

*Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland. Edinburgh, 1885.*

The total number of registered lunatics in Scotland on 1st January, 1885, was 10,918, including 53 persons in the lunatic department of the general prison at Perth, and 238 imbeciles in training schools.

The whole increase of registered lunatics during 1884 was 169, of which number 23 were private and 146 were pauper patients. Imbeciles in training schools are registered separately, and there was an increase of 10 pauper patients in such establishments.

The increase during 1884 is 45 less than that of the preceding year.

The changes in the distribution of the insane during the year were as follows:—

In Royal and District asylums there was an increase of 36 private patients, and an increase of 30 pauper patients. In private asylums there was a decrease of 15 patients. In parochial asylums there was an increase of 37 patients, and in the lunatic wards of poorhouses an increase of 29 patients. In private dwellings there was an increase of two private and of 50 pauper patients,

The following paragraph is quoted from page xi of the Report:—"The details which most deserve special notice among the results for the year are as follows:—(1) There is a total increase of 96 in the number of registered pauper lunatics in asylums and other establishments during the past year; (2) there is an increase of two in the number of private and of 50 in the number of pauper lunatics accommodated in private dwellings; (3) all pauper lunatics continue to be provided for in public establishments." How the second and third of these statements can be correct it is difficult to imagine. If, on the 1st of January, 1885, 1,861 pauper lunatics were provided for in private dwellings, how is it possible that at the same date all pauper lunatics were provided for in public establishments? Establishments do not include private dwellings, but only Royal, district, private, and parochial asylums, lunatic wards of poorhouses, training schools for imbeciles, and the lunatic department of the general prison. That the statement, that all pauper

lunatics continue to be provided for in public establishments, means something, is highly probable, since it has been put forward as one of the details deserving special attention, in each report, for several years past. To the ordinary reader, however, the two statements appear to be directly contradictory.

During the year 485 private and 2,093 pauper patients were admitted to establishments, showing an increase of 23 in the private class and a decrease of 52 in the pauper class, as compared with the admissions of 1883. Transfers from one establishment to another are not reckoned as admissions.

The number of voluntary patients remains nearly unchanged, and their condition has been satisfactory.

The percentage of recoveries on the admissions for the year is 40·5, including both private and pauper cases. That of last year was 27·2. This great difference arises from the fact that the recovery rate in private asylums has in 1884 amounted to 71 per cent., while in 1883 it was only 11 per cent. On reference to the table detailing the numbers of admissions and recoveries in private asylums, it is found that there have been only eight males and thirteen females admitted, and that seven males and eight females have recovered. These numbers yield a recovery rate of 87·5 per cent. for males and 61·5 per cent. for females. The number of patients discharged unrecovered was 140 in the private class and 440 in the pauper class.

The death rate on the average number resident in all classes of establishments was 7 per cent. for private patients and 8·1 per cent. for pauper patients.

The removal of patients on statutory probation—that is, their removal for a longer period than 28 days—is again urged, and the Board expresses regret that application for this probationary discharge is not more frequently applied for. It is not to be wondered at, however, that superintendents are not eager to add to their responsibilities in this way, for it must be a very doubtful case indeed, where the relatives of the patient are unable to decide in four weeks, whether they will be able to take care of the patient or not.

The changes among attendants have been 519 as compared with 603 in 1883. In one asylum, between the 29th of June, 1883, and the 11th of March, 1884, 15 attendants resigned and four were dismissed; thus in the space of nine

months 19 attendants, in a staff probably of about 40, have been changed. Such frequent changes in the staff of an asylum are a great hindrance to its prosperity, and must act very prejudicially on its inmates. Would it not be useful to publish in the report a table enumerating the changes among attendants in each asylum, and thus to show where the changes were most frequent?

In their remarks on the present condition of the various establishments, the Board directs attention to the overcrowding of nearly all the Royal asylums. The Glasgow Royal Asylum and the Crichton Royal Institution appear to be the only exceptions. In the Murray Royal Asylum no pauper patients are received. This overcrowding of Royal asylums by pauper patients is much to be regretted, as it greatly increases the difficulty of patients with small means obtaining asylum treatment without coming on the pauper roll.

