, extending from Tweedside to Speyside; and, as heretofore, friends of patients have been encouraged to come to Perth or the neighbourhood to spend days or weeks with them.

Excursions.

The Chapel services continue to be conducted

Church and Chapel.

as reported last year, and an additional seat has been secured in the Parish Church. During the Chaplain's illness the work is being done by Mr. Small.

Occupations.

Useful occupations have engaged a large number of the patients throughout the year. Fifty-six are so employed to-day. Much of the excavating work in connection with the renovation of the north galleries was done by the labour of the patients, besides the planting of the new belt of trees in the south field, and the keeping of the grounds and garden.

Amusements.

The amusements have been varied, and we are under deep obligations to our friends and neighbours who are so ready with kindly aid. The standard games of cricket and bowls for summer, and bagatelle, draughts, billiards, dancing, and theatricals in winter, are most popular. We have also the advantage of being so near Perth, that few lectures or entertainments of any consequence take place to which the Murray does not send a party. The Combe Trust Lectures of last winter were particularly well attended by patients and staff.

*Structural
Improvements.*

Extensive improvements in the north block have been completed during the past year, and have resulted most satisfactorily in cheerfulness and comfort. The stone floors in Galleries iv. and v. were taken up and replaced by polished pitch pine, jointed with red lead, and ventilated underneath by valved gratings. The recesses for the pipes connected with the heating apparatus, the

hot and cold water supply, and the drains, have been so arranged as to be readily accessible. The boards covering these recesses have been furnished with hinges and locks, so that any section requiring repairs can be exposed at a moment's notice. The old heating flues now distribute fresh air to the dormitories and day-rooms, and can be regulated at pleasure. The lavatories and bath-rooms have been cut off by ventilating traps from the sewage drains, and the latter are ventilated by pipes that extend above the roof of the building. At various points man-hole traps have been introduced along the course of the main drains, and large flushing valves are periodically made to discharge volumes of water from the highest points of the drainage system. Inspection of the whole sanitary arrangements is thus facilitated, and can be made at any moment from the highest point to the sewage tank outside the boundary wall.

The overflow pipes of each cistern discharge freely into the open air.

Low wardrobes have been fitted up in the corridors, and a section allotted to the clothing of each patient. Commodious boot and shoe rooms have been erected for the convenience of the persons occupying these wards, and linoleum, with a neatly stencilled border, laid on the floors.

The water-closets throughout the south block have been renewed. Wash-out basins, with syphon-flushing cisterns, have been substituted for the old latrines. The pipes and mechanism are readily accessible to the engineer, and a brass disc screwed into the top of the syphon trap facilitates its clearance in case of obstruction. The trap

contains clean water after each flushing; and all who have inspected these closets attest to the purity of the atmosphere and their general cleanliness.

By arrangement with the tenants, the sewage tank was emptied in autumn through the pipe leading to the north fields of the farm, and the contents run over the stubble.

The upper part of the central tower has been temporarily repaired, in accordance with a report by Mr. Heiton; repairs of the roof and chimneys of the lodge, and of the entrance-gate, the walls of the boiler-house, and other parts of the fabric, were carried out; the farm buildings were put in order—the cost of all these alterations being as follows:—

For Furnishings, ...	...	£298	10	10
„ Repairs, ...	...	273	2	6
„ Alterations, ...	...	503	15	1
		<hr/>		
		£1075	8	5

Financial Results.

The financial results of the year are satisfactory. Although the sum received from patients' boards is less by £294 than last year, it compares favourably with the average of other years since 1864, when the paupers left, inasmuch as it exceeds that average by £835. It is much the same as for the year before last, and exceeds the income in any year previous to 1881. After payment of all ordinary and extraordinary claims, it is found that £5 19s 7d remain to be carried over to next year.

The heritable debt, having been reduced by £1400 last Martinmas, now stands at £3600. The Asylum is thus placed in a better position in this respect than since 1864.

