

been equal to those of former years. We feel a special interest in alluding to these improvements, because they render the hospital more suitable for a middle class of patients, who are received, under the new regulation, upon payment of one guinea per week towards their maintenance. The number resident of this class is now thirty-seven, as compared with thirty at the end of last year, thus showing a tendency to increase; and we think it can only be for the want of a more extended publicity that the numbers applying for admission under this rule have not been much larger."—*Report of the Physicians and Medical Superintendent for the year 1862.*'

*Result of Improvements at the Birmingham Asylum.*

"If the architect who planned the asylum could see it in its present state, he would be vastly astonished at the changes which have taken place, at the improvements which have been effected throughout the building, and in the arrangement of the grounds. The new day-rooms especially, which are twelve in number, contrast most favorably with the old ones, all of which were not only much too small, but, for the most part, were placed in the worst position that could be found. The new ones, on the contrary, are spacious, well-lighted, and all are so situated as to command the best and most cheerful prospect which the neighbourhood affords. Very little now requires to be done to make the establishment complete and efficient in every department. The walls both of the old and new parts are being coated with paper or paint, in lieu of whitewash—a work which is drawing towards its conclusion, and additional articles of good furniture, both useful and ornamental, are being introduced into the various corridors and day-rooms.

"These changes have had a well-marked beneficial influence upon the behaviour of the patients. There is now ample space for them to assemble in groups according to their respective tastes and inclinations. There is also room for an excited and restless patient to execute his rapid and eccentric movements without coming in contact with others. Hence unpleasant collisions are avoided and general tranquillity preserved. In my last report it was said that the better an asylum is furnished the better will the patients behave. That opinion has been well borne out by the experience of the past year; for as the house has advanced in cheerfulness of appearance and in comfort, the conduct of the patients has improved. It is true that a patient may now and then, under the influence of some delusion, tear his clothes, or an excited patient in a tempest of passion may thrust his fist through a window; but such occurrences are by no means frequent. In so large an establishment there must necessarily be a certain amount of accidental breakage, but it is not relatively

larger than in a private house, probably not so large; and wilful damage, other than that stated, there is none."—*Mr. Green. 'Twelfth Annual Report of the Birmingham Lunatic Asylum, 1862.'*

*Advantage of a General Dining Hall for each Sex.*

"A second year's experience of the use of the large central hall as a general dining and reading room for the men patients, strengthens the opinion originally formed of the advantage which might be anticipated from such an arrangement. The hall is regularly used as a public dining room by about 360 men patients. These comprise, not only the quiet and orderly, but also those who under ordinary circumstances would be classified as noisy and refractory. The essential conditions insisted upon for those dining in the hall are an ordinary demeanour, and that they shall be engaged in some kind of employment. There is no question as to the preference which the patients feel for dining in the hall, to having this meal in their wards; and this acts as a powerful incentive to many of the wayward and irritable, as well as the lethargic and melancholic, to qualify themselves for the privilege by conforming to the conditions previously referred to, namely, preserving an orderly demeanour, and showing a disposition to engage in some occupation."—*Mr. Cleaton. 'Forty-third Report of the West Riding of York Lunatic Asylum, 1863.'*

*Public Concerts in the West Riding Asylum.*

"In the month of November a morning performance of the 'Elijah,' under the patronage of the visiting justices, was given in the asylum church, by the two principal church choirs of the town and the asylum choir, kindly assisted by several professional and amateur friends, together with an efficient band—in all about seventy performers. The public were admitted by tickets at six shillings, four shillings, and two shillings and sixpence; the vacant seats in the aisle being occupied by a certain number of the more intelligent patients of both sexes.

"The performance was, musically, most successful, and the proceeds were devoted to the asylum organ fund, and to the incidental expenses of the choirs.

"During the last month, also, a very interesting and successful performance of the music of the 'Handel Festival Selection' of Wednesday, June 25th, 1862, by a good choir of fifty voices, com-