

II. *English Psychological Literature.*

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It is proposed to devote the present psychological retrospect to a short, and it is feared necessarily imperfect, *résumé* of the "English County Lunatic Asylum Reports" for the year 1865. We must defer to a future occasion our notice of the Irish and Scotch reports. Many of these reports unavoidably re-echo one another, and it is evidently sufficiently difficult even for the able men who govern our county asylums to find from year to year enough of interesting matter to fill up the allotted quota of pages. This difficulty is in a great measure due to the fact that they have to write for two different classes of readers—on the one hand, the visiting justices and the general public; on the other, the medical profession in general and the specialty in particular. Hence, we might easily class each report under one of these headings—First, we have reports written entirely for the visiting justices, in which the writer confines himself to general subjects, and as far as possible ignores medical matters; secondly, reports almost purely medical; and thirdly, and these decidedly predominate, a mixture of both.

That such is the case, cannot but be viewed as a subject of regret, because, considering what vast storehouses for psychological teaching our asylums must be, one cannot but think that a more studied attention to, and report on, the modes of treatment and their results pursued in the various county hospitals for the insane would unquestionably advance our knowledge of insanity and increase our powers of battling with its progress. Undoubtedly, a step in the right direction has been taken in the successful attempt of the committee of our society appointed to recommend and promote a uniform system of statistics, and the thanks of all true psychologists are due to these gentlemen for the successful prosecution of their labours. Much remains to be done, however, in this matter. Several superintendents, it is true, have already adopted the proposed tables, including the superintendents of the Wilts, the Hants, the Warwick, the Somerset, the Abergavenny, the Oxford, the Norfolk, the Lincoln, the Cumberland and Westmoreland, the Sussex, and the city and county of Bristol, &c., &c., but many still hang back; it is, however, to be hoped in the interest of science and the common weal, that next year we shall see them adopted in many more, if not all, of the reports.

There is, however, very much of interesting matter to be culled from these reports, for, as Dr. Bucknill has remarked, it is impossible for a number of men so full of knowledge to write without

conveying important and original information, and in the following pages an attempt will be made to collect and to some extent arrange the most useful and original information from each report.

We would first, however, recall to the recollection of the readers of this Journal a sentence written in the number for July, 1862, by Dr. Lockhart Robertson, in which, speaking of asylum reports, he says, "Thus we find the superintendents of new asylums complaining to ears, which by old experience we know to be 'deaf as adders;' that patients are sent to them in a hopeless state of bodily disease when asylum care can afford no help, and when their admission can only tend to swell the bills of asylum mortality; and with equal frequency the complaint is made that few of the cases sent to the asylums for treatment are sufficiently recent to be curable." This was written now some four years ago, and in nearly every asylum report we find the same complaint made with the unvarying repetition of a cuckoo cry. This is to a very great extent due to the cheese-paring policy of boards of guardians, and would be worthy of the considerations of Mr. Gathorne Hardy in any future reform he may contemplate in the poor laws.

Bedford, Hertford, and Huntingdon Counties' Lunatic Asylum.—

A leading feature in this asylum is a tramway connecting it with the railway station at Arlesey. This is a great convenience, and having become out of repair has been relaid at a cost of £528. "The sum is large, but it is much more than compensated by the heavy cost of carting goods, &c., along the road from the railway to the asylum." The sewerage is utilised over the meadow land connected with the asylum, and appears to have been very successful. Thus, in a report to the committee, Mr. Heathcote writes—

"I have been over the sixteen acre field that has been subject to the sewerage of the asylum, and it may be satisfactory to have the report as at present made by Mr. Steckley :—" Ten acres have not received any of the fluid, and their produce of hay has been under half a ton per acre. The remainder has principally kept eleven cows, and if it had been permitted to run to a crop of hay would have produced two tons per acre. Three acres have already been cut twice and will be fit to cut once more in October. Three acres have been cut once and will give one more crop in October.

"There is reason to suppose that all the six acres will in future become more saturated with the sewerage, and will afford four crops in the course of the year."

This was on the 24th of July. On the 18th of December he writes—

"I have walked over the field watered by the sewerage of the asylum, and find the appearance of the herbage satisfactory. Mr. Steckley informs me that since my last minute was made, three acres have been cut twice, producing ten tons per acre at each cutting. Six acres have been cut again

once, producing seven tons from each acre. During six weeks fifty-nine sheep have depastured on the sixteen acres."

It would be interesting to have some more detailed particulars respecting this experiment, such as the nature of the land, the strength of the sewerage, the number of gallons of water used per patient, the quality of the hay, &c., because the success of this experiment is somewhat different to that experienced elsewhere. Both at Northampton and Hayward's Heath the irrigation of ordinary pasturage has had to be conducted with very great caution, for it was found that the sewerage unless applied very diluted and for short periods, enabled, it is true, all the coarser grasses to spring up almost to any height, but quite killed the finer and more valuable herbage.

Bristol City and County Lunatic Asylum.—Dr. Stephens calls the attention of his committee to the overcrowded condition of the asylum which was built for 200 patients, and on the 31st December, 1865, contained 209. Out of this number he can only recommend eight males and ten females as at all fit to be removed to the work-houses in conformity with the powers given to committees of visitors under the 8th section of the 'Lunacy Amendment Act,' for 1862. Dr. Stephens reports favorably of papering dormitories, and intends to extend it. He appears also to favour a heating apparatus for the wards, and one having failed a second is being erected by Messrs. Haden and Son, of Trowbridge. There would seem to be no lack of amusements at the Bristol Asylum.

Buckinghamshire County Lunatic Asylum.—On the 17th December, 1864, the numbers in the asylum were 129 men, and 150 women,—total, 279.

