

which Dr. Parsey has discharged the duties of President during the past year. No one has a greater right than I have myself to express that opinion; from knowing you so well, from my anxious feeling for the welfare of this Institution, no one has a greater pleasure than I have; from my intimate knowledge of my old friend, and the pleasure it has given me on seeing him in that chair, comporting himself in the manner he has done to the satisfaction, complete and entire, of every one; and the feeling is, I am sure, participated in by every member of this Association (applause).

The PRESIDENT—That, gentlemen, is a motion which I need not put to you as a motion at all; it will be carried, I am sure, unanimously.

Dr. PARSEY—After the very flattering way in which my poor services have been mentioned by Dr. Bucknill, I think it would be improper of me not to express thanks for the honour you have conferred upon me. I have looked upon it as one of the most pleasing periods of my life to find myself at the head of an Association which I have been mixed up with for such a large number of years. It is very flattering to any member of the Association to find himself placed by his compeers as their President. My duties have been slight. Being a country member, only on one occasion have I been called to London. I am sorry to say that that was in a measure a failure. There was an attempt by application made through myself as President to the Secretaries of the Royal Society, to have this Association considered in the Government grants made for scientific purposes. During the past year our claims were pressed upon them as far as we could, and I have no doubt these claims received their consideration. But I am sorry the answer we received was that the funds were not very large, and that we could not be considered. We asked to have a portion given for the pursuit of scientific subjects in connection with lunacy. That was the only matter out of the ordinary routine in which I was concerned. That was a failure. At the same time I have to thank you for the cordial way in which you have accepted my services.

THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT, &c., OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF  
PHYSICIANS.

Mr. MOULD—I move that our most cordial thanks be given to the President and Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians for the use of these rooms. We cordially express our thanks to them, and hope they will, year by year, continue to us the same favour (cheers).

The proceedings then closed.

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THE WILLARD ASYLUM.

The following extract from a letter of its correspondent at Albany, to the "Springfield Republican," of October 13, 1876, is interesting in itself, and as showing the interest taken in such matters, and the current views about asylums in America:—

Within the last week I have seen the two largest collections of the chronic or incurable insane which are to be found anywhere in the United States, with perhaps the single exception of the New York City Lunatic Asylum on Blackwell's Island. I do not know the exact number maintained there, but suppose it to be thirteen or fourteen hundred. The two other establishments which I have just visited are the insane departments of the Blockley Alms-house in Philadelphia—where I found 1,175 chronic insane persons on the 18th September—and the Willard Asylum, on the east shore of Seneca lake, in the township of Ovid, where I found just about the same number (1,173), on the 22nd of September. In the Blockley Alms-house, where the insane department is euphonically called the "Philadelphia Hospital," nearly 1,200 patients, chiefly paupers, are cooped up in huge buildings, with small yards, giving scarcely

space enough for drying their clothes on washing-day—and with little or no employment or amusement. They are kindly treated, and are under the care of a medical superintendent, as all the insane should be, but something more than 10 per cent. of them die in a year, and those who survive lead dull and stagnant lives, with far less comfort and freedom than they might enjoy in different surroundings. At the Willard Asylum, on the contrary, the buildings in which nearly 1,200 insane persons (chiefly paupers, and nearly all incurable) pass their lives, are scattered over a pleasant farm, a mile in length, in detached buildings, none containing more than 500, while the smallest contains about 150. Instead of being cooped up within stone walls or in narrow yards, they have the range of this farm of nearly 500 acres, and such of them as are able to work, assist in cultivating the soil, gathering the crops, and performing the numberless tasks that belong to a great colony such as this is. It is a colony, I mean in the French sense, that is, a rural community, living upon its own land, and cultivating that, and resembles in some degree, the famous "colony of Fitz-James" at Clermont, in France, where between 1,000 and 2,000 pauper insane have long been supported, and have contributed almost the whole cost of their maintenance by their farm labour. It is quite probable that Dr. John B. Chapin, the real founder of the Willard Asylum (although it bears the name of another physician, now dead) had the Clermont colony in mind when planning the establishment which he now directs on the shore of Seneca lake. In many respects, however, it differs widely from its French prototype. It may also be called, as I believe it has been, "the American Gheel," though it is much smaller than that famous "city of the simple" among the wastes of Belgium. It resembles Gheel more in its spirit and aim than in its circumstances; and it is, in fact, a well-managed hospital for the incurable insane on a new plan, and with some remarkable advantages over the old system of hospital building and management.