The average daily cost per head for pauper lunatics has been in Royal and district asylums and in parochial asylums 1s. 5d., in lunatic wards of poorhouses 1s. 1½d., and in private dwellings 9½d., giving an average for all classes of 1s. 3½d., or one farthing less than the average cost of the previous year.

The proportion of pauper lunatics in asylums decreased in 1883 to 185 per 100,000 of the population, from 188 per 100,000 which was the proportion in 1882, and although there is no further decrease, still there is no increase, the proportion being again 185 per 100,000.

The increase in the number of lunatics in Scotland since January, 1858, amounts to 5,095, and this increase is chiefly due to the larger number of pauper lunatics. The increase in the number of private lunatics, especially if only the patients in asylums are considered, is little more than is accounted for by the increase of population of the country. The enormous increase among pauper patients is found to have occurred nearly entirely among those resident in establishments, not among those in private dwellings. The natural increase of the number of pauper patients in establishments, due to the increased population of the country since 1860, would be 916. The increase has actually been 3,795. In explanation of this the Board says:—"This increase is undoubtedly due for the most part, if not altogether, to the action of legislative enactments, such as the lunacy

law and the poor law, to the action of the Government grant for pauper lunatics, to the increasing tendency in recent times to treat as lunatics those who suffer from the less pronounced kinds of mental weakness or perversion, and to the greater facilities that are afforded for obtaining care and treatment for them in special institutions."

The increase of the number of patients admitted into and resident in establishments has varied greatly in different localities, and this variation is specially investigated in the report. To aid in this investigation the counties are divided into two groups, a highland group and a lowland group.

In the highland group the average number admitted per 100,000 of population, in the period 1860 to 1864, was 17, the number resident was 92. The corresponding numbers for the lowland group were 34 and 108. In the period from 1880 to 1884 the number admitted from the highland group was 50, and the number resident 225. In the same period the number admitted from the lowland group was 54, and the number resident 166. The great increase in both admissions and residents in the highland group, as compared with the lowland group, is, to a considerable extent, explained by the absence of asylum accommodation in the highland counties at the earlier period, and by the great difficulty there then existed in transmitting patients to asylums, whereas now asylums have been provided, and transmission of patients to them is easy.

Another great cause of the increase in the numbers resident in the highland counties is the longer average period of residence. The average period of residence is four and a half years in the highland counties and three years in the lowland. This longer period of residence in the highland counties is explained by the higher proportion of ordinary paupers on the poor-roll in these counties. In small towns and rural districts the average length of time for an ordinary pauper to remain on the poor-roll is five years, while in the principal towns it is only a year and a quarter. The number of ordinary paupers added to the poor-roll is less in the rural localities, and the number on the roll at one time is much greater. The opinion arrived at is that—"it may be inferred from this that it is to the social conditions which lead to pauperism of all kinds being a more enduring condition in rural than in urban localities, that the fact that pauper lunatics are less frequently removed from asylums in rural districts is to be attributed."

Of the pauper lunatics in private dwellings in 1860, 1,432 resided with relatives and 415 with strangers; of those in 1885, 935 resided with relatives and 926 with strangers. The class of patients residing with relatives is very different from the class boarded out with strangers. The names of patients in the former group would never come on the register of the Board if they were not paupers. But while the number boarded with strangers has largely increased of late years, the policy of the Board has been to transfer patients for whom asylum treatment is no longer necessary, to friends rather than to strangers. From 1860 to 1875 there was a steady decrease in the number of pauper lunatics resident with relatives. In 1875 the Government grant was instituted, and since then there has been a steady increase, particularly in the highland counties.

