

A short account of the Magdalen Hospital.

Contributors

Magdalen Hospital (London, England)

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A

SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE

Magdalen Hospital.

LONDON:

Printed by W. Wilson,

St. Peter's Hill, Doctors' Commons,

(For the Charity)

And sold by Messrs. F. C. and J. RIVINGTON, Booksellers, St.
Paul's Church-Yard; Mr. TRIPHOOK, Stationer to the
King, St. James's Street; and, at the Hospital,
in St. George's Fields, St. George's Road,
in the County of Surrey.

1807.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.



A
SHORT ACCOUNT
OF THE
Magdalen Hospital.

THE Governors of this Charity are concerned to find how much the design of this most humane and benevolent Institution, and the mode of admission into the House, are *misunderstood*; and how much its *existence* is unknown to a great number of those unfortunate persons, for whose relief and welfare it was established. They are desirous of diffusing, as widely as possible, the knowlege of the benefits proceeding from it, and are convinced that some explanation of its nature, and a short account of its proceedings, must tend to recommend it to the Public. Its object is

the relief and reformation of wretched outcasts from society ; and the principle on which it is founded gives it, surely, some title to the countenance and favour of the Public, and *particularly of the FEMALE SEX* ; and her *Most Gracious Majesty* has set the example, by taking this Hospital under her more immediate patronage. And what can possibly be an object more worthy of *their* care, than the rescuing from the deepest woe and distress the most miserable of their fellow-creatures ; leading them back from vice to virtue and happiness ; reconciling the deluded and betrayed daughter to her offended mother ; and restoring hundreds of unfortunate young women to industry, again to become useful members of that community in which Providence has placed them ?

The MAGDALEN HOSPITAL was opened in the year 1758. During the period that it has subsisted, *more than two-thirds* of the women, who have been admitted, have been reconciled to their friends, or placed
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in honest employments or reputable services. Of this number some, undoubtedly, have relapsed into their former errors ; but many, who left the House at their own request, have since behaved well ; and several of those discharged for improper behaviour have, to the certain knowledge of the Committee, never returned to evil courses. A very considerable number are since married, and are, at this moment, respectable members of society ; and, could their names and situations be disclosed, (which, for the most obvious reasons, would be highly improper) the very great utility of this Charity would appear in the strongest light.

A PROBATIONARY WARD has been instituted for the young women on their first admission ; a separation of those of different descriptions and qualifications has been established ; and Apartments have been fitted up in the *Lodge of the Hospital*, for the residence of the Chaplain, the Reverend Mr. PRINCE, and his family ;

that he may with the greater facility continue to devote his time and attention to the instruction of the women, in the same most satisfactory manner in which he has hitherto performed all the duties of his situation.

Each class is entrusted to its particular Assistant, and the whole is under the inspection of the Matron. This separation, useful on many accounts, is peculiarly so to a numerous class of women, who are much to be pitied, and to whom this Charity has been very beneficial; viz. *Young women, who have been seduced from their friends, under promise of marriage, and have been deserted by their seducers.* They have never been in public prostitution, but fly to the MAGDALEN to avoid it. Their relations, in the first moments of resentment, refuse to receive, protect, or acknowledge them; they are abandoned by the world, without character, without friends, without money, without resource; and wretched indeed is their situation! To such especially this
House

House of Refuge opens wide its doors ; and, instead of being driven by despair to lay violent hands on themselves, and to super-add the crime of self-murder to that guilt which is the cause of their distress, or of being forced by the strong call of hunger into prostitution, they find a safe and quiet retreat in this abode of peace and reflection. To rescue from the threatening horrors of prostitution such victims of the most base and ungenerous arts, whose ruin has frequently been more owing to their unsuspecting innocence than to any other cause, to restore them to virtue and industry, after one false step, and to reconcile their friends to them, are considerations of the greatest magnitude. The Committee generally give these young women the preference, because they are almost certain of the best consequences ; for it scarcely ever happens but their relations relent, when, by taking shelter in this House, they have given so strong a proof of their determination to quit a vicious way of life.

