

Ninth annual report of the New-York Asylum for Idiots : To the legislature of the State of New-York for 1860 / New York State Asylum for Idiots.

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NINTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

NEW-YORK ASYLUM

FOR

IDIOTS.

To the Legislature of the State of New-York for 1860.

ALBANY:
CHARLES VAN BENTHUYSEN, PRINTER.
1860.

TRUSTEES.

JAMES H. TITUS,
HENRY H. POHLMAN,
ALLEN MONROE,
HIRAM PUTNAM,

FRANKLIN TOWNSEND,
HAMILTON WHITE,
LYMAN CLARY,
G. H. MIDDLETON.

Ex-officio Trustees,

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D. FLOYD JONES,

R. CAMPBELL,
ROBERT DENNISTON,

H. H. VAN DYCK.

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Secretary,
ALLEN MUNROE.

Treasurer,
HAMILTON WHITE.

Executive Committee,
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ALLEN MUNROE.

OFFICERS.

Superintendent,
HERVEY B. WILBUR, M. D.

Matron,
MRS. ELIZA F. MULFORD.

Housekeeper,
MRS. HARRIET RHODES.

Teachers,
MISS S. P. YOUNG, MISS LODEMA HUTCHINSON,
MISS ALVIRA WOOD, MISS CHRISTINA ERLAND,
MISS SARAH S. WALD, MISS M. A. CONWAY.

Steward,
R. FRISSELLE.

STATE OF NEW YORK.

No. 41.

IN ASSEMBLY, JAN. 18, 1860.

NINTH ANNUAL REPORT

Of the Trustees of the New-York State Asylum for Idiots.

To the Legislature of the State of New-York :

In compliance with the act establishing the Asylum for Idiots, the subscribers, trustees of the institution, respectfully submit this, their

NINTH ANNUAL REPORT:

The total of cash receipts and payments for the fiscal year of the institution, ending September 30th, 1859, as stated in the Treasurer's annual report herewith transmitted, (appendix A), is as follows :

RECEIPTS.

From the State Treasurer,	\$15,000 00
do counties for clothing State pupils,	857 16
do paying pupils for board and clothing,	2,398 76
do loan from savings bank,	2,250 00
Cash in treasury, Oct. 1, 1859,	176 67
	<hr/>
	\$20,682 59

EXPENDITURES.

Repairs of building and improvement of grounds, ..	\$1,508 39
Provisions,	5,985 61
Household supplies,	347 60
Farm, garden, stable, stock, &c.,	619 91
Furniture and furnishing articles,	387 00
Fuel,	440 57
Gas,	740 50
Rent of land and taxes,	310 81
Salaries of officers and teachers,	3,641 66

Wages of attendants and servants,	\$3,495 48
Traveling expenses of trustees and superintendent,	79 92
Clothing pupils,	1,539 35
Water,	100 00
Insurance,	210 00
Printing,	37 65
Freight and express charges,	59 21
Postage,	35 62
School apparatus, books and stationery,	148 69
Expenses of children home,	40 25
Medical services,	74 50
Barber,	16 00
Expenses for amusement of pupils,	11 69
Expenses for runaway boy,	13 28
Funeral expenses,	17 25
Miscellaneous,	87 22
	<hr/>
	\$19,948 16
Amount in treasury, Oct. 1, 1859,	734 43
	<hr/>
	\$20,682 59
	<hr/> <hr/>

DEBTS.

The institution was in debt on the 1st of October, the commencement of the fiscal year,

For sundry balances due on account of salaries, wages and supplies,	\$6,179 43
For loan from savings bank,	\$2,250 00
Interest on loan,	26 25
	<hr/>
	2,276 25
	<hr/>
Total debt,	\$8,455 68
	<hr/> <hr/>

The cash assets are as follows:

Balance in treasury,	\$734 43
Due from pay pupils,	1,583 56
Due from counties for clothing,	931 50
	<hr/>
	\$3,249 43
	<hr/>
Total liabilities less cash assets,	\$5,206 25
	<hr/> <hr/>

The trustees, in their last annual report to the Legislature, stated that "there were outstanding claims against the Asylum on the 30th September, 1858, amounting to \$4,894.39;" and that

"there were at the same time cash assets, in the form of sums due from counties and individuals for board and clothing, and also household supplies of various kinds on hand so nearly to balance this indebtedness, as to supersede the necessity of calling upon the Legislature for any deficiencies."

From the above statement of the present fiscal condition of the Asylum, it will be seen that the trustees were not only disappointed in their expectations of canceling their former indebtedness by their expected receipts, but that their liabilities have increased in the ratio of about ten per cent upon the whole amount of their expenditure, or at the rate of \$2000 per annum.

That this has resulted from no mismanagement on the part of the executive officers of the institution, the trustees are well assured; for at the monthly meetings of the executive committee, and the semi-annual meetings of the board, the most rigid scrutiny has discovered no want of economy, and no lack of effort to keep the necessary expenditures within the limits of the several appropriations which have been made from time to time for the successful prosecution of this truly benevolent enterprise.

The cause of this deficiency therefore is to be sought for in another quarter, and is found principally in the excess of actual and necessary expenses over our annual estimates; together with the falling off of the revenue from pay pupils, which is some seven or eight hundred dollars less than in preceding years; and the expenditure of at least one thousand dollars, which was absolutely necessary for the keeping up of the grounds, and the proper preservation of the building and furniture.