The policy of the Board with respect to the boarding out of patients in private dwellings is as follows:—"It is sufficient here to say that the policy of the Board, of which the boarding out has been an outcome, has been to discourage the unnecessary or needlessly prolonged removal of pauper lunatics from the position which they would naturally have occupied if they had been sane; and where such removal is required, either for their own welfare or the public interest, to prevent the restrictions and other circumstances of the treatment from interfering more than is necessary with their natural mode of life. With this view we have striven to prevent the unnecessary or inconsiderate removal of patients from their own homes, to encourage as far as possible the abatement of the prison features of asylums, and to stimulate the relegation of patients to their homes when asylum treatment ceased to be beneficial. In accordance with this we have encouraged the transference of patients in asylums, for whom asylum treatment had become unnecessary, to the houses of strangers in their own position in life, but only when no relatives could be found able and willing to take efficient care of them. In this way the boarding out has had the effect of diminishing the demand for further asylum accommodation, and has permitted a considerable number of pauper lunatics to live in a way little removed in its character from the mode of life which they would have led had they not suffered from insanity."

The changes in the numbers of patients in private dwellings since 1860 are seen most readily in the following table:—

On 1st January.	Number of Pauper Lunatics in Private Dwellings.					
	With Relatives.			With Strangers.		
	Highland Selected Counties.	Lowland Selected Counties.	Whole of Scotland.	Highland Selected Counties.	Lowland Selected Counties.	Whole of Scotland.
1860 ... ..	479	558	1,432	91	180	415
1865 ... ..	392	446	1,168	98	205	441
1870 ... ..	328	358	986	102	230	483
1875 ... ..	290	313	843	108	301	544
1880 ... ..	346	294	855	133	278	560
1885 ... ..	381	310	935	174	538	926
Increase since 1860... ..	—	—	—	83	358	511
Decrease since 1860... ..	98	248	497	—	—	—
Percentage of Increase or Decrease ...	20	45	35	91	199	128

From this table it will be seen that after 1875 the effect of the Government grant was to increase the number of patients resident with relatives, numerous ordinary paupers being placed on the register to secure the allowance. Of patients boarded with strangers the great majority have been inmates of asylums, and their removal to private dwellings has, in a great measure, been due to the policy of the Board. The great increase in the number of pauper lunatics boarded with strangers during the period 1880 to 1885 shows that the Board have already been successful in some districts in carrying their views into effect, but to secure and extend this system of providing for harmless and incurable lunatics it is necessary that the Board should secure the co-operation of the parochial authorities, of the asylum medical officers, and of the inspectors of the poor. As yet only a few parishes have adopted this means of saving their asylum accommodation; but as many asylums are becoming overcrowded, extension of asylum accommodation or boarding out will soon become a necessity.

It is pointed out that for this system to be carried out efficiently a sparsely inhabited district is not necessary, in so far as that, with the exception of Inverness, all the parishes

which have successfully adopted it are in the lowland counties.

The reports of the Deputy-Commissioners refer to the condition of patients living in private dwellings only. All such patients are visited once each year by a Deputy-Commissioner, and where any considerable number reside in one district they are visited twice in the year. A short paragraph from each report will serve to indicate the opinion of the Deputy-Commissioners as to the condition of the patients whom they inspect. Dr. Fraser says:—"As regards the great majority of the insane in private dwellings in my district, I have not the least hesitation in saying that they are adequately and suitably provided for; that their general condition is a satisfactory one; that they enjoy a more rational, normal, and healthy life than any institution could afford them; that they are satisfied with the arrangements made for their care and comfort; and that they would not exchange their domestic and other privileges for any other treatment of which they may have had experience. The evidence of the correctness of these views lies in the low mortality which exists among the boarded-out insane, their good health and good physical condition, the rarity of accidents among them, and their general contentment."

Dr. Lawson says:—"I have already said that I have now visited the whole of my district six times in succession. Some portions of it, where there are considerable aggregations of patients in specially licensed houses, I have visited twice yearly, and, taking one portion of the district with another, I believe that the standard of comfort amongst the pauper lunatics in private dwellings has increased during the course of these six years."