The rates of board for the admissions were—

1	at	...	...	£200	...	...	£200
1	„	...	...	120	...	...	120
1	„	...	...	110	...	...	110
1	„	...	...	100	...	...	100
3	„	...	...	80	...	...	240
2	„	...	...	70	...	...	140
3	„	...	...	60	...	...	180
6	„	...	...	52	...	...	312
5	„	...	...	50	...	...	250

23 at an average of £71 16s 6d—Total, £1652

The rates of those discharged amounted to £1657. The yearly income per patient was £67 18s 8d. The cost, excluding alterations, but including repairs, £59 4s 10d; if including the former, £69 17s 7d. The weekly cost per patient on ordinary expenditure was £1 2s 9d—2d less than last year.

To-day, the patients in the Asylum together pay £5688 per annum. They have been received from the following localities:—Thirteen from Edinburgh, fifteen from Glasgow, eight from Dundee, three from Aberdeen, two from Inverness, three from Perth, ten from Perthshire, twenty-one from other parts of Scotland, two from London, five from England, and two from Ireland.

There have been various changes among the subordinate members of the staff, but none among the charge attendants. Seven ordinary attendants left, and one was summarily dismissed. Three special attendants were engaged during part of the year. The difficulty of getting suitable attendants, for gentlemen especially, continues great; nor is it easy to see how, considering the nature of their *The Staff.*

duties and the meagre inducements held out to them by one of the most onerous of all callings, this difficulty can be rectified.

It is a pleasure to have this opportunity of thanking the officers for their efficient conduct and great interest in their duties, and of acknowledging the services of the attendants throughout an exceptionally trying year.

At the Servants' Ball a Christmas tree was provided by the Committee, and gifts for each were duly found on it.

*Statutory
Visits.*

The Report of the Lunacy Commissioners will be found annexed to this. Two statutory visits were made during the year. It will be observed that Dr. Mitchell commends the management of the Institution, and advises a continuance on the lines of action that have been followed since its founding.

Conclusion.

I have to acknowledge, in conclusion, the able services of Dr. H. M. L. Wilson, in my absence, on more than one occasion, and beg earnestly to thank the Directors for their continued kindness and the assurance of their confidence and approval.

A. R. URQUHART, M.D.

TABLE

Showing Changes in the Population of the Asylum during the Year ending 10th June, 1883.

	Private.		Voluntary.		TOTAL.	Private.		Voluntary.		TOTAL.
	M.	F.	M.	F.		M.	F.	M.	F.	
June 11, 1882.	Resident in the Asylum, ...	...	...	...	...	33	37	2	2	74
	Remaining on Pass, ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
	Remaining at Carnoustie, ...	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	6
	Total No. on Asylum Books, ...	...	...	...	...	33	43	2	3	81
Cases admitted—										
First admissions, ...	13	8	...	...	21					
Not first admissions, ...	...	2	1	...	3					
Total Cases admitted during the year, ...	...	...	...	...	...	13	10	1	...	24
Total Cases under care during the year, ...	...	...	...	...	...	46	53	3	3	105
Cases discharged—										
Recovered, ...	4	...	...	...	4					
Relieved, ...	2	4	...	...	6					
Not Improved, ...	...	3	...	...	3					
Voluntary Patients left, ...	...	...	1	2	3					
Died, ...	2	2	1	...	5					
Total Cases discharged and died during the year, ...	...	...	...	...	...	8	9	2	2	21
June 10, 1883.	Total No. on Asylum Books, ...	...	...	...	...	38	44	1	1	84
	Remaining on Pass, ...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	2
	Remaining at Carnoustie, ...	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	...	7
	Resident in the Asylum, ...	...	...	...	...	37	36	1	1	75

	Private.		Voluntary.		TOTAL.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	
Average numbers on Books during the year, ...	34.98	41.55	1.20	1.32	79.08
Lowest number resident, 27th December, 1882, ...	33	40	1	1	75
Highest number resident, 6th June, 1883, ...	38	44	1	1	84
Persons under care during the year, ...	46	52	2	3	103
Persons admitted during the year, ...	13	10	...	...	23
Persons discharged recovered during the year, ...	4	...	...	...	4
Transferred from other Asylums, ...	3	2	...	...	5
Transferred to other Asylums, ...	...	2	...	...	2
Percentage of Recoveries on admissions, ...	30.76	...	...	...	16.6
Percentage of Deaths on average numbers resident, ...	5.71	4.81	...	...	6.32

R E P O R T S
 OF THE
 COMMISSIONERS IN LUNACY
 FOR THE YEAR.

