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MEMORIAL

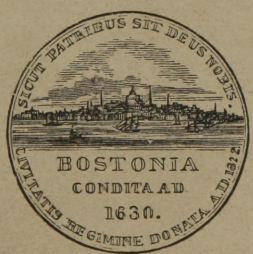
OF THE

Board of Directors for Public Institutions

IN RELATION TO THE

✓
LUNATIC HOSPITAL.

JANUARY, 1863.



BOSTON:

J. E. FARWELL & COMPANY, PRINTERS TO THE CITY,

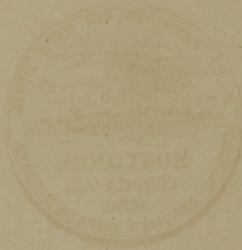
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CITY OF BOSTON.



MEMORIAL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

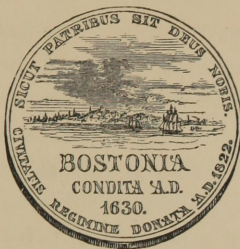
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CITY OF BOSTON.



MEMORIAL

OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

IN RELATION TO THE

LUNATIC HOSPITAL.

1863.

CITY OF BOSTON
CITY OF BOSTON

Mayor's Office, City Hall, Boston, February 3, 1853

To the Honorable the City Council

Gentlemen: I have the honor to receive the accompanying Memorial from the Board of Directors for Public Buildings, calling your attention to the present condition of the Marine Hospital under their care, with some suggestions in regard to the prospective wants of that institution. The Memorial is more elaborate than our former reports, and contains details that are not presented in the City Government. There are probably not so many members of the City Council and here in the ranks of the Legislature, turned from the opinion that the time is not far distant when some measure will be necessary to provide for the location of the Marine Hospital. The present condition of public affairs may render it imprudent to embark in any new enterprise for the construction of a large appropriation. The Directors realize this fact, and they avoid it by desiring to have suitable accommodations for the Marine Hospital, in order that their suggestions may be adopted, and that they may be enabled, when an opportunity occurs, to select an appropriate site for your approval upon which a new building may be erected, when their proposition shall have been approved by the Council.

The subject is one deserving your consideration, and at the request of the Board, I bring it before you in this manner.

F. W. ALCOCK, Secy.

In Board of Aldermen, February 3, 1853

Filed on the table, and ordered to be printed.
A. E. McCLARY, City Clerk

CITY OF BOSTON.

MAYOR'S OFFICE, CITY HALL, BOSTON, *February 2, 1863.*

TO THE HONORABLE THE CITY COUNCIL :

GENTLEMEN : I have the honor to transmit the accompanying Memorial from the Board of Directors for Public Institutions, calling your attention to the present condition of the Lunatic Hospital under their care, with some suggestions in regard to the prospective wants of that institution. The Memorial is more elaborate in its character, going more fully into details than that presented to the last City Government. The facts are probably new to many members of the City Council, and have, in the minds of the Directors, forced them to the conclusion that the time is not far distant when some measure will be necessary to provide for a change in the location of the Hospital. The present condition of public affairs may render it inexpedient to embark in any new enterprise for the expenditure of a large appropriation. The Directors realize this fact, but have deemed it their duty to bring the subject to your notice, in order, if their suggestions meet your approbation, that they may be enabled, when an opportunity occurs, to select an eligible site for your approval, upon which a new building may be erected, when more prosperous times dawn upon our distracted country.

The subject is one deserving your consideration, and at the request of the Board, I bring it thus formally to your notice.

F. W. LINCOLN, JR., *Mayor.*

In Board of Aldermen, February 2, 1863.

Laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

Attest :

S. F. McCLEARY, *City Clerk.*

CITY OF BOSTON.

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS,
BOSTON, *January 26, 1863.*

HON. F. W. LINCOLN, JR., *Mayor :*

DEAR SIR: By instructions of the Board of Directors for Public Institutions, I have the honor to transmit the accompanying Memorial in relation to the Lunatic Hospital, with the request that you will present it to the City Council.

Respectfully, &c.,

MOSES KIMBALL, *President.*

CITY OF BOSTON

CITY OF BOSTON

Office of the Board of Health & Public Instruction

Boston, January 2, 1883

To the Honorable THE MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL OF BOSTON

Dear Sirs: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 29th inst. in relation to the proposed plan for the establishment of a public hospital for the insane.