The only conclusion therefore to which we can arrive under these circumstances is, that the appropriations hitherto made, have not been sufficient to accomplish the end proposed. And in this matter we are far from casting any blame upon the Legislature, for we are convinced that the chief reason why we have not had larger appropriations, is because we have failed to ask for them. We have usually found the Legislature willing to attend to our requests, and in all cases, save when there was an extraordinary pressure upon the public treasury, and other charitable institutions suffered with us, they have always complied with our wishes.

The fault then is chiefly our own. But there are several extenuating circumstances which deserve consideration. It will be remembered by the Legislature, that the enterprise committed to our charge is altogether novel in its character; and consequently,

that we are without that experience in the cost of its maintenance which longer established charities have obtained. It must only be borne in mind that for four years after the inception of the plan, the instruction of idiots was but an experiment. It was commenced in a hired building, at small cost, and free from many incidental expenses in the way of repairs and improvements, and with but from twenty to forty pupils. Since that period there has been an entire change in our circumstances. The institution is no longer merely an experiment. A spacious edifice has been erected; the grounds reclaimed from their original state, and embellished with trees and shruberry; a farm leased, laid out, and arranged for the employment of the boys; necessary modifications and additions made to the establishment, and the number of pupils, has increased from twenty-seven, which was the original number, to one hundred and thirty-one.

Under this change of circumstances, the experience derived from our previous operations was entirely unavailable, inasmuch as it furnished no reliable basis on which we could found estimates for our increased expenditures. This the trustees advance as one reason why their calculations have failed, and consequently why there is such a deficiency in meeting their current expenses. And as an additional justification, they must in frankness to the Legislature, and in justice to themselves, state, that they have from year to year been restrained from making more liberal estimates of expenditure, because they had no desire unduly to press the claims of an institution which so many considered as a novelty; and because they would not willingly trespass upon the funds sacredly devoted by the State to charitable purposes. Hence our estimates have been made more in the line of our wishes, than from a conviction based upon experience.

But now, convinced that whatever is worth doing at all, deserves to be well done, and having from the experience of the past, arrived at an absolute knowledge of our actual necessities, we respectfully ask the Legislature,

1st. For a special appropriation of \$5,500 to relieve us from our present embarrassments; and

2nd. For a continuance of the annual appropriation of \$18,000, which we are happy to believe will be amply sufficient to enable us to carry on the operations of the noble charity intrusted to our care freed from the difficulties which have hitherto impeded our progress. And in this, we are the more confident, as our present application is based upon specific estimates made by the Superintendent of the institution, of the amount of the current year, which will

serve as a guide for future expenditures, and which in no case will be allowed to exceed it.

The trustees in their annual report of last year, made the following statement relative to the farming operations of the institution.

"There are belonging to the Asylum eighteen acres of excellent land, the purchase money for which was mainly contributed by the citizens of Syracuse. In addition to this, we have had a lease of thirty-five acres of land adjoining. This amount of land, together, makes a farm, the cultivation of which the trustees regard of great advantage to the institution. It has been cultivated, under the direction of the steward, mainly by the larger boys. A gardener, and one man employed for a few months, being the only additional laborers required. Besides the value of its products for domestic use, the opportunity it affords for training the boys to labor, proves an efficient auxiliary in promoting the objects of the institution."

The experience of the past season has fully confirmed this estimate of the advantages resulting from the connection of a farm with the institution. A large portion of the land (35 acres) is held by a lease which terminates when the owner shall sell the same. He is now fully determined to sell, and the benefits heretofore derived from that land will be lost, unless the State shall see fit to purchase it for the Asylum. The location, the required facilities and the character of the soil, afford exactly the opportunity for those farming operations which the trustees consider so advantageous for the enterprise under their charge: they therefore submit for the consideration of the Legislature, the expediency of securing the same by purchase.

In conclusion, the trustees refer with pleasure to the accompanying report of the Superintendent, which reveals the practical workings of the institution, and the results we are attaining in this apparently most hopeless of all the fields of human culture; and commend the whole subject to the kind consideration, enlightened philanthropy, and fostering care of its legitimate guardian, the Legislature of the State of New-York.

JAMES H. TITUS,
HENRY H. POHLMAN,
FRANKLIN TOWNSEND,
HAMILTON WHITE,
ALLEN MUNROE,
HIRAM PUTNAM,
LYMAN CLARY,
GEO. H. MIDDLETON,

Trustees.

E. D. MORGAN,
ROBERT DENNISTON,
H. H. VAN DYCK.

Ex-Officio Trustees.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT.

To the Trustees of the N. Y. Asylum for Idiots:

Another year has passed in the history of the Asylum. During that period, we have been visited by an epidemic of some severity, the small pox and varioloid. Aside from the prevalence of these diseases, we have had scarcely a case of sickness in the institution, and we have had no death from any cause.

The same officers and teachers now fulfill their duties in the Asylum, as at the time of the last annual report.

The number of pupils during the past year has been about the same, as during the preceding year.

The whole number of pupils supported entirely from the State treasury, was ----- 93

The number of pupils paying half the expense of their board and instruction, was ----- 8

The number paying the whole expense of their board and instruction, was ----- 12

Total number, ----- 113

Some changes have been made in the list of pupils during the vacation just passed, by the substitution of new pupils for old ones removed, and by the addition of new pupils, in view of the increased State appropriation, of last year.