From the Buckinghamshire Asylum, as from most others, comes the cry of overcrowding, and new buildings are being erected to meet the increased lunatic population.

Mr. Humphrey concludes his report by recording his sense of the loss sustained by "resignation (in consequence of impaired health) of T. Raymond Barker, Esq., who had acted as chairman of the committee for the last ten years."

Cambridgeshire County Lunatic Asylum.—Contained on the 19th December, 1865, males 138—females 159; total, 297.

The two following extracts from the report of the committee of visitors may form useful precedents for other superintendents:—

"2. *Appeals against the Poor Rate on the Asylum.*—During the year 1864, your Committee prosecuted at the Court of Quarter Sessions at Cambridge an appeal against a poor's rate made for the parish of Fulbourn, dated the 28th of April, 1864, by which the asylum and buildings were assessed at £1000 gross, and £900 nets, in addition to £88 10s. 0d. for the grounds and

site of the asylum. In our last report, page 13 (printed copy), we announced that the Court of Quarter Sessions had allowed your Committee's appeal, 'Subject to a special case to be stated by the parties for the opinion of the Court of Queen's Bench.'

"On Saturday, the 6th of May last, the special case was argued at the Court of Queen's Bench, at Westminster, by Mr. D. D. Keane, Q.C., Mr. Douglas Brown, and Dr. Abdy, on behalf of your Committee; and by Mr. Lush, Q.C., and Mr. Mills, on behalf of the parish of Fulbourn. It resulted in a decision in favour of your Committee, so that the assessment of the asylum and grounds was reduced to the same amount, to which the land forming the site of the asylum, &c., was assessed previous to its being purchased by your Committee.

"The Court of Queen's Bench allowed the costs of your Committee's arguing the case before that Court. The Court of Quarter Sessions, on motion by counsel on the 30th June last, ordered the paovers' rate to be amended, but directed the parties to pay their respective costs in that Court.

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"In January last a relieving officer of the Chesterton union brought to the asylum a female pauper patient named Barker, until then residing at Milton, in that union, with forms filled up for her reception into the asylum. The medical superintendent found that the pauper had been insane for upwards of eleven years, and that her husband had died of typhus fever at Milton, where she resided, only three weeks before the patient was brought to the asylum, the patient leaving a daughter in the same house ill with that infectious disease. Under these circumstances, and from the fact of there not being an infectious ward at the asylum, the medical superintendent, acting on the 53rd section of 'The Lunatic Asylums Act, 1853,' refused to admit the patient into the asylum, which course was fully approved of by your Committee. A correspondence thereupon ensued with the guardians of the Chesterton union, with the view to their reprimanding the medical officer who filled up the forms for the admission of the patient into the asylum, the result being that the guardians fully approved of Dr. Lawrence's conduct in refusing to admit the patient into the asylum, and remarked that the medical officer, in explanation of the matter stated 'that as the order for the woman's removal to the asylum came from the board of guardians, he presumed they were aware from the 'Medical Report Book' that her husband had died of fever, and that he was bound to obey their order."

Dr. Lawrence in his report mentions a rather curious case. A married woman was admitted in a state of dementia with advanced general palsy and a suspicion of early pregnancy. She was prematurely delivered one night, unknown to the night watch, who observed no change in her condition. The child when found was dead, imperfectly developed, and in date between the sixth and seventh month. As the condition of the lungs left a doubt that it might have been born alive, the coroner thought it advisable to bring the case before a jury, whose verdict was that the child was found in the clothes of the bed, but whether born alive or not there was no evidence to show.

Twenty-seven acres have been added to the asylum land, and have proved very valuable in affording out-door occupation to an increased number of patients, and Dr. Lawrence says he has been enabled to work the twenty-seven extra acres with the same number of paid

labourers as before, and the farm horses have been reduced from three to two in number.

A new ward has been erected for female patients, which will increase the total asylum accommodation to 310.

Carmarthen Joint Counties Asylum.—This asylum, which has been erected near Carmarthen by the joint counties of Carmarthen, Cardigan, and Pembroke for 212 patients, was opened for the reception of patients on the 26th September, 1865; and on the 8th of March, 1866, already contained 61 males, and 41 females; most of these had been for many years either at Vernon House Asylum, or at the Somerset Asylum; and Mr. Wilton, the Medical Superintendent, remarks that the majority were “either chronic, paralytic, idiotic, or demented, leaving only eight with the slightest chance of recovery.”

Mr. Wilton has already instituted dances, games, country walks, &c., for the patients, and with marked amelioration in their condition.

Cheshire County Lunatic Asylum.—The Committee of this asylum “regret much,” in their report, “having to report the resignation of Dr. Bushfield, consequent on his appointment to the new asylum at Woking, and are glad to take this opportunity of bearing testimony to his valuable services during the past thirteen years. The Committee have appointed as his successor Dr. Henry Lewis Harper, who for five years has been connected with the asylum as assistant medical officer.”

Dr. Bushfield records that, as usual, more deaths occurred amongst the males than the females, and he accounts for this by the larger number of males suffering from general paresis than females. This greater mortality amongst the male patients of asylums would seem to be very generally the case, and may be reckoned as one of the items which causes an excess of females over males in most asylums.

Cumberland and Westmoreland Lunatic Asylum.—The number of patients remaining in this asylum on 31st December, 1865, was 132 males, and 107 females. These numbers, however, only show a proportion of the insane belonging to the above counties, and two new blocks are in course of erection, each to afford accommodation for 105 patients.

Writing about his recoveries, Dr. Clouston says that in most of the cases the patients were at first only discharged for a fortnight or a month on trial. The relieving officer of the districts to which the patients belonged very kindly went to see them during their period of probation, and reported to him at the end of the time whether they remained well or not.