The Board of Health for Public Instruction respectfully suggests that the Board of Public Instruction should be authorized to examine the plan proposed for the establishment of a public hospital for the insane, and to report thereon to the Board of Health. It is respectfully suggested that the Board of Public Instruction should be authorized to examine the plan proposed for the establishment of a public hospital for the insane, and to report thereon to the Board of Health. It is respectfully suggested that the Board of Public Instruction should be authorized to examine the plan proposed for the establishment of a public hospital for the insane, and to report thereon to the Board of Health.

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CITY OF BOSTON.

Office of the Board of Directors for Public Institutions,

BOSTON, January 9, 1863.

TO HIS HONOR THE MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL OF
BOSTON :

The Board of Directors for Public Institutions respectfully present to your honorable body this memorial in relation to the accommodations furnished for the care of the insane of the municipality, which the City is, legally as well as morally, bound to provide for. Impressed with the importance of proper conveniences for their treatment, as contributing largely toward the restoration of this unfortunate class, and aware of the great deficiencies of the Boston Lunatic Hospital, the Board feel it their duty, deferentially but earnestly, to ask your early and serious attention to the subject.

As the whole matter of insanity is one with which the public is but imperfectly acquainted, and as more knowledge in relation to it is necessary for forming a correct opinion in reference to the necessities of the hospital, the Board have thought it not improper at the outset to present a brief retrospect of the treatment of the insane at the commencement of the present century, and the advancement that has since been made for the amelioration of their condition.

Little more than fifty years ago the condition and treatment of the insane throughout the world was most deplorable. A person once declared insane was generally considered out of the

pale of humanity, “smitten of God,” and thought to be beyond all hope of redemption. Suitable hospitals or proper provision for their treatment, was only then beginning to be thought of. There were places for the detention of such as were supposed to be dangerous, where they were kept securely confined in chains and shackles, or under lock. The history of their treatment is most revolting and disgraceful. A report upon the subject says, “The patients were bled, vomited, and purged at fixed periods — scourged, kept in chains, filth, and nakedness, and subjected to every kind of neglect and cruelty which the ignorance, superstitious fear, and brutality of what were called ‘keepers’ could suggest.” The merely harmless were for the time allowed to wander at large, filthy in person, miserably clad, in rags, and depending upon charity for food and shelter. Too often these unfortunates were made to contribute to the amusement of the thoughtless, who omitted no opportunity to excite and irritate them, that they might laugh at the wild extravagances of the “madman.” Thus, as a natural consequence, many a mind that might have been restored, was utterly destroyed, and the unfortunate victim, dethroned of all reason, was transformed from an unoffending lunatic to a furiously insane person, dangerous to be at large, and at length committed to a receptacle to linger out, in a living death, the remainder of his miserable existence.

The few public asylums that existed in England in the early part of the present century, as we learn from official reports, “were conducted on the same principles of severity, and with the same ignorance and cruelty which had characterized the treatment of the insane through all Christendom for eighteen hundred years.”

The first step which commenced a new era in the treatment of the insane in England, was the establishment by the Society of Friends in 1792 of an asylum, called the Retreat, near York. It was founded by William Tuke, a benevolent Quaker, and was from the first conducted on those principles of humanity

which are now everywhere recognized in the treatment of the malady. Slowly but surely the beneficence and success of this institution became known. It attracted the attention of the humane, who before had not considered the subject, and ultimately, in 1814, led to an investigation into the abuses existing in the old institutions. The examination disclosed such a frightful picture of neglect and cruelty, that a Parliamentary inquiry was made into the state of the various receptacles for the insane, by a committee of the House of Commons.

The report of this committee, it is said, "led to the disclosure of, what now appears to our more enlightened eyes, the most appalling facts. Not only at York, but in Bethlehem, and in other asylums possessed of ample funds for the purpose of affording the best and most humane treatment, the same system of neglect, ignorance, and cruelty existed. The use of straight-waistcoats, or, by preference, handcuffs, leg locks and chains was the rule for all cases that were restless or troublesome. Barbarous and dangerous methods of 'forcing' the patients to eat — the use of stripes — neglect, filth, darkness, and total discomfort, and the entire absence of all moral treatment, gentleness, or sympathy appear to have everywhere prevailed."

"The asylums of Ireland were not in a better condition than those of England. In many of them the inmates were kept in what were, as regards size, construction, paving, and furniture, literally dog-kennels."

"Of patients not in asylums, the more violent were often kept in the common jails, where they were associated with the worst class of criminals, and subjected to every species of indignity and cruelty."

"A large number were detained in workhouses, where in some instances, patients were found who had been chained naked for many years to the damp floors of cold cells and out-houses."