Thirteen pupils have been removed.

Thirty-two new pupils have been received; two former pupils have been returned to us, and three children have been accepted by the trustees but not yet entered. This gives the present number connected with the Asylum one hundred and thirty-seven.

Of the pupils removed, three were removed at the request of the Superintendent on account of failing health.

Two, because a longer continuance at the Asylum was unnecessary. They are now usefully employed under the care of their friends.

One, because his friends had left the State. Another, a resident of Conn., taken away to be placed in a similar institution established in his own State.

One, a youth of 20, who had been with us a year, dismissed because he was too old to be radically benefited by our system of

training and instruction. Another boy who had made very good progress for nearly three years, was dismissed for the following reason. He came to the institution with but one eye, and this was finally so obscured by the growth of a cataract, that it was not advisable to attempt to teach him longer. Four others were dismissed as insusceptible of any essential improvement, by a longer continuance in the Asylum, though not till they had had a fair trial. One of these was a deaf mute, beside being an idiot of a low grade, and also a cripple.

Another, a cripple, who had been confined to her bed, till a short time before coming to the Asylum, and who had been allowed to remain in a particular position till her muscles and tendons had become permanently contracted. The other two apparently had chronic diseases of the brain.

It should be observed, however, that even in the most of these cases where the results have not been equal to the desires of the friends or the expectations of the officers of the institution, there still has been a very marked improvement in many particulars. Their habits have been amended. They have been rendered more obedient. In short, less a burden and source of discomfort to friends.

I have thus briefly mentioned the causes of removal in the several cases discharged during the past year, because they suggest, indirectly, the true function of an institution for idiots, about which, there is a degree of misconception in the public mind; and also indicate some of the reasons for the limitations specified in our by-laws, as to the reception and retention of pupils.

As this is a matter that concerns many families throughout the State, and in fact, the public generally who support the institution, it deserves still more notice. By referring to the extracts from the by-laws of the Asylum given in the appendix to this report, it will be seen what the conditions of admission and continuance in the institution are.

“The design and object of the Asylum, as established by the action of the Legislature, are not of a custodial character, but to furnish the means of education to that portion of the youth of the State, not provided for in any of its other educational institutions. Those only will, therefore, be received into the Asylum who are of a proper school-attending age, and for such periods of time as shall, in the estimation of the board of trustees, suffice to impart all the education practicable in each particular case, and in conformity with the regulations hereinafter specified.

"Children between the ages of seven and fourteen who are idiotic, or so deficient in intelligence as to be incapable of being educated at any ordinary school, and who are *not epileptic, insane or greatly deformed*, may be admitted by the superintendent, with the advise and counsel of the executive committee. Applications in behalf of others shall be referred to the action of the board of trustees."

Some limitations, in the reception of idiots are manifestly necessary on the part of the trustees, who are only the agents of the State in carrying out the design and object of the institution, with the pecuniary means appropriated by the Legislature annually.

Other limitations were implied in the original plan of the founders of the Asylum.

The N. Y. Asylum for Idiots was established to meet a public want. There were within the borders of the State, judging from the statistics of other countries and states, under similar circumstances, and of analogous population, more than 3000 idiots, embracing every shade of mental endowment below the common standard of intelligence, and subjected to every variety of social influences.

They were thrown by the very nature of their infirmity, beyond the pale of that common school education which the State provides for every child of average intellect within its limits.

Any rational and practicable project for the amelioration of their condition or the furnishing of any permanent relief to those who were burdened with their care, would look beyond the mere ministering to their physical wants, or the simple substitution of the State's care and maintenance for that of parents, friends or local authorities. It would afford them opportunities for development. It would give them all the education that they were susceptible of. It would attempt to qualify them, by a proper instruction in practical matters, to be returned to their friends capable of sustaining and providing for themselves with the least possible care and anxiety of others. And it would do this in accordance with the policy, long established in reference to those other children of misfortune, the deaf-mute and the blind.

It would seem to lie outside the province of the State's charity in this direction, to provide a public institution for such of the number as could be as well cared for under family or other influences at home. Nor is it the policy of the State, at present, to adopt any of these unfortunates. It only assumes their guardian-

ship and maintenance during the period of education. It will be understood then, that the institution is an educational one and is not custodial in its character. All admitted therefore to its privileges, should be of a teachable age and of a teachable condition. As to the first point, our general rule (the admission of pupils from 7 to 14 years of age) seems to be practically a just one. At all events, as it can be suspended, for proper reasons, in any individual case, by the action of the board of trustees, it can do no harm. Whenever in the farther experience of the institution, it shall be deemed advisable to extend the limits of age in the reception of pupils, it can be done.

As to what constitutes a teachable condition, in the case of idiots, is a point not so easily determined. On the one hand, it had been universally supposed, till a few years since, that education was of no service in any case of idiocy. On the other hand, there have been but a very few cases that have been submitted to a judicious course of training, for any length of time, either in this institution or any other of similar character, elsewhere, in which those most interested in the welfare of the parties, have not seen a very decided improvement as the result. The only exceptions to this rule have been those cases, in which the idiocy was apparently dependent upon an active organic disease of the brain.

In certain classes of cases, however they will not be much difficulty in deciding to exclude the parties for whose admission to the Asylum application is made.