Dr. Clouston's death per-centage is very low, being only $6\frac{1}{3}$ on the average number resident, and contrasts favorably with the 12 per cent. of the previous year, when—as the readers of this Journal will remember—dysentery was so prevalent. There were, however, four cases in the spring of this year; and, as Dr. Clouston remarks after their experience of last year, when the cause of this dysentery was so clearly ascertained, it demands explanation how the cause was again allowed to come into operation with such fatal results. Dr. Clouston's explanation being interesting, we make no apology for giving it here *in toto* :

“During the trenching of the field below the sewage tank, the level of the ground through which the covered drain from the tank passed had to be altered, and the drain to be taken up; while this was up, the sewage was shut up in the tank when the wind blew towards the house, and was allowed to run over the land when the wind blew in other directions. While so running over the land, the wind changed to the north one night, and the effluvia was sent directly towards the house. The sewage was promptly stopped in the morning. Six days after this, five patients were simultaneously attacked with dysentery, of the same character as last year. At the time they were attacked, a drain was found to be obstructed under the windows of the ward in which they resided. At first I was doubtful whether the drain or the sewage exhalations from the tank were the cause of the disease. I have now no doubt that it was the sewage exhalations. From most careful observation as the time the sewage poison took to incubate in the system, after being inhaled in the outbreak of last year, I find that it required from three to six days to produce its effect. Now the drain had not been so long obstructed, so that it must have been the sewage from the tank. The method by which I discovered the length of time the poison took to incubate, was by carefully going over the Rev. Mr. Redford's meteorological register, and comparing the period when the patients were attacked, with the times when there had been north winds—the only winds that would carry the poison towards the house.

“Certainly, nothing could more conclusively prove the virulent nature of sewage exhalations, than this unfortunate outbreak of dysentery. Since last March, when this occurred, there has not been the least tendency to the disease among the patients.

“Since the publication of last year's report, considerable attention has been directed to the account I gave of the outbreak of dysentery, and its cause. Many comments have been made on it, and some misapprehension has been shown. To correct this, I may mention that the sewage irrigation, such as it was, was not a 'crude' and 'dangerous experiment' carried on by me, but an accidental and temporary arrangement that existed before I came here, and that was merely allowed to remain until the field on which the sewage was run, should have been levelled and properly prepared to receive the sewage distributed scientifically. My object in giving an account of it was simply to state the facts of the case, as a most interesting example of how dysentery of a peculiar type could be produced, and as a terrible warning as to the deadly effects of sewage exhalation. I had no intention whatever of expressing or implying any opinion about the general question of sewage utilisation in a proper manner. Surely the solution of most important questions should be rather helped than impeded by such an example of the effects of an improper utilisation.

“Then I have heard it said that the diet or clothing of the patients might have something to do with the disease as well as the sewage. When I say

that the daily food of each patient contains 296 grains of nitrogenous materials, and 12½ ounces of carbon, and that each patient is warmly clothed—when I mention that patients who were on stimulants and extra diet were attacked by the disease, and that a strong, young, robust male attendant, who had only been a few days in the house was one of those attacked last year, I think I have sufficiently disposed of those groundless surmises.

“I have every reason to suppose that the system of deodorising the sewage, *ab initio*, by supplying water impregnated with carbolic acid and lime to the water closets, as recommended by Mr. McDougal, of Manchester, and carried out by you, will be most successful in preventing all offensive odours in the house, and in enabling us to use the sewage anywhere to the land with safety and profit. Mr. Todd has contrived an ingenious arrangement for mixing the carbolic acid with the water, which will save much labour, and do it much more effectively than it can be done by hand. When the cast-iron gutters for distributing the sewage over any part of the land are got, the system of deodorisation and utilisation will be complete.”

The Derbyshire County Lunatic Asylum continues to prosper under the management of its able superintendent. It contained at the end of last year 342 patients, the males and females curiously enough being in equal numbers, and only eight beds are left unoccupied. Additions are about to be made to the existing fabric by which all the patients both of the county and also the borough of Derby may be accommodated.

Dr. Hitchman strongly urges on the committee of visitors the want of a proper chapel, and proposes that the present chapel be substituted for a separate ecclesiastical building on the grounds. His remarks are so pertinent, and so fully bear out our experience of the good effects resulting from a detached place of worship, both at Northampton and Hayward's Heath, that I make no apology for extracting them *in extenso* :

“The chapel services have been conducted with great efficiency by the Rev. W. Findley, the chaplain; and this prompts me to record that the enlargement of the asylum, which has become urgent, which was determined upon at the last Quarter Sessions, and the plans for which have been approved by the Commissioners in Lunacy and the Secretary of State, renders increased accommodation for Divine service absolutely necessary. In proportion as the patients are raised by benign treatment to a better state of mind and feeling, the need of a place consecrated to the worship of the Supreme becomes felt and coveted. It was once thought absurd to permit the insane to attend public worship; it was deemed wrong to allow any to partake of the holy sacrament; but now, thanks to the eloquent teachings of wise and humane men, more correct ideas prevail, and it is known that the immortal spirit may be solaced by religious ordinances, although the brain, the material organ through which its operations are manifested, may be disordered and disturbed. Indeed, nowhere can be found more sincere and devout worshippers than may be seen in any well-conducted lunatic asylum; at this place the room which is used as a chapel is very crowded on the males' side every Sabbath, and although a seat intended for officers is allotted to patients, the need for further room is urgent, and I hope that the magistrates of the county will deem it right to provide for the religious needs of the insane poor in the same manner as the counties of Chester,

Worcester, Lancaster, Middlesex, and York, have provided for their lunatic patients. By increased admissions, and by the conscientious labours of our chaplain, the room allotted to Divine worship has become inadequate for the purpose. The necessity for better provision is further increased by the character which mental derangement now assumes. The violent and frantic mania, once so common, is becoming more rare, and is replaced or represented by morbid gloom, despondency, and great bodily prostration. The intellect is not so wildly bewildered, but the feelings are more deeply affected, and, therefore, the ministrations of a discreet and pious pastor becomes a powerful auxiliary to the physician. The sermons of our present chaplain are prepared to meet the mental conditions of the large number of patients who are suffering from morbid fears and despondency, and his services would be more profitable to the patients, if conducted in a better room. The mere transition of such patients from the walls of their daily abode to a church external to it, and possessing the form and character which are associated in their memories as belonging to a sacred place, would aid in dispersing the shadows which rest upon their feelings, and in strengthening the sacred words which fall from the lips of the preacher. This has been experienced wherever the change has been wisely carried out."