REPORT BY DR. SIBBALD.

PERTH ROYAL ASYLUM,
 12th January, 1883.

There are at present 34 gentlemen and 39 ladies under certificates resident in the Asylum. Besides these, one gentlemen and one lady are resident as voluntary inmates.

The following changes have taken place among the certificated patients since last visit :—

	Male.	Female.	Totals.
Admissions,	5	4	9
Discharged Unrecovered, ...	2	6	8
Deaths,	2	1	3

The deaths were due in all the cases to forms of brain diseases, and in each case the patient was of an advanced age.

Among the voluntary inmates there have been one admission, two departures, and one death.

The Books and Registers of the Asylum were examined, and found carefully and correctly kept. Neither restraint nor seclusion has been used in the treatment of the patients since last visit, and there have been no accidents. No patients have escaped, and this is noteworthy on account of the greater amount of freedom the patients have now

given to them. Ten gentlemen and fourteen ladies go about the grounds on parole, and six gentlemen and three ladies walk beyond the grounds on the same condition.

The patients were found in a very satisfactory state in every part of the Establishment. There was an absence of any signs of discontent, and tranquillity prevailed throughout.

Improvements of various kinds continue to be made in many directions in the arrangements and furnishings of the building. The improvements in the back galleries, which have been for some time in progress, have now been completed, and have added greatly to the comfort, as well as to the healthiness, of that section of the Institution. Similar advantages may be expected from the introduction of improved water-closets into the south block, the erection of shoe-rooms, and the painting of some of the floors. It is observed with approval that another of the galleries is now kept unlocked, and it is believed that, except when it may be necessary temporarily, on account of some special circumstances, it will soon be found practicable to keep all the galleries unlocked.

It is proposed to use the cottage at the back of the Asylum for the accommodation of gentlemen who will appreciate the greater freedom which can be given to them there.

A desirable addition to the accommodation is the provision of a small mortuary, which has been suitably fitted up.

Great attention continues to be given to the occupation of the patients. Their amusements are not neglected; indeed, they appear to be very successfully provided for; but successful

endeavours are also made to engage nearly all the patients who are able for it in some form of useful work. This is much to be commended, because it does not admit of doubt that the mental condition of most patients can be much improved, and even recovery may be brought about, by being engaged in some judiciously selected form of physical labour. It also adds to the general happiness of most persons to have some kind of occupation, and it tends to make what is done as a recreation more completely enjoyed.

JOHN SIBBALD,
Commissioner in Lunacy.

REPORT BY DR. MITCHELL.

PERTH ROYAL ASYLUM,
16th May, 1883.

The following statement shows the number and character of the present population :—

	Private Patients.						Total.
	Certificated.		Voluntary.				
	M.	F.	M.	F.			
Resident, ...	31	41	1	0		73	
On Pass, ...	1	0	0	1		2	
At the Seaside, ...	6	0	0	0		6	
	—	—	—	—		—	
On the Register,	38	41	1	1		81	

The changes which have taken place since last visit are shown below :—

	Certificated Private Patients.					
	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
Admitted,	7	4	11
Discharged,	3	1	4
Dead,	0	1	1

All parts of the Asylum were found in a most satisfactory state. The cleanliness and good order of the different apartments attracted much notice. In these respects nothing could have been better. But the apartments are not only clean and fresh and tidy; they are quite as noteworthy for their comforts, and for the bright and cheerful aspect given to them by ample furnishings and tasteful decoration. The Asylum now possesses accommodation of an exceptionally good character, both for patients in affluent circumstances and for patients belonging to the middle classes.

The management of the Asylum and the treatment of the patients are also thoroughly satisfactory. All the changes introduced by Dr. Urquhart tend to make the house healthier, to increase the chances of cure in the curable, and to add to the happiness of the lives of those who are beyond hope of cure. Greater liberty is accorded to the patients, both within and beyond the grounds. The patients are led to occupy themselves in ways which cannot fail to be of benefit to them, and their amusements and recreations are such as to be real sources of enjoyment and of improved health. Hard-and-fast lines in discipline have disappeared, and the management of each patient is regulated by the carefully studied peculiarities and requirements of his special condition. In this way contentment and tranquillity are promoted, and, where complete cure is impossible, improvement is effected.