Cases of idiocy, accompanied with confirmed epilepsy, are to be reckoned among these. The presence of the two conjoined, (whichever manifestation precedes the other) usually indicates the existence of a common cause in organic disease of the brain or spinal cord. In such instances, the epilepsy is generally incurable. Each recurring paroxysm impairs the more, the intellectual faculties, till complete dementia and death are the result. Even when, in the intervals between the convulsions, a marked improvement in all respects has rewarded the persistent efforts of training and instruction, a single recurrence of the disease will destroy the labor of months. Under such circumstances, an institution offers no very essential advantages over a home and its accommodations should be reserved for those who can be radically benefited.

Again, where insanity is complicated with idiocy, (not a very common complication however) it is not deemed advisable to re-

ceive them into this institution. We have no provision for confinement, in fact for restraint of any kind. The very means employed to arouse the attention and stimulate the sluggish intellectual operations of our ordinary pupils, tend to excite and aggravate the peculiar mental condition of this class. The admission of the insane, therefore, would subject us to very great trouble and inconvenience, without any corresponding benefit to those received, if not a positive injury to them.

It has not been the policy of this institution to receive cases of very marked deformity, nor where the subjects are hopelessly crippled, from permanent contractions of the muscles and tendons, or from irregular and spasmodic muscular contractions, preventing the application of our elementary physical training, nor yet the numerous cases of idiocy connected with a depraved and diseased physical condition, proper subjects for a hospital of incurables, and not for an educational establishment. These are often very troublesome cases at home, which induce the friends to make application for their admission here. In some instances, where there has been a loss of one or both parents, they are urged upon the officers of the Asylum with great persistence, even when it is supposed that they are coming here to die. In fact, a large percentage of the deaths that have occurred in the establishment, since its foundation, have been in cases that have come hither with fatal disease already at work upon them.

There is another class of cases usually admitted on a proper application, but who are dismissed after a fair trial and examination, if the result confirms the opinion of the officers as to their probable condition. I refer to cases of *dementia*, in distinction from idiocy, when a gradual obliteration of the mental faculties has supervened after an organic disease of the brain, and the disease is still active and progressive. These are dismissed as incurables.

Excluding then all cases coming within the classes thus enumerated, the institution, according to the language of our by-laws, affords to that portion of the youth of the State, not provided for in any other educational establishment, and who are of a proper school attending age, all the education practicable in each particular case. "The education furnished by the institution will include not only the simpler elements of instruction usually taught in common schools, where that is practicable; but will embrace a course of training in the more practical matters of every day life; the cultivation of habits of decency; propriety;

self-management and self-reliance, and the development and increase of a capacity for useful occupations."

It is designed, in other words, to receive all children of a teachable age hitherto shut out from educational privileges, by reason of a defect or infirmity of their mental powers. This includes a much wider range of natural endowment than would at first be supposed, and within this range there exists a great variety of manifestations.

When one observes carefully the phenomena of idiocy, he is surprised to find that differences in the individual characteristics are more noticeable than the resemblances that would be anticipated from a more casual observation. This is so marked, that it is always difficult, properly to classify them for purposes of accurate description. Still these differences and peculiarities, as relating to the principles and methods to be adopted in their instruction, and to the diversity of the educational results to be aimed at, may be sufficiently indicated for our present purpose.

Some are only a little below a degree of intelligence, that would enable them to be educated in the common schools of the State. They are so nearly possessed of all human faculties, to a normal degree, that it is difficult to say in what the deficiency consists, And yet this slight inferiority separates them practically by a long interval, from those with whom they would naturally associate, in the school-room, in the play-ground, and even in the family.

Others are low down in the scale of idiocy. They approximate, what has been described as the type of idiocy or the extreme of mental incapacity; an individual who neither wills, nor thinks, nor acts. In such an one, there seems to be no power of spontaneous thought or action. In such an one sensation is only followed by an imperfect reflex action. In such an one inertia so prevails that consciousness responds feebly, only to the loudest summons through the avenues of special sensation.

Between these two extremes, there exists every variety of manifestations. The mental and moral phenomena are as diverse as the physical and physiological conditions, upon which they depend.

Superadded to these natural differences, we have certain traits that are the result of habits peculiar to idiocy. It has been substantially remarked, by an eminent French writer, in relation to persons of ordinary natural endowments, "that habits are acquired, dispositions resulting from an exercise or from an inaction more or less prolonged

movements having become habitual through frequent repetition, do not wait for a signal from our will, they anticipate volition; recurring even against our will, whenever the circumstances of place and time with which they are connected return. They become automatical and are confounded with the movements that belong to the vital functions. Contrary movements become impossible, and therefore, these habits may be a resistance and an obstacle to the execution of voluntary determinations."

If this is true of individuals, in whom the will is well developed, one can readily appreciate the fact, that in the case of idiots, in whom the will is always feeble, the results of habit will be still more striking. It so usurps the office of spontaneous or self-determination, that any effort of the will becomes continually more and more irksome and infrequent, and the individual grows more and more averse to any occupation, and unconscious of what is passing around him.

It may be affirmed generally that the less the intelligence of any individual, the more readily will he fall under the influence and control of habits of various kinds; and the more resist any efforts to break them up when once formed.