North Wales' Counties Lunatic Asylum, Denbigh, contains 137 males, and 164 females—total, 311.

Mr. Jones complains much of the difficulty of obtaining the services of suitable attendants, more especially females. This he considers to be due to the fact that communication is now rendered so easy by railways that competent female servants seek for situations in the large English towns, thus securing to themselves higher wages and greater advantages. He therefore strongly recommends an advance in the present scale of payment. Having been requested by Mr. Townsend Mainwaring, M.P., one of the committee of visitors, to try and ascertain the cause of the great amount of insanity in Wales, Mr. Jones went into the subject with great care, but found it impossible to come to a satisfactory conclusion. He writes:

"The causes assigned in the certificates of the patients when admitted are very vague and frequently wanting altogether.

"I have compared the number of patients confined in this with other county asylums, and I find we have fewer in proportion to the population than most other asylums, as shown by the following table, according to returns made on the 1st January, 1865.

Name of Asylum.	Population of Counties.	Number of Patients.
Denbigh, North Wales	359,834	248
Abergavenny, South Wales	439,947	450
Bucks	166,597	286
Cambridge	175,950	275
Chester	585,153	435
Cornwall	369,323	324
Cumberland and Westmoreland	266,102	225
Devon	584,531	674
Essex	404,644	521
Hants	481,495	547
Lincoln	411,997	449
Rutland and Leicester	259,261	337
Salop and Montgomery	307,951	403

"These tables, I think, show decidedly that insanity is not so prevalent in North Wales as in other parts of the kingdom."

Essex Lunatic Asylum.—This asylum contained, at the end of last year, 554 patients, of whom 236 were males and 318 females. We find the following in the report of the committee, and sincerely congratulate Dr. Campbell thereon:—"At the last meeting, on the 18th December, the committee, taking into consideration Dr. Campbell's valuable services and increased duties, and desirous of doing justice to his eminent professional attainments and high reputation, unanimously resolved to increase his salary from £600 to £800 a year."

Most medical men attached to lunatic asylums will indorse the remarks of Dr. Campbell when he writes—

"There is no doubt that the treatment experienced by a patient on his entrance into a lunatic hospital in many instances determines the future career of the disease. The persons with whom he is placed, his occupations, amusements, or otherwise, according to the nature of the case, are matters of the first importance. The great objects in view are to collect around the unfortunate inmates as many sources of happiness as are attainable, to give a generous diet, substantial clothing, and careful superintendence, employment, and amusements, wherever these promise to contribute to recovery or relief, or even pleasure. By such a course I find that almost every individual in some degree improves, the most degraded are elevated in the scale of being, improper and filthy habits are eradicated, and peculiarities corrected, and happiness frequently imparted where recovery cannot be anticipated. Every hour of happiness which is given, every degree of additional enlightenment which is gained, is a boon of incalculable benefit to the patient, and places the whole mind in a condition to be benefited by the other measures adopted for its improvement."

Dr. Campbell publishes in his report a very interesting table, showing the number of admissions, recoveries, deaths, and average number resident in the several county asylums during the five years ending 1863; with per centage of recoveries on admissions, and per centage of deaths on average number of patients resident. Unfortunately, it is too long to be reproduced here.

Glamorgan County Lunatic Asylum.—This is one of the most recently opened asylums, being first occupied by patients on the 4th November, 1864; and it is evident, both from the Report of the Committee and of the Commissioners in Lunacy, that Dr. Yellowlees has, under circumstances of no mean difficulty and endless annoyances, been enabled to organise an asylum which will compare favorably with the best of the modern English county asylums.

The Committee report that the present buildings afford accommodation for 350 patients, with all the necessary officers, attendants, and servants; but as it does not seem probable that so large a number of beds will be immediately required for the county, the

visitors propose taking a limited number of patients from other asylums.

Dr. Yellowlees in his report, speaking on the general principles of treatment followed in the asylum, writes :

“They are these :—To remove as far as possible, in each case, any physical cause of insanity, and to promote by every means the general health. To distract the insane mind from its morbid thoughts, by occupation or amusement, and to present to it new and healthy thoughts. To soothe by kindness, to control by tact and firmness, and to invite confidence by candour and truth. To share all the sorrows, cares, and joys of the patients, to interest them in each other, and to make their daily life as comfortable, happy, and homelike as possible. Harshness, punishment, or restraint, are absolutely forbidden. There is not a single strait-jacket, nor anything of the kind, in the whole institution.

As Dr. Yellowlees truly remarks, these general principles are now happily adopted in most asylums for the insane. They cannot, however, be too frequently repeated.