While it must be highly gratifying to the Board to be able to publish such favourable reports of the progress of their system, these reports would appear much more satisfactory to others interested in the treatment of the insane, and would be much more instructive, if they contained a greater number of details concerning the patients boarded out. Thus, a table showing the form of mental disorder from which the patients suffered when removed from the asylum would be of value, as also would be a table showing the form of mental disorder of such patients as were returned to asylum treatment. Nowhere in the report can there be found a table of the causes of death. This is a most undesirable omission, and reference to a table furnished in the previous annual report, detailing the causes of death for the years 1880, 1881,

and 1882, is not reassuring. Thus, three deaths were caused in that period by maniacal and melancholic exhaustion. That such deaths occurred among pauper lunatics in private dwellings appears to indicate a want of sufficient supervision, for it is difficult to conceive how the constant nursing and medical treatment necessary in such cases could be obtainable in the private houses of the class of people with whom such patients are boarded. In nine cases the cause of death was unknown. Does this mean that in these cases no medical assistance was obtained during their fatal illness?

Another detail on which little or no information is to be obtained from the report is the number of accidents occurring among the boarded-out patients. In the Commissioners' entries at the various asylums serious accidents are nearly always enumerated, but among the boarded-out the rarity of accident alone is mentioned. Other points on which it would be interesting to have information are the frequency of the causation of really serious injury to person or property by these patients, and the frequency with which their sexual propensities give rise to untoward results.

Instead of such details, Dr. Fraser furnishes a "Sketch of the Development of the Private Dwelling System in Scotland." Little more than the headings of the various sections in this sketch is necessary to indicate its aim and scope. The first section shows that lunatics are disposed of in private dwellings in all countries, though they are not everywhere under efficient supervision. The next five sections point out that the Scotch Lunacy Act for 1857 did not contemplate the organization of a system of providing for lunatics in private dwellings, but that the views arrived at by the officials of the Board in the discharge of their first duties after the passing of that Act, led to the organization of this system, which is now a marked feature of the Scotch Lunacy Administration; and further, that the Amendment Acts of 1862 and 1866 reflected the views of the Board, and made care and treatment in private dwellings a definite and important part of the work of the Board. This being so, the Board's work and policy have influenced the number of these patients in various ways and to a considerable extent.

The following table, copied from this part of the report, is at first sight very misleading. From the table as it stands it would appear that 43·8 per cent. of the total insane were in 1859 in private dwellings, and 80·8 per cent. in 1885, giving an increase of 37·5 per cent. for the period. The real



figures are 9·1 per cent. resident in 1859 and 14·2 per cent. in 1885, giving an increase of 5·1 per cent.

PARISH.	On 1st January, 1859.			On 1st January, 1885.			In-crease.	De-crease.
	Total Insane.	In Private Dwellings.		Total Insane.	In Private Dwellings.			
		No.	Per Cent.		No.	Per Cent.		
City, Edinburgh ...	196	8	4·8	238	63	26·4	21·6	—
Govan and Gorbals ...	40	1	2·5	307	65	21·1	18·6	—
City, Glasgow ...	293	23	7·8	501	64	12·3	4·5	—
St. Cuthbert's and Canongate ...	183	25	13·6	375	65	17·3	3·7	—
Barony ...	151	22	14·6	512	19	3·7	—	10·9
	863	79	43·3	1943	276	80·8	48·8	10·9

Nothing of any interest is to be found in the rest of Dr. Fraser's report, and the whole Sketch is merely a defence of a system which, if adopted and carried out with care and moderation, is useful and valuable, but which may easily be rendered a source of danger to both patients and the public, by over-zeal on the part of its adopters.

Dr. Lawson, in his report, furnishes tables which offer a "comparative statement of the comfort and cost of pauper lunatics under domestic care." Each of the counties visited by Dr. Lawson is dealt with separately, and the following table for the county of Ayr will illustrate the method adopted:—

COUNTY.	Bad.		Avge. Allowance.	Mid-dling.		Avge. Allowance.	Good.		Avge. Allowance.	Very Good.		Avge. Allowance.	TL.	Avge. Allowance.				
	M.	F.		s.	d.		M.	F.		s.	d.				M.	F.	s.	d.
Ayr.																		
Alone ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—				
With Strangers	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	6	5	0	1	2	5	5	13	5	1	
With Relatives	—	—	—	2	3	4	0	4	16	3	10	4	3	4	5	32	4	0
In S. L. Houses	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	2	4	9	—	—	—	—	6	4	9	
Totals ...	—	—	—	2	3	4	0	12	24	4	4	5	5	4	9	51	4	4