With this in mind, it will be understood, that without efforts for their instruction, the difference between idiots and those of their own age, who are well endowed by nature, is an ever widening one. The one by the constant exercise of a self-determining purpose in view of all the circumstances by which they are surrounded, are constantly increasing both in intelligence and in the control of the will over it, which makes it valuable; and also in a proper regard for the social and other relations in which they are placed. The other, by failing to exercise any degree of spontaneity, are as steadily falling under the dominion of habits of body and mind, accompanied by a self-absorption, that makes them indifferent to every thing but what may minister to their merely physical wants.

Parents are often slow to believe in the existence of any degree of mental deficiency, in early childhood. They look upon the unpleasant manifestations, only as a protracted childishness, till the continued incapacity for receiving instruction and the formation of disagreeable or mischievous habits force them to recognize its true character.

Finally, these natural differences that exist in cases of idiocy, will be found to be somewhat modified by the circumstances by which they have been surrounded, and the social influences to

which they have been exposed. This is not true to as great an extent however, as might at first thought be supposed.

There is, however, one common characteristic in all the class of idiots; and that is a deficiency or infirmity of will. This is a fundamental one. It affects all action on their part. It affects all thought. Whatever may be one's theory of the relation of the human will to the other faculties of a human being, he cannot but be impressed with the idea when observing carefully the class in question, that it is a defect or infirmity of the will that underlies all the other psychological phenomena.

Physiology, however, teaches us that there is a physical cause underlying even this, and that in the nervous system.

To meet and obviate, as far as may be, all these conditions peculiar to idiocy, is the office of such an institution as ours, and the system of management, training and instruction pursued in it.

What that system is, may be summarily stated here, that its reasonableness and practicability may be appreciated.

It relates first to the physical system, and then to the mental condition of idiots. Not always, be it observed, by distinct efforts in each direction, but more often by exercises having a two-fold object.

These efforts may be noticed in the following order. Where there is more or less of physical unsoundness, the first step will be some form of treatment in distinction from education. If there are accompanying maladies, an attempt will be made to induce a healthy condition of the whole body. It is then to be ascertained, as nearly as may be, upon what abnormal or diseased condition of the brain or spinal cord or other nervous tissue the idiocy depends. If upon any condition that can be obviated by any resource of medicine, of regimen or physical exercise, such resource must be applied at once. If this fault in the nervous centres is merely a disorder of function, the treatment then, may properly be, through the medium of intellectual exercises.

As a general rule, physical exercise is the basis of the whole course of education.

Passing from these material relations, we come now to the mental peculiarities to be encountered. Here we may notice that part of our system which is more strictly educational, as the term is commonly understood. This is based upon no new principles of education, but consists of novel applications of those principles to meet the peculiar mental conditions of the subjects of it. Intellectual and moral faculties are to be developed, not created. The

method of instruction is peculiar in this, that it commences with exercises adapted to the very lowest degree of intelligence, and proceeds by a very gradually ascending scale, up to the point where ordinary systems of education begin.

In former reports, some descriptions have been given of the methods pursued in this institution. They cannot however, be well understood, without witnessing their application. It is to be remembered that each new pupil will start in that schedule of exercises, wherever his capacity when received, will allow him to go on with advantage to himself; and also that this starting point has an important relation to the results to be looked for.

There can be no more doubt of the good results of a judicious system of instruction in the case of idiots than in the case of any other human beings. There is an intrinsic, typical likeness, in their spiritual nature, to all others of the human race, and both are subject to the same law of development. The human soul is dependent for growth and culture, in all cases, upon the nervous system, in the reception of impressions and sensations from without and as the seat and organ of the mental operations.

Ordinarily these impressions from without flow through the open channels of sensation and the normal brain, an active organ of perceptions, intelligence and volitions, receives and acts upon them.

But even in those exceptional cases, of physical defect and infirmity, whenever by any power from without, impressions can be forced along these natural avenues of the mind, and the brain itself is not actually torpid in all its functions, there is an opportunity for the work of education. Some degree of instruction, at least, is possible.

The experience of this institution, as does that of all similar institutions, shows that the habits of idiots can be materially improved. In a small percentage this improvement lasts only while the subject of it is an object of special care and attention. In the large majority it is an improvement, in this respect that is radical. Their increased physical comfort from this source, the substitution of some occupation, requiring an exercise of the mind and an awakened regard to the opinion of others, insure their continuance in the direction of these amended habits.

This change for the better is readily appreciated, for it is on the very surface. It gives the idiot or child of feeble mind, a greater resemblance to those of their own age, who are well endowed. The disagreeable and repulsive features of idiocy, are in

the main, the result of improper habits. Thus when any course of management is successful in overcoming such habits, these repulsive features disappear. The subject of them becomes at once an object of sympathy and pity. The countenance is no longer distorted by unmeaning muscular contractions. The gait and deportment are improved. A proper control of the limbs takes the place of awkwardness and habits of personal cleanliness and some regard for propriety in dress take the place of their opposites.

Looking at the whole body of our pupils, one can see, from time to time, the evidences of a very decided rise in the scale of intelligence. With a few exceptions, that would be embraced in those classes described in the former part as this report, as unsuitable subjects for admission into the Asylum, there has been a positive mental development in all cases, as the result of our labors of instruction. They are daily in the school room, and engaged in exercises of an intellectual character. They learn the use of language; they learn to obey commands. They are exercised in articulation to give them the power of speech or for the purpose of securing distinctness of utterance. They acquire notions of form and color; of the qualities of objects and their uses. They learn to count and to understand other relations of numbers. They are taught to observe pictures, as the representatives of objects; then words in the same relation; the transition is then to reading and writing.