More open to objection are the following remarks :

“The absence of beer from the regular dietary is unusual in asylums, and deserves special notice. It is given with bread and cheese, as luncheon—but only to those patients who engage in some kind of occupation. Very few patients complained of the want of it at dinner, and such complaints have long ago ceased—this is explained by the fact that beer is not a habitual article of diet among the working classes throughout the county. The present system is of much service in inducing some of the idlers to work, and two thirds of the patients now establish a claim for beer, by engaging in some kind of occupation. I deem this a great advantage, and have as yet seen no reason for recommending the introduction of beer into the general dietary, which seems to be both suitable and sufficient without it. Sick or feeble patients, of course, receive beer, wine, or any other extra that their condition may require.”

Dr. Yellowlees says two thirds of the patients, viz., those who are able and willing to work, establish a claim to beer ; whilst it may be presumed the other one third, who, in our humble judgment, are the very ones requiring a stimulant, being, most probably, the demented, imbecile, and idiotic of the asylum, whose physical condition is invariably bad, have to do without. This fact has been well exemplified lately at the Hayward's Heath Asylum. An eruption of a peculiar nature has for the last few years been prevalent in several asylums and workhouses ; indeed, we first saw it at the Gloucester Asylum six years ago. It first appeared at Hayward's Heath about twelve months ago. On first sight it much resembles scabies in appearance, and one of its peculiar features is that it appears on none but the feeble and demented. It is most intractable, and we tried many remedies without success. Under the idea that it was a bastard scabies, some of the patients were kept in sulphur sheets for as long as a fortnight, but without any benefit. It confined itself to one ward, that in which the idiots, epileptics, and imbeciles were resident. The whole of the patients in this ward were put on porter

daily, and the eruption gradually died away. This spring the porter was taken off, and within two months many of the patients were again suffering from the eruption. The porter was returned to, and the patients are now again improved in health and their skins are becoming free.

Hants County Lunatic Asylum.—On the 23rd December, 1865, this asylum contained 275 males, and 317 females, the admissions for the past year having reached the large number of 177.

Dr. Manley commences his report by referring to the large mortality of 16 per cent. for the last twelve months, and explains it thus :

“Speaking generally, the deaths have occurred amongst the older residents:—22 of the patients who died having been here more than 7 years; whilst 42 had been here more than 3 years. Again, 22 have exceeded 70 years of age, and 35 have exceeded 60 years.

“With so large a removal of chronic cases and so numerous admissions into the asylum, it might reasonably be hoped that the class of inmates would for a time at least improve, and the per centage of recoveries increase, but such is certainly not likely to be the case. The admissions during the past year have been of a very unsatisfactory character: 25 patients were in a demented condition; 18 suffered from paresifying mental disease; 21 were idiots, in 14 of whom the mental infirmity was complicated with epilepsy; and ten other patients have epilepsy as a complication to some other form of mental disease.”

Dr. Manley then gives a table showing the ages of the patients now in the asylum, from which it appears that more than 100 are above sixty years of age. This is a very large per centage of aged people, and, as Dr. Manley truly remarks, does not give room for much hope in the future.

With such cases, necessarily all that can be done is to render their few remaining days as little irksome as possible, and to soothe their last hours with kind treatment, generous diet, and gentle nursing. In no asylum is this more carefully carried out than in the Hants County Lunatic Asylum.

Kent County Lunatic Asylum.—On the 1st of January, 1866, the population numbered, of males 325, of females 429—total, 754. This asylum is not, however, large enough to meet the requirements of the county, and Dr. Kirkman writes :

“A detached residence for the superintendent is close upon completion, and the apartments at present occupied by him will be given up to the patients.”

“The overcrowded state of the asylum has for some time been a source of much anxiety, the congregation of large numbers of lunatics in a limited space operates very prejudicially upon all, increasing their excitement and retarding their cure; this is felt very much in the winter months and unfavorable weather, when frequent recourse to out-door exercise and amusement is inadmissible. The subject is now occupying the serious attention of

the visitors, and it is in contemplation to provide additional accommodation for 500 more patients, as well as entirely new officers, the present ones from the gradual growth of the asylum having become altogether insufficient for the requirements of the establishment. We have now 108 patients more than the asylum is calculated properly to accommodate.

Lancashire County Lunatic Asylum, at Prestwich.—This asylum is capable of accommodating 1000 patients, and on December 27th, 1866, it contained 963. Considerable additions and improvements have been made during the past year. The airing-grounds have been remodelled, broad asphalted walks have been substituted for the narrow gravel footpaths, and a light open paling for the brick walls which previously enclosed them. Pleasant lawns, surrounded by shrubs, have also been formed in front of the rooms.

Lancashire County Lunatic Asylum, at Rainhill, contains 301 males and 356 females—total, 657. Dr. Rogers writes :

“The practice of discharging patients probationally is one which has been generally pretty extensively employed in this asylum, the advantages being—1st. That a patient may be thus sent out at the earliest moment at which it may be considered justifiable both for the welfare of himself and others. 2nd. In some few cases circumstances may occur in the domestic or other concerns of a patient, which by acting as a continued mental irritant are calculated to render detention in an asylum more prejudicial to his or her mental condition than a temporary return to home and social cares and duties, even when it may not be anticipated that a final discharge from restraint will be eventually advisable. 3rd. The knowledge that they still remain under a certain amount of supervision will often tend to act as a check on those who otherwise might be tempted to revert to irregular habits of life; and lastly, though by no means of least importance, it enables the magistrates to take advantage of the beneficent clause in the Act of Parliament which empowers them to make a weekly pecuniary allowance to patients discharged on trial, thus ensuring against a sudden transition from comparative comfort to almost actual destitution, those whose homes have been broken up, and whose means of employment have been temporarily lost in consequence of the affliction which has befallen them, but who by the aid of a little timely assistance may yet be enabled by their own industry to maintain themselves, and to reoccupy their former position.”

Dr. Rogers has occasionally permitted a few of the patients who could be safely trusted to visit their friends and relations, usually going and returning on the same day; but under exceptional circumstances the leave has been extended to two or three days.