It would be difficult to over-estimate the benefits which have resulted from the removal of the walled airing-courts on the male side. Dr. Urquhart has other changes of a similar character in contempla-

tion, and it is hoped that he will soon be able to carry them into effect. They all tend to take away the Asylum or Institutional look from the buildings, and to give them, as far as possible, the aspect of a large private residence. Everything that is done in this direction will render the Asylum more attractive to wealthy patients; but it is hoped that it will always be able to receive many poor private patients at low rates of board. At present it does this to a large extent, and in a very benevolent and praiseworthy manner—giving to many such patients advantages in the way of care and treatment much beyond what could be given to them in a private Asylum for the board they pay.

Altogether, the impression left by this visit to the Asylum was very pleasing. It is felt that it has entered on a career of prosperity; but, to secure this, it is desirable that the structural and other changes which the Directors and Dr. Urquhart have in view should be carried out with as little delay as possible.

The Registers and Books were examined, and were found to be carefully and accurately kept.

ARTHUR MITCHELL,
Commissioner in Lunacy.

Incorporated by



Royal Charter.

MURRAY ROYAL ASYLUM, PERTH, FOR THE UPPER AND MIDDLE CLASSES ONLY.

Extensive and costly alterations have been completed, rendering the Asylum an efficient Hospital, as well as a comfortable Home, for all classes of Private Patients.

It is healthily situated on the Hill of Kinnoull, in the immediate vicinity of Perth, and commands unrivalled views, extending over the valley of the Tay to the range of the Grampians. The central position of Perth and its picturesque surroundings are well known.

This Asylum contains no Paupers, and no publicity is implied in the proceedings connected with the admission of a patient, or in the term Royal Asylum.

Reference may be made to the highly favourable Reports of the Commissioners in Lunacy.

GENERAL REGULATIONS.

Applications for the admission of Patients should be addressed to the Physician Superintendent, from whom may be obtained the statutory forms to be completed before Patients can be received.

These are indispensable in every case :—

- a.* Petition to the Sheriff of the County, and accompanying Statement by a Relative or Guardian of the Patient.
- b.* Two Medical Certificates by duly qualified practitioners.
- c.* Order granted by the Sheriff of the County in which the Patient resides, or in which the Asylum is situated.
- d.* Letter of Obligation for Payment of Board, &c., to be signed by a responsible male person.

In a case of Urgency, however, the Certificate of Emergency (in proper legal form), granted by any Medical Man, is sufficient for the detention of a Patient for three days, during which time the ordinary papers can be filled up.

When the other documents are complete, Dr. Urquhart will obtain the Sheriff's Order, if so desired. These papers are private and confidential, and no publicity is implied in getting the Sheriff's Order.

Epileptic and Paralytic Patients are received only on special terms; and the admissibility of, and rates of Board for, all Patients are determined by Dr. Urquhart.

The Board is payable Quarterly, and in advance, to the Secretaries and Treasurers, MESSRS. MACKENZIE & DICKSON, 61 George Street, Perth.

Every Patient must be provided with suitable and sufficient Clothing. An accurate list of every article brought with the Patient must, on admission, be delivered to the Asylum Official in charge, and the name fully marked on each garment. If any necessary part of Dress should not be supplied after eight days' intimation has been given that it is wanted, it will be furnished by the Institution, and the cost of it charged against the Patient.

Patients may be visited at suitable hours every lawful day. Only those who are authorized can be permitted to visit Patients.

All communications regarding Patients must, in every case, be sent to Dr. Urquhart; and it is requested that due notice be given to him before a Patient is removed.

Every information regarding the admission of Voluntary Boarders can be obtained from Dr. Urquhart.

RATES OF BOARD

Vary from £52 to £350 per annum and upwards, according to Accommodation, Dietary, Attendance, &c., required. They are the subject of special arrangement in each case.