In all these various exercises, reference is had not only to the mental discipline acquired in them, but also to the more practical use that is to be made of these attained powers.

This brings me to speak of the practical results. Such as are to be taken into account in estimating the value of the institution in the light of political economy.

Among the first lessons of our pupils are those designed to teach them to take care of themselves as far as possible in all personal matters; to assist in various household occupations and little matters of out-door work. As soon as they become of sufficient age, strength and intelligence, they are assigned regular daily duties. At first these duties are performed under the constant supervision of the attendants, but afterwards, they are expected to do their tasks without oversight.

A few of the female pupils now do no small amount of work in the bed rooms, dining rooms and laundry.

In the summer time, the larger boys are employed in agricultural labor. During the past season, they have done nearly all the work upon our farm and in the garden. A list of the products is given in an appendix, and it will be seen from that statement that no inconsiderable amount of work has been accomplished by them.

Quite a number of them have arrived at a point, and many others are progressing towards it, where their labor is worth as much as the cost of their support, under intelligent direction. They are contented, happy and obedient, when thus occupied. Whereas, without a proper education, and without occupation, they are not only restless and uncomfortable themselves, but a burden to their friends, or perhaps a public nuisance.

Within a month or two, by way of an experiment to test the mechanical ability of our pupils and to furnish them with occupation during the winter months, we have introduced the manufacture of boots and shoes. A shop has been fitted up and a shoemaker employed to instruct the boys.

Short as has been the time since the experiment was instituted, it is already seen, that we can manufacture during the winter months, all the boots and shoes needed in the establishment for a year, besides imparting a mechanical skill, that will increase the productive power of the pupils. All who have witnessed the amount and quality of the work already accomplished by the boys engaged in it, look upon it as an important step in the management of the Asylum.

No one but an officer of this Asylum can fully understand what a relief it affords to a multitude of families scattered throughout the State. Any adequate care of an idiot child is a burden and a source of solicitude, even under the most favorable conditions that the family relation may supply. It becomes an almost insupportable hardship and affliction, when found necessary in the home of indigence and poverty. The subject of it cannot be left to itself, but is an ever present cause of anxiety during its waking hours. The lapse of years only increases the misfortune.

A partial appreciation of the benefits it confers must be felt by any one who reflects at all. And it would seem as if no citizen of the State of New York who remembers the wise and noble provision she has already made for the care of the insane; who remembers that she has assumed the special education of the deaf-mute and blind, could regret that she had added to these highest evidences of her progress in civilization, by extending the

blessings of an appropriate education to the only remaining children of physical misfortune, when by so doing it affords a permanent relief in the case of a class, more positively troublesome at home than any other, except the violently insane.

It remains for me only, in closing this report, to do justice to the services rendered by my assistants of every kind, in carrying out the design of the institution. To their experience and tact, patience and fidelity is owing, with the blessing of God, all the good results I have attempted to set forth.

H. B. WILBUR, *Sup't.*

N. Y. ASYLUM FOR IDIOTS, }
SYRACUSE, Oct 26th, '59. }

TREASURER'S ACCOUNT.

HAMILTON WHITE, *Treasurer of N. Y. Asylum for Idiots, in account current with the State of New York, for cash received and expended for the general supplies and the salaries and wages of officers, teachers, attendants and servants of said Asylum, during the quarter ending December 31st, 1858.*

Dr.

Oct. 1st.	To balance on hand on clothing accounts,	\$296 06
2d.	To cash from State Treasurer,	3,750 00
		<hr/> \$4,046 06
		3,768 62
		<hr/> \$277 44
		<hr/> <hr/>
	Balance carried forward to next quarter,	\$245 21
	Clothing account,	32 23
		<hr/> \$277 44
		<hr/> <hr/>

Cr.

Oct. 1st.	By overdraft on general account,	\$119 39
11th.	By bill pd. salaries of officers & teachers,	687 50
	do Thomas Rice,	170 62
	do Wynkoop Bros.,	114 33
12th.	do E. & S. Cheney,	215 78
	do Kenyon & Rogers,	83 80
	do I. A. Thurber & Son,	144 22
	do Henry Harmon,	116 50
	do Loomis & Griswold,	81 50
13th.	do Water works company,	50 00
	do D. G. Stafford,	19 00
	do Luke Collins,	77 90
	do Luke Collins,	69 60
Nov. 10th.	do wages of attendants and ser-	
	vants,	542 17
	do Merrick & Hunt,	50 25

Nov. 11th.	By bill pd. I. A. Thurber & Son, -----	\$41 00
	do Hitchcock & Denison, -----	23 21
	do Gas company, -----	175 58
	do Marvin & May, -----	25 00
16th.	do Gas company, -----	202 49
	do H. H. Day, -----	15 25
	do Bush & Wildes, -----	91 35
Dec. 7th.	do wages of attendants, &c., -----	296 75
8th.	do S. E. Barker, -----	41 52
9th.	do O. Orcutt, -----	50 08
Oct. 2nd.	do clothing accounts, ---\$102 64	
	do do ----- 161 19	263 83
		<hr/>
		\$3,768 62
		<hr/>

HAMILTON WHITE,
Treasurer N. Y. Asylum for Idiots.