Lincolnshire County Lunatic Asylum.—The number of patients in the asylum, April, 1866, was, males 234, females 273—total, 507.

Two new wings, each to contain 80 patients, have been lately opened in this asylum; and Dr. Palmer, in his report, thus describes them :

“The new wings, each affording accommodation for eighty patients, are attached at right angles to the east and west ends of the original structure,

with which they correspond in style of elevation, although they differ very considerably from it in internal arrangement. The upper floor on each side is, with the exception of one room, used for the sewing-machine, occupied by sleeping-rooms, which, after the patients rise in the morning, can be left open to free natural ventilation. The dormitories are provided with seats, washstands, and such other simple furniture as is calculated to arouse and maintain the patients' self-respect, the absence of which is incompatible with recovery. Each dormitory has either an attendant sleeping in it, or is in immediate connection with an attendant's room, and is lighted by a gas-burner shut off from communication with the air of the room, and contrived so that the flame may be easily regulated by the attendant. On the ground-floor are placed the patient's work-room or sitting-room, reading-room, school-room, and library, dining-hall, scullery, bath-room, lavatory, stores, &c. The warming and ventilation are effected by open fire-places with reflecting sides of white glazed fire-bricks, and fire-boxes behind the grates through which fresh air passes from a channel communicating with the outside of the building, and is distributed by means of flues and valves. Each fire takes its supply of air from a valve placed in the hearth. In this way the dormitories are kept aired by the fires in the sitting-room, dining-hall, &c., underneath; and it will, consequently, not be necessary to light fires in them very frequently after the walls are once thoroughly dry. The vitiated air of the rooms passes through openings in the ceilings into foul-air flues, which are carried up in the chimneys between the smoke-flues, and deliver just under the cappings. The windows are all of the ordinary sash kind, but with limited openings, and have a single contrivance to allow a considerable amount of ventilation to take place during wet weather without admitting the rain, or causing a downright draught. The hot and cold water apparatus being found ample to meet the increased requirements, the old pipes have been simply extended into the new building, and a storing-cistern for cold water placed in each wing. The rain water from the roofs is collected, and, after passing through a filter, runs into the well-headings."

The Commissioners in Lunacy, in their Report, speak in the very highest terms of Dr. Palmer's arrangements; and referring to the male refractory patients, they write:

"They were in their own airing-court, which, by the praiseworthy exertion of the attendant who has principal charge of it, has been prettily laid out, and extensively planted with flower-beds. Of these, there are six or seven on the border given over to the exclusive care of particular patients: in one corner there is a small potato plot belonging to a patient formerly of very objectionable habits; the northern wall is covered with gourds, planted a few months since, and to none of these or the flowers has any sort of damage been done by any one. So marked, indeed, has been the beneficial influence of these arrangements on the most troublesome kind of patients, that we strongly recommend them to be tried to the same extent in the corresponding female court, and we are sure that the attempt will be made. We observed with satisfaction the progress already made in enlarging and adapting the A and B airing-courts for use by the additional patients in the new wing of each division. The improvements will comprise a rockery and ornamental work to conceal the wall, a newly-planted avenue of trees, and new roads at the back connecting the courts and forming a walk all round. The construction of these roads has formed an employment for patients whose habits had rendered them unfit for regular farm occupation."

Middlesex County Lunatic Asylum, Colney Hatch, contained, on the 31st December, 1865, males 812, females 1214—total, 2026.

It is but fair to this much-abused institution to state that vast improvement appears to have been made in it during the past year; and even its great antagonists, the Commissioners in Lunacy, were bound in their last report to state that they "have satisfaction in reporting generally that the state and aspect of the several wards, which were very clean and free from all unpleasant odour, and the personal condition of the inmates, exhibit a marked improvement."

The Committee of Visitors, amongst other additions, have, at the request of Dr. Sheppard, erected a Turkish bath at a cost of £300.

Dr. Sheppard reports thus of its efficacy in the treatment of mental disease:

"It will be remembered by the committee that many of its members had a not unnatural mistrust of a power so susceptible of misapplication, and so shrouded in prejudices by the community at large. They will be glad, therefore, to learn from the individual who pressed it so strongly upon their favorable consideration, that the Turkish bath in Colney Hatch Asylum has been an unqualified success. Its power in many forms of disease, especially in melancholia, is most remarkable. Sleep is wooed by its soft influences, and morbid fancies are chased away. It does not appear (so far as my experience yet goes) to shorten the paroxysms, though it certainly mitigates the violence, of acute mania. That it removes many obstructions from our path, and expedites ultimate recovery, is, however, as certain with respect to mania as melancholia. It is known to those who are familiar with insanity that one of the most striking characteristics is a remarkable dryness of skin. In many cases there is a peculiar odour from the scanty dermal secretions, which has given rise to and almost justified the common saying, that you can smell a madman anywhere. This state of things invites the action of the bath. Dry epithelium is peeled from the human covering; poisonous exudations crowd upon it in crystal beads, and not by the lungs only, but by the neglected skin, is oxygen grafted into the circulating current of the blood.

"One of the most noteworthy things in connection with the Turkish bath is the dread with which many patients contemplate its earlier, and the satisfaction with which they regard its later, exhibitions. The measure of its enjoyment becomes the measure of its usefulness and success."

Mainly owing, also, to the exertions of Dr. Sheppard, a handsome theatre has been erected, and amusements of all kinds seem to be regularly offered to the patients. In the female department Mr. Marshall speaks in high terms of a new building called the Convalescent Home, in which additional accommodation is afforded for twenty-eight persons, who, with three attendants, form a complete and separate establishment. In the event of any epidemic breaking out in the asylum, this Convalescent Home would be converted into a hospital for the infected cases.