About a dozen years ago, several of the physicians and philanthropists of New York, scandalised at the condition of the insane poor in the county almshouses of that State, began to agitate for their removal to a better place of treatment. The state medical society took up the question, and its secretary, Dr. Willard, a young man who had made a good reputation in the war, was authorised by the Legislature, in 1864, to investigate the whole subject. Dr. Willard's report, presenting a mass of painful facts concerning the treatment of the insane in the New York poor-houses, was published in 1865, and led to the passage of a law called "The Willard Act," by which a new asylum, specially designed for the chronic or incurable insane, was authorised, and the money for its commencement was appropriated. Dr. Chapin, at that time associated with the late Dr. Cooke in the management of a private lunatic asylum at Canandaigua, was appointed by Gov Fenton as one of the commissioners to build the new asylum. He had in his mind a distinct plan for it, which has been carried out during the past ten years, in the face of many obstacles of all kinds; and the Willard Asylum, as it now stands, must be regarded as the development of Dr. Chapin's idea concerning the medical and economical care of the chronic insane poor. Since the problem presented in New York was in substance the same that we find in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and all the older States—the same that England, France, and Germany are now wrestling with—it will be well to take notice of the way in which Dr. Chapin has solved it.

The law of 1865 consigned to the Willard Asylum only the chronic pauper insane. The recent cases, supposed to be curable, by the same law are directed to be sent to the State Lunatic Asylum, at Utica, and thence, if pronounced incurable, or after two years' treatment, to this asylum. The intent of the law is clear; the poor-houses were to be emptied of insane persons, and under this law, hereafter, all the pauper insane, chronic and recent cases alike, are to be provided with proper homes and care by the State. Connected with the Willard Asylum is a farm of 475 acres. The buildings are located at different points on the farm; plain, substantial buildings adapted to the care of the

insane, and so arranged as to be comfortable, safe, and convenient. "We do not see," said the trustees of the asylum, five years ago, "either the necessity or propriety of buildings, palatial in outside ornament and cost, for the use of the pauper insane. We recommend less expensive buildings, yet equally convenient, grouped in different localities, contiguous to the gardens and orchards, where many of the patients could be most profitably employed. We believe such an arrangement of detached buildings for the permanent homes of the pauper insane will be in all respects advantageous. It will prove economical by lessing the first cost of the buildings per capita. It will lead to a more perfect and better classification. It will more perfectly and efficiently utilize the labour and render it most productive. The aggregation of all the pauper insane now in the State here, and then their segregation into detached groups of branch buildings, is a practical measure. The adoption of this scheme offers these paramount advantages:—

"First. The removal of all the pauper insane from the poor-houses.

"Second. Vastly better and most comfortable homes, care and treatment for this unfortunate class, than they could possibly have in the poor-house.

"Third. A better classification of the insane, thereby increasing their comfort, the chances of their cure, at the same time realising more fully the value of their labour.

"Fourth. The bringing all under a single responsible direction and control would ensure the best combination of experience, economy and skill in their care, treatment and support of the whole.

"Fifth. The relieving the poor-houses of a burden, not to say a nuisance, it makes them better and safer homes for the paupers who are not insane."

These results were undoubtedly in the mind of the founder of this charity; and the plan was broad and comprehensive in design. The results, thus far, show that it was also practicable, for it has been so long in operation as to demonstrate its entire feasibility and its general success. The system of detached buildings, or wards outside of a main hospital building, is no longer a mere theory; for at this moment more than 600 patients are comfortably cared for in such detached buildings at the Willard Asylum. This is more than can be taken care of in either of the two new Massachusetts hospitals, yet look at the difference in cost of construction. The Worcester hospital alone, finished and furnished, will have cost more than 1,300,000 dols., the Danvers hospital more than 1,700,000 dols.—while these detached buildings have cost less than 350,000 dols. For an outlay of no more than 500 dols. per patient, the State of New York has thus provided, in groups of detached buildings, sufficient shelter and comfort, and all necessary medical and sanitary appliances, while at Worcester the cost of construction is more than 2,500 dols. per patient, and at Danvers nearly 3,500 dols. The interest money which Massachusetts pays on the superfluous cost of construction at Danvers (60,000 dols. a year) would pay the board at Willard of nearly as many patients as the Danvers hospital ought to contain. Yet the annual cost of maintaining 400 patients at Danvers or at Worcester in the new buildings will probably be as great as that of maintaining 800 at Willard.