HAMILTON WHITE, *Treasurer of N. Y. Asylum for Idiots, in account current with the State of New York, for cash received and expended for the general supplies and the salaries and wages of officers, teachers, attendants and servants of said Asylum, during the quarter ending March 31st, 1859.*

Dr.

Jan. 1st.	To balance on hand, general fund, -----	\$245 21
	do clothing account, ---	32 23
5th.	To cash from State Treasurer, -----	3,750 00
21st.	do Treasurer of Onondaga co., ---	60 00
24th.	do do Wayne co., ----	39 77
	do do Monroe co., ----	19 87
25th.	do do Otsego co., -----	19 87
	do do Genesee co., ---	19 87
	do do Dutchess co., ---	19 80
	do do Niagara co., ---	19 87
26th.	do do Tompkins co., ---	19 90
	do do Saratoga co., ---	19 92
	do do Cortland co., ---	19 87
27th.	do do Columbia co., ---	59 85
	do do Sullivan co., ---	19 87
	do do Wyoming co., ---	19 87.
31st.	do do Chautauqua co., ---	19 87
Feb. 3d.	do do Cattaraugus co., ---	19 95

Feb. 7th.	To cash from Treasurer of Montgomery co.,	\$79 57
15th.	do do New York co.,	220 00
	do do Cayuga co.,	59 70
	do do Oneida co.,	19 87
	do do Suffolk co.,	19 87
	do do Kings co.,	60 00
		<hr/>
		\$4,884 60
		4,177 17
		<hr/>
Balance, general fund,	\$235 64	
do clothing account,	471 79	
		<hr/>
		\$707 43
		<hr/> <hr/>

Cr.

Jan 6th,	By bill of wages of attendants and servants, (Dec.)	\$288 25
	By bill of salaries of sup't., officers and teachers, (quarter),	1,012 50
11th,	By bill of J. C. Stuart,	65 00
18th.	do J. J. Hopper,	52 82
	do J. J. Hopper,	134 60
20th.	do G. & G. Evetson,	136 97
	do I. A. Thurber & Son,	44 55
	do Norton & Bradley,	15 13
21st,	do C. P. Philips,	34 74
	do R. Stillwell & Sons,	213 19
	do George Kimber,	31 82
22d	do Thomas Rice,	149 91
	do Henry Harmon,	444 31
	do Dillage Bro's.,	112 13
27th.	do I. W. Barker,	140 25
	do D. & J. Leslie,	470 55
Feb. 1st.	do wages of attendants and servants for Jan.,	254 50
	do P. F. Fay,	84 50
2nd.	do C. H. Hasbrouck,	29 65
Mch 10th.	do Loomis & Griswold,	44 20
Feb. 9th.	do Weaver & Son, clothing account,	22 80
16th.	do G. L. West & Co., do	78 75
23d.	do W. E. Abbott, do	288 34
Mch 16th.	do D. J. Morris & Son, do	27 71
		<hr/>
		\$4,177 17
		<hr/> <hr/>

HAMILTON WHITE, *Treasurer of N. Y. Asylum for Idiots, in account current with the State of New York, for cash received and expended for the general supplies and the salaries and wages of officers, teachers, attendants and servants of said Asylum, during the quarter ending June 30th, 1859.*

Dr.

April 1st. To balance on hand in Treasury,	\$235 64
do do clothing account, ..	271 79
2nd. To cash from State Treasurer,	3,750 00
June 10th. do do	3,750 00
	<hr/>
	\$8,207 43
	6,958 73
	<hr/>
July 1st. Bal. carried to new ac. (gen. fund,) \$921 73	
do do (clothing,) 326 97	
	<hr/>
	\$1,248 70
	<hr/> <hr/>

Cr.

April 4th. By bill of wages of attendants and servants, Feb. and March,	\$588 75
Salaries of officers and teachers, quarter ending April 1st,	979 16
23d. Ritchie & Leslie,	890 11
May 2nd. Wages of attendants, &c., April,	288 00
Insurance,	135 00
S. Worden & Co.,	33 48
Clary & Bigelow,	9 50
Gates & Carroll,	39 23
Insurance,	37 50
May 3rd. McCarthy & Titus,	91 46
B. C. Hasbrouck,	21 00
5th. J. W. Barker & Co.,	246 75
7th. W. E. Pomeroy & Co.,	448 90
9th. Woodford & Wilbur,	85 08
Protest on draft,	3 77
June 6th. O. Orcutt,	30 00
S. Pierce & Co.,	92 17
11th. H. Harmon,	350 93
16th. Wages of attendants and servants,	266 00
H. White,	150 00
Waterworks company,	50 00
17th. G. & G. Everson,	64 62
Kenyon & Potter,	10 23

June 17th. Insurance,	\$37 50
Geo. Maynard,	17 25
E. L. Griffith,	7 38
June 18th. E. W. Leavenworth,	250 00
Cobb & Ostrom,	335 68
C. H. Hasbrouck,	97 20
John Ritchie,	170 04
20th. J. W. Barker & Co.,	126 00
21st. Palmer Shaw,	28 32
I. A. Thurber & Son,	33 13
D. & S. Leslie,	502 21
Charles Tallman,	12 53
22d. Thomas Rice,	147 20
I. I. Hopper,	137 83
June 17th. Clothing account,	144 82
	<hr/>
	\$6,958 73

HAMILTON WHITE,
Treasurer N. Y. Asylum for Idiots.