Joint Counties Lunatic Asylum at Abergavenny.—This asylum contained, at the end of last year, 511 patients—225 males, and 286 females; and there are only nine vacant beds, so that in this, as in most other asylums, there is an urgent demand for increased accommodation.

Middlesex County Lunatic Asylum, Hanwell.—On the 31st December, 1865, there were 1693 patients in this asylum, 629 being males and 1064 females, and there appears to be but little room for an increase in numbers.

The Committee in their report lament the breaking out of the rinderpest amongst the cattle. The cow first attacked recovered, but the whole of the remainder of the stock, being twenty-four cows, one bull, five heifers, and ten calves, altogether forty head, were all attacked and either died of the disease or were destroyed by order of the inspector of the district.

Following the report of the Committee is that of the Commissioners in Lunacy, who allow a certain amount of improvement, but reiterate with but few exceptions all their old complaints. Amongst other improvements, Dr. Lindsay seems to have introduced a more varied supply of amusements.

Dr. Begbie in his report mentions an interesting case which I append in his own words—

There was an inquest also in one of the deaths from apoplexy. This patient, four months in the asylum, forty-four years of age, epileptic, suicidal, occasionally violent, and in whom symptoms of paralysis had appeared, was noticed by the night attendant at early morning with blood upon his face, chest, and bedclothes, which had oozed from what was supposed to be a scratched pimple on the scalp, almost concealed by hair; the man had been comatose the day before, and continued so until his death, three days after. At the examination of the body an opening of the size of a pin's head was observed in the scalp, a little anterior to the coronal suture, and near the mesial line; corresponding to the situation of this opening was one somewhat larger in the skull cap. In the latter a small dark speck was seen, which proved to be a piece of a rusty iron nail, a quarter of an inch in length, and very thin; it had pierced the bone, but not penetrated the dura mater, and was embedded in a portion of the os frontis of the size of a silver three-penny coin, not circular, however, but rather of an irregular shape, somewhat jagged and quite detached from the surrounding calvaria; it was necrosed, and the process of repair had set up, small spiculæ were exfoliating from the inner table of the skull, the membranes were thickened, coagulated blood and fully organised lymph were found on the surface of the anterior lobes of the brain, especially near the spot of perforation, and there was bloody serum in the ventricles. The patient, a plasterer, had many falls from scaffolds in his employment before admission. The nail was ascertained to be a fragment of one such as is used in fastening laths to rafters for ceilings. Whether in one of these falls upon old laths the nail was forced in, or was driven in by himself for a suicidal purpose, could not be discovered. He was not occupied in any way here, and it is thought he could not have inflicted the injury in the asylum. The state of the parts, as described, tends to show that it was not of recent date. The verdict was "Death by apoplexy."

Dr. Lindsay remarks in his report that mania was the most frequent form of the mental malady in those who recovered (43); melancholia coming next in frequency (26), the reverse of the

previous year, in which 3 more recovered from melancholia than from mania.

The Engineer in his report (every one in this asylum seems to write a report, even including the matron) details thus the utilisation of the sewerage which formerly ran into the Brent—

The works in connection with the utilisation of the sewage were started on the 20th of April last, and since that time the whole of the sewage from the asylum (with the exception of a few out-door privies, which are now being removed) has passed through the collecting tanks, the solid matter being deposited therein, and the liquid only passing over into other tanks, and from which it is pumped up by steam power into elevated tanks, for distribution over the land.

Of solid matter so collected there has been removed from the tanks up to this time (and mixed with ashes and other refuse, to render it portable) 200 tons, and no person who once observes the emptying of these tanks would doubt for an instant, I am sure, the necessity that existed for relieving the River Brent of this vast amount of filth.

Of liquid sewage there has been pumped up, on an average, nearly 100,000 gallons daily, giving an average of 53 gallons per head for the whole establishment.

The Farm Committee report that the sewage has been applied with great advantage to the wurzel, Italian rye grass, tares, and barley; leeks, peas, and cabbages.

The Matron advances “as evidence of the improved capacity of the attendants and earnest labours of the officers, that the destruction of clothing, furniture, and window-glass, has gradually and steadily decreased.” How different must this overgrown place be from most county asylums, even allowing for greater numbers, when such a paragraph is called for.

Northampton General Lunatic Asylum.—This asylum contains 214 males, and 212 females—total, 426; nearly 100 being private patients.

The Committee of Management commence their report by an “expression of the regret with which they announce the death of the late medical superintendent, Dr. Wing. He had been at the head of this asylum for nearly six years, and had ministered to the afflictions of its inmates with great kindness, and with a medical treatment which the large amount of recoveries fully proves to have been most successful.” The writer of this retrospect having laboured with him for some years, and witnessed his zeal, can bear sorrowful testimony to the correctness of this tribute. As Mr. Bayley, the new superintendent, only entered on his duties in December, there is no superintendent’s report.

A new building for 50 men has been erected at the low rate of £41 3s. a bed—let us hope it is not “cheap and nasty.”

There was a severe outbreak of smallpox in this asylum at the commencement of the year, and on this subject the Committee write—

The profits of the year were further reduced by the building of a temporary hospital for smallpox cases, to the amount of £210. This hospital was built and made fit for the occupation of patients in the short space of four days; and it is but just to the secretary to say that this rapid execution of the work was due to his design and superintendence. All those afflicted with the disease were at once removed to the building, which happily had the effect of preventing the breaking out of any fresh cases.

Northumberland Pauper Lunatic Asylum, contained at the end of last year 277 patients; 139 males, and 138 females. It is full, and the medical superintendent urges on the Committee a necessity for extending the present fabric. This report is chiefly remarkable for its unwieldy size.