The following table, compiled from the tables similar to the above, shows the influence on guardianship of the presence or absence of family relationship :—

	Bad.	Middling.	Good.	Very Good.
<b>1. Under Unrelated Guardians—</b>				
<i>a.</i> As Single Patients ...	3	12·4	53·8	30·8
<i>b.</i> In Specially Licensed Houses...	—	2·3	72·6	25·1
<i>c.</i> Combined ...	0·9	7·2	68·7	23·2
<b>2. Under Related Guardians</b>				
3. Alone ...	—	—	78·6	21·4

Commenting on this table, Dr. Lawson says :—“ It will thus be seen that the best provision for pauper lunatics in private dwellings is that which exists in specially licensed houses. It is remarkable, however, that the largest proportion of strikingly satisfactory cases is found in dwellings where one patient is the sole charge of an unrelated guardian; while, on the other hand, the largest proportion of distinctly unsatisfactory cases occurs among the patients who are in the keeping of their own relatives.” This fact has been recognised in the article on Gheel in the present number of the Journal.

The rate of board paid for lunatics in private dwellings is evidently becoming a question of vital importance to the Commissioners, and is dwelt on at some length by Dr. Lawson. He is of opinion that from seven to eight shillings a week should be the maximum charge, but that in addition, all that is required in cases of illness should be provided. The actual condition of affairs, in one district at least, may be inferred from the following paragraph quoted from the report of a Scotch superintendent :—

“ It is the question of keep—the difficulty of obtaining it at first at a sufficiently low figure, and the immediate demand for an unobtainable increase—which threatens obstruction, and appears most likely to prove a real hindrance to the obtaining of room for the treatment of cases not actually ailing. Ten shillings, and, I am told, twenty shillings a week has been refused. No wonder, therefore, that the initial seven shillings or eight shillings a week is soon reported as insufficient, and under threat of a break in the bargain a new and more highly paid one is demanded, and

has had to be conceded, otherwise replacement in the asylum offered the only outlet. And it is well to have in mind also that demented and chronic lunatics often possess vigorous—nay, gluttonous—appetites, requiring, as I have been pitifully told by an applicant for an increase to her weekly dole, an egg or ham and egg to breakfast and meat to dinner for satisfaction. Thus it may well be feared we have a long and painful journey to travel, as well as a bitter experience to undergo, ere we arrive at that higher and happier civilization some of our neighbours are boastingly said to have attained to, which regards the introduction of an alien and a lunatic into the family as an advantage and a boon.”

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*The Blot upon the Brain. Studies in History and Psychology.*  
By WILLIAM W. IRELAND, M.D. Edin.

The work consists of thirteen distinct chapters, as follows:—(1) On Hallucinations. (2) The Hallucinations of Mohammed, Luther, and Swedenborg. (3) The Character and Hallucinations of Joan of Arc. (4) The Hereditary Neurosis of the Claudian-Julian family, of Mohammed Toghlaq, Sultan of India, of Ivan the Terrible of Russia, and the Romanoffs. (5) The Hereditary Neurosis of the Royal Family of Spain. (6) On St. Francis Xavier. (7) On Fixed Ideas. (8) Folie à deux. (9) On Unconscious Cerebration. (10) Thought Without Words and the Relation of Words to Thought. (11) Left-handedness and Right-headedness. (12) On Mirror-writing. (13) On the Dual Functions of the Double Brain.

Several of these papers will be already familiar to our readers, and to the readers of "Brain." A part of the paper on Xavier was reprinted from the "Quarterly Review,"

It is always well to get the unpleasant part of a review over first. To begin, then, we cannot think that Dr. Ireland has been happy in the title he has chosen. The title conveys no particularly distinct idea in itself, and to the controversial chapters, such as the one on Unconscious Cerebration, it does not apply. To many of the others it only applies incidentally where isolated examples of mental perversion may be chosen in illustration of a particular theory. We cannot think it sufficient that he should cite the poet-laureate as an assumed authority. Again, a blot is a thing