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The method of proceeding for the admission of women into this Hospital is as follows : *The first Thursday in every Month* is an *Admission-Day* ; when, sometimes, from twenty to thirty petitioners appear, who, *without any recommendation whatever*, on applying at the door, to the Clerk, receive a printed form of petition *gratis*, which is properly filled up. Each petition is numbered, and a corresponding number is given to the petitioner herself. They are called in singly before the Board, and such questions are put to them, as may enable the Committee to judge of the sincerity of their professions and to ascertain the truth of their assertions. If a parent, relation, or friend, has accompanied them, (which, though not necessary, is very desirable, and is very frequently the case) these are also called in separately and examined, with a view to confirm and strengthen, if true, or to disprove, if false, the account given by the women themselves. The Committee take particular pains to select for admission the most deserving ; as it often happens
that

that there are but few vacancies. In the next place, they endeavour, to the best of their ability, to assist such other petitioners, as appear thoroughly resolved to amend their lives. Many are reconciled to their friends, by the interposition of the Committee, even without being admitted into the House ; and others are supported until a vacancy takes place, that they may not be compelled by want to return to their evil ways. Women, whilst diseased, or pregnant, are not admissible, being objects for other Hospitals.

The treatment of the women is of the gentlest kind. They are instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion, in reading, and in several kinds of work, and the various branches of household employment, to qualify them for service, or other situations, wherein they may honestly earn their bread. The Chaplain attends them daily, to promote and encourage their good resolutions, and to exhort them to religion and virtue. The Sacrament of the Lord's
Supper

Supper is administered on the Great Festivals, and at other stated times ; when many of the young women, who have been some time in the House, and who, after having themselves expressed their wish to be instructed in this duty, have been considered by the Chaplain as sufficiently informed and prepared for it, receive it with the most serious attention.

The time they remain in the House varies according to circumstances. The greatest pains are taken to find out their relations and friends, to bring about a reconciliation with them, and, if they be people of character, to put them under their protection : if, however, the young women are destitute of such friends, they are retained in the House till an opportunity offers of placing them in a reputable service, or of procuring them the means of obtaining an honest livelihood. NO YOUNG WOMAN, WHO HAS BEHAVED WELL DURING HER STAY IN THE HOUSE, IS DISCHARGED UNPROVIDED FOR.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

FOUR General Courts are holden in every year; viz. on the last Wednesday in January, April, July, and October, when every Governor may be present.

At the General Court in April the Committee and all Officers, except the President, are elected.

The Committee, consisting of Thirty-two Governors, meet at the Hospital *every Thursday, at Twelve o' Clock precisely*, except on the *first Thursday* of every Month, when they meet at *Eleven*; and two of them in rotation attend at the Chapel every Sunday, at Morning and Evening Service, when a Collection is made previously to Admission. The Hours of Divine Service are a *Quarter after Eleven in the Forenoon, and a Quarter after Six in the Evening.*

This Account of the Institution, the By-Laws and Regulations for its management, the Psalms and Hymns used in the Chapel, and a correct List of all the Benefactors, Subscribers and Governors, may be had at the Hospital; and are sold, for the Benefit of the Charity, by *F. C. and J. Rivington*, Booksellers, in St. Paul's Church-Yard; and Mr. *Triphook*, Stationer to the King, St. James's Street.

A Subscription of *Twenty Guineas* or more at one Time, or of Five Guineas *per Annum* for Five successive Years, is a Qualification for a Governor for Life; and an Annual Subscription of Five Guineas, for a Governor for one Year; *but smaller Subscriptions or Donations are thankfully received.*

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are received by the Treasurer, *Alexander Bennett*, Esq. Exchequer Office, Temple; Messrs. *Boldero and Co.* Cornhill; Messrs. *Child and Co.* Fleet-street; Messrs. *Croft and Co.* Pall-Mall; Messrs. *Dorrien and Co.* Finch-lane; Messrs. *Drummond*, Charing-cross; Messrs. *Hoare*, Fleet-street; Messrs. *Martin and Co.* Lombard-street; Messrs. *Vere and Co.* Lombard-street; Messrs. *Wilkinson and Co.* Southwark Bank; and by the Rev. *John Prince*, Chaplain and Secretary, at the Hospital.

To such as are inclined to become Benefactors by their last Will the following Form of Legacy is recommended:

“ I give and bequeath unto the President, Vice-
 “ Presidents, Treasurer, and Governors of the Mag-
 “ dalen Hospital, for the Reception of Penitent Pros-
 “ titutes, in St. George’s Road, in the County of
 “ Surrey, the Sum of
 “ *which I desire may be paid out of my personal*
 “ *Estate.*”

N. B. Devises of Land, or Money charged on Land, or to be laid out in Land, are void by the Statute of Mortmain.

FINIS.