HAMILTON WHITE, *Treasurer of N. Y. Asylum for Idiots, in account current with the State of New York, for cash received and expended for the general supplies and salaries and wages of officers, teachers, attendants and servants of said Asylum, during the quarter ending September 30th, 1859.*

Dr.

July 1st. To balance on hand, (general fund,)	\$921 73
do do (clothing account),	326 97
12th. To cash rec'd from pay pupils, by sup't,	1,671 05
Aug. 2nd. do from savings bank loan,	1,500 00
Sep. 16th. do do	750 00
30th. do from paying pupils,	727 71
	<hr/>
	\$5,897 46
	5,163 03
	<hr/>
Am't carried forward to new ac. (gen. fund) \$695 39	
do do (clothing account,) 39 04	
	<hr/>
	\$734 43

Cr.

1859.	By cash paid on warrants of executive committee, viz :	
July 2nd.	Bill of gas company,-----	\$205 15
	do do -----	156 28
12th.	Wages of attendents & servants for June	369 56
	Supt., contingent account for 9 months	
	ending June 30th, -----	1,633 52
13th.	Salaries and wages for quarter ending	
	June 30th, -----	962 50
30th.	Bill of Peter Featherly, blacksmith,----	14 80
Aug. 2nd.	do R. Griffin & Son, machinists,----	122 21
3d.	do Andrews & Page, grocers, -----	34 96
	do I. A. Thurber & Son, bakers,----	53 08
	do M. Beardslee, soap,-----	84 78
	do Henry Harman, butcher,-----	343 21
14th.	do John C. Braman, shoemaker,-----	51 97
23d.	Wages of attendants and servants for	
	July and August,-----	466 75
30th.	Supt's contingent account for July,-----	111 06
	do do August, ---	138 60
	do do September,-	125 73
July 30th.	Clothing account, -----	52 63
Aug. 9th.	do do -----	86 17
	do do -----	149 13
		<hr/>
		\$5,163 03
		<hr/>

HAMILTON WHITE,
Treasurer N. Y. Asylum for Idiots.

(B.)

LIST OF PRODUCTS OF THE FARM.

19½	tons of hay.
800	bundles of corn stalks,
1½	tons of oats, cut green for fodder.
224	bushels of corn.
591	do potatoes.
333	do carrots.
226	do turnips.
102	do beets.
73	do tomatoes.
6	do onions.
17	do parsneps.
8	do vegetable oysters.
15	do spinach.
15	do peas,
11	do beans.
5	do cucumbers.
1½	do peppers.
600	heads of cabbages.
100	do cauliflowers.
200	do endives.
450	bunches of celery.
50	do radishes.
60	do asparagus.
500	do lettuce.
10	loads of pumpkins.

Fruit.

30	bushels of apples.
40	do pears.
6	do grapes,
250	boxes of strawberries.
160	quarts of currants.

APPENDIX C.

The following extracts from the by-laws of the Asylum will show the aims, and the condition upon which pupils are received:

"The design and object of the Asylum, as established by the action of the Legislature, are not of a custodial character, but to furnish the means of education to that portion of the youth of the State, not provided for in any of its other educational institutions. Those only will, therefore, be received into the Asylum who are of a proper school-attending age, and for such periods of time as shall in the estimation of the board of trustees, suffice to impart all the education practicable in each particular case, and in conformity with the regulations hereinafter specified.

"Children between the ages of seven and fourteen who are idiotic, or so deficient in intelligence as to be incapable of being educated at any ordinary school, and who are *not epileptic, insane or greatly deformed*, may be admitted by the superintendent, with the advice and counsel of the executive committee. Applications in behalf of others shall be referred to the action of the board of trustees.

"The parents or next friends of those in whose behalf applications are made for admission as pupils, shall make answer in writing to such questions as the superintendent may prescribe.

"They shall, moreover, if of sufficient ability, engage to pay such reasonable sums for the education and support of the pupils, and to furnish them with such proper clothing while in the institution as shall be stipulated by the superintendent, and they shall in all cases be bound to receive them back, when required, free of expense to the Asylum.

"The State pupils in the Asylum will be selected in equal numbers, as far as may be, from each judicial district, from those whose parents or guardians are unable to provide for their support therein.

"The State pupils will be expected to come to the Asylum, provided with a supply of neat and substantial clothing adequate for the first six months; after which period, their clothing will be furnished by the Asylum at the expense of the respective counties of which they are residents, as in the case of the deaf and dumb,

and the blind asylums of the State. A bond will be required in all cases to ensure the removal of the pupil, when required by the superintendent, free of expense to the institution.

"All pupils will be received upon trial for one month, at the end of which time, a report upon the case will be made to the parents or parties sending them.

"The education furnished by the institution will include not only the simpler elements of instruction usually taught in common schools, where that is practicable, but will embrace a course of training in the practical matters of every day life; the cultivation of habits of decency, propriety, self-management, and self-reliance, and the development and enlargement of a capacity for useful occupation.

"There shall be a vacation during the whole month of August, unless otherwise directed by the board, at which period all pupils must be removed from the Asylum by the parents or guardians, if required by the superintendent."

Applications for admission to the Asylum must be made to the superintendent.

H. B. WILBUR, M. D.

Syracuse, N. Y.