Of the 1,173 patients whom I found at the Willard asylum, 679 were women—nearly three-fifths of the whole. Of the 500 men but a small minority are able to do a day's work, and probably the majority of them can do little or nothing. The same is true of the women. Yet the whole farm is carried on chiefly by the labour of the men, while the women do most of the indoor work. The attendants are about as many in proportion to the patients as at Taunton, and the cost of maintaining the whole establishment will be, this year, less than 175,000 dols. for an average of about 1,050 patients. The counties pay 3 dols. a week for the board of the patients—about 30 cents a week for clothing and breakage, while the State keeps the buildings in repair, and pays a few thousand dollars for the salaries of the chief officers. The whole cost is about

3.50 dols. for each patient, which is precisely what the State pays in Massachusetts for the board of the pauper patients at Northampton and elsewhere. The interest charge on the cost of the establishment is about one dol. a week for each patient; which is not far from the charge at Northampton. At the new Worcester hospital this interest charge will be nearly 3 dols. a week, and at the Danvers hospital it will be about 4 dols. a week for each patient. The State pays this charge both in Massachusetts and New York. In my opinion the Willard Asylum is too large, and I even doubt whether there is any economy in managing an establishment with more than 500 patients, but the usual evils of large institutions are not visible at Willard—so well does Dr. Chapin keep his work in hand. There are, in fact, four separate establishments on this one estate, and when the new group of detached buildings is completed and occupied, next summer, there will be five separate buildings or groups, capable of containing 1,450 patients. The farm is, in fact, dotted with buildings, and looks like a manufacturing village rather than an insane asylum. The steward lives in a separate house, built of bricks, and costing less than 5,000 dols., but far better for a family than the quarters usually assigned to such an officer in the hospital-palaces which superintendents delight to build. Several of the medical officers and other officers of the higher grade live in the detached buildings, and the attendants take their meals among the patients. The farm, which was originally bought for a State agricultural college, is well cultivated, though much of it is still covered with wood. The location is exceedingly pleasant, close by Seneca lake, and the buildings are not perched on the top of steep hills, as is the expensive fashion in Massachusetts. What was paid for grading and road-building at "Hawthorne hill" in Danvers would have bought two or three farms like that at Willard, the cost of which was 50,000 dols. There is no city or large town near, and consequently no convenient market, so that the supplies of meat, poultry, etc., must be furnished on the spot, and there are large slaughter-houses and poultry-yards. The whole establishment has the air, except for its factory-like buildings, of a great inland farm, as it really is.

#### HABITUAL DRUNKENNESS.

We have received from Dr. Joseph Parrish, of New Jersey, U.S., an open letter to John Charles Bucknill, M.D., of London, on the subject of Habitual Drunkenness. The following are extracts from Dr. Parrish's letter:—

"My dear Sir,—Reports of your speech at Rugby, before the Temperance Association, of your correspondence with Dr. Clouston, and your essay in the 'Contemporary Review' for February last, on Habitual Drunkenness, etc., are before me.

"You seem to have used these means of communicating with the medical profession, and to some extent with the general public of Great Britain, for the purpose of discrediting the testimony of witnesses from this country before what is popularly known as Dr. Dalrymple's Parliamentary 'Committee on Habitual Drunkards,' in 1872, and of injuring the cause which they represented before said Committee.

"As some of your statements are, to say the least, unguarded, and as the impression they are evidently meant to convey, must be false and injurious, I feel it to be due to my colleague and myself, who appeared before the Committee above referred to, and to the Inebriate Asylums and Reformatories in this country, that your erroneous statements should be corrected.

"On several occasions, both in your own land, and during your recent visit to America, you have publicly expressed your right to make open enquiry into the 'credibility' of 'statements' made by Dr. Dodge and myself before the Committee of your own Parliament, in answer to important questions which were submitted to us by the Committee. You also accuse us of being 'deputed to teach' the English people 'how to change the laws of your country,' etc., and