Oxfordshire and Berkshire County Lunatic Asylum.—The total number of patients at Littlemore, on the 31st December, 1865, was 466, of whom 219 were males, and 247 females, and there are 97 patients belonging to Oxfordshire in other asylums. This is eventually to be remedied by the erection of a separate asylum for Berkshire. The sewage is extensively utilised in this asylum, and Mr. Ley speaks very favorably of it in a lengthy report, which is unfortunately too long to quote here, and too full of interesting matter to allow of epitome. I am fain, therefore, to refer those interested in this subject to the report itself.

The *Somerset County Lunatic Asylum* contained on the last day of 1865, 225 males, and 255 females, and in this report, unlike nearly all the others we have examined, we find no complaint of overcrowding, which to a great extent is owing to the fact, that the Welsh patients have been removed to the new asylum for Glamorganshire.

Dr. Boyd's report is replete as usual with interesting and instructive matter, and it will be impossible in a brief notice like this to do it anything like justice.

In the early part of the year, the Committee requested Dr. Boyd to visit certain other asylums, and the remarks he made on them have been printed, and incorporated with his report.

A plan (on a reduced scale) of the survey of the asylum and grounds, and the sewerage operations, recently made by Mr. Whitehead, the county surveyor, is prefixed to the report, and is of great assistance in realising the plan, &c., of the asylum.

Post-mortem examinations are made apparently in every case, and the results are published in a series of most carefully prepared tables, which of themselves require a separate review to do justice to them.

The Staffordshire County Lunatic Asylums.—Staffordshire now boasts of two lunatic asylums, a new asylum auxiliary to the old

one at Stafford having been opened under the superintendence of Dr. Davies, at Burntwood, near Lichfield. It already contains 195 patients. The present accommodation is for males only, to the number of 240, but a second portion for females is being rapidly completed. The old asylum contained at the end of last year 217 males, and 252 females.

Dr. Bowers has not for many years used seclusion. It would be interesting to have Dr. Bowers' exact definition of what he considers the word seclusion to imply.

Suffolk County Lunatic Asylum contains 380 inmates, 165 males, and 215 females. Like most others it is overcrowded, and in considering the reasons for this, Dr. Kirkman writes—

There are some remarkable facts which are gaining rapid extension and importance year by year, throughout our increasing population, and fermenting life. A prevalent *uniformity of type*, more or less faint in the disorders of the human body, is observed to rule for some considerable period, and gradually to change. This type has of late years been steadily assuming as its seat the mysterious branches of the *nervous system*. There are many indications that this type will become more marked. It might seem perhaps fanciful to trace this very directly to such subordinate causes as increased immorality, injudicious marriages, increased drunkenness, or diminished or more fitful generation of that elementary substance, ozone, as severally fixing their results in poverty of blood, which too easily establishes itself as hereditary: but there can be no doubt that the immensely accelerated rapidity of life in all its departments; the innumerable streams of duty, business, and thought, hastened by facilities of locomotion, by the intense competition and emulation in all spheres, and by the dense living of increased populations; all create a painful increase of *brain-tax* which must show itself in the spread of all hues of nervous affection, and of insanity in particular.

Sussex County Lunatic Asylum contained on the last day of 1865 233 males, 277 females; total, 510. Extensive additions have been made to the female side of the house, and a like accommodation is to be provided for the males. When these alterations are completed the asylum will contain 700 beds.

A detached building opposite the entrance gates has been purchased, and will be converted into a small hospital (12 beds) for infectious cases.

Two large dining halls, eighty feet by thirty, are also in course of erection, one for each sex.

Warwick County Lunatic Asylum.—This asylum contained at the time of the publication of the report 181 males, and 220 females.

Dr. Parsey thus describes his management, &c.—

In general matters of discipline and treatment, or in appliances for promoting the comfort and health of our inmates, or the recovery of those in whom so happy a result has appeared attainable, there has been no marked change from the practice of former years; and such changes as have been

made may, I hope, be considered as advancement; for, without adopting every novelty that is suggested, or every change that is not also an improvement, I have endeavoured, so far as my own judgment or the experience of others will guide me, to regard our present treatment of the insane as only progressive; or, I may more correctly say, remembering how small is our real knowledge of the mental and physical changes comprehended in the term insanity, as simply tentative: for, as yet, mental disorder is, as it were, an inscrutable mystery, and will probably remain such so long as our ideas of mind, in what we call its sound state, are no more than a series of crude speculations.

Wilts County Asylum.—The insane population of this asylum includes 166 males, and 246 females; total, 412. The weekly rate of payment for patients during the first quarter of the year was 7*s.* 7*d.*, and never reached higher than 7*s.* 10½*d.* in any quarter.

The asylum is full, and increased accommodation is being provided, or is about to be provided, for both males and females.

Utilisation of the sewerage has lately been introduced on to the asylum farm, and Dr. Thurnam writes—

On the farm, the process of irrigation by the sewage has been thought to succeed satisfactorily; and though in some states of the wind, and in close weather, an effluvia is sometimes perceived in the house, no ill effects to health have as yet been traced to it. The regular addition of lime and of a disinfectant liquid (carbolic acid) to the tank, morning and evening, as practised in the Sussex and in some other county asylums, appears to have been useful in the prevention of any deleterious effects. The committee have determined to extend the system to a portion of the land lately acquired, and pipes are about to be laid down over about five acres, to an extent of not more than 250 yards.

In deference to the opinion urged upon the Committee and Medical Superintendent, by the Commissioners in Lunacy, during several years, a system of night watching has, within the last year, been adopted. A night attendant, relieved from all duty by day, has been appointed for each side of the house; and every case such as above described is visited three or four times during each night; the epileptics and sick being likewise specially placed under the night attendant's care.