It is unnecessary to enlarge this picture of the past, by giving in detail the revolting developments that became known

by the revelations before the committee. The result of the investigations, and a knowledge of the reign of humanity so successfully inaugurated by the mode of treatment at the York Retreat, awoke a general interest in the public mind upon the subject, and secured enactments by Parliament which went far toward bettering the treatment of the unfortunate class of insane in all its phases.

In this country, at the same period, matters were no better, and it was long before any important advance was made, however great and rapid our knowledge upon the subject has of late become. With the exception of the Eastern Lunatic Asylum, in Virginia, founded in 1773, and the Maryland Hospital, established about 1800, there were no public asylums in this country up to 1817. In that year the Friends' Asylum, near Philadelphia, was built, and in 1818 the McLean Asylum, at Somerville, was opened. As the capacity of the latter institution was then very limited, it could only accommodate a small proportion of the sufferers throughout the State. The greater part of the insane remained distributed amongst the jails, houses of correction, and almshouses, or were cared for at the residences of their friends.

Many of us have a remembrance of the horrible manner in which the insane were treated at that time. In the jails and houses of correction they were kept locked in small close cells. In almshouses they were either loaded with chains, or kept in what were called "cages," being no other than strong open crates, which were usually in moderate weather rolled out into the yard to allow the poor creatures the benefit of fresh air, and to "get them out of the way." A friend tells us that it was a common thing in his town for the school-boys, on half holiday, to go there to amuse themselves by "stirring up the wild men" in their cages, an employment at which they were seldom molested or reproved, their fun being often enjoyed by those in charge. Another friend tells us of a poor wretch who was kept by his family for fifteen years, as a matter

of economy, in a strong room in the barn-loft, most of the time in a state of nudity. The straw upon which he slept was generally in a filthy condition and seldom changed. The food that was given was passed in through a small hole in the door. His suffering was at length ended. He was one morning found frozen to death.

About 1830, the attention of the Massachusetts Legislature was called to the condition of the insane. The members were astounded at the facts that were presented, and steps were immediately taken for the establishment of the State Hospital, at Worcester. It was completed and opened in 1833. Its conveniences, according to the then knowledge of the requirements for such an institution, were most excellent, but the accommodations were by no means adequate to the wants of the community. It served, however, to relieve the counties of some of their more violent and dangerous cases, and its wards were immediately filled. Insanity now began to be understood by some, but though the treatment of the patients was much modified, it was yet far from being considered humane. The art of governing by kindness had not been learned. Crazy men were still feared, and shackles, handcuffs, and strong rooms were deemed necessary for their custody, and for the safety of those having charge. So ignorant were the people of the proper mode of management of the insane, and so timid in their intercourse with them, that, upon the occasion of the removal of a party to the State Hospital, from an eastern county, the authorities caused the construction of a strong open car, upon low wheels, in which they were securely fastened, and thus transported across the State like the wild beasts of a menagerie.

Fortunately for civilization, this condition of things is only known in the history of the past. Intelligence, kindness, and right have taken the place of ignorance, brutality, and wrong. The discoveries in the nature of the disease, and the consequent improvement in treatment, have been so great that the

study of mental ills has become almost a distinct department of medical science, to which some practitioners devote themselves almost exclusively. They believe with Grotius, that “The care of the human mind is the most noble branch of medicine.”

The honor of the first reform in the treatment of the insane is due to the French nation. It was one of the physicians of that country, M. Pinel, who, in the latter part of the last century, first dared to attempt an innovation upon the state of barbarity under which the insane had so long suffered. Pursuing his medical studies with a zeal without parallel, his thoughts had never turned to a disease so peculiar, so frightful, and so imperfectly understood as insanity, until a circumstance occurred that at once directed his attention to the subject. “At that time,” says his eulogist, M. Parient, “he had the unhappiness to lose a young man whom he cherished, and whom persevering study and an excessive temperance had deprived of reason. The unfortunate youth after his return to his family became furious. One evening he escaped from his father’s house, and plunged into the neighboring forests, where he was destroyed by wolves. The following day naught was found of him but some torn fragments, and near them a copy of Phedra, covered with blood. Pinel was singularly struck with so cruel a catastrophe.” He at once devoted himself to the study of mental disease, and perhaps to the incident we have narrated may be attributed the great boon to humanity that will redound to the glory of science, and render his name forever dear to posterity. In 1792 he wrote a treatise on “*The most effective means of treating patients whose minds had become disordered prior to the period of old age,*” which attracted the attention of the government of the Royal Society of Medicine. In consequence he was shortly afterwards appointed Physician to the Hospital of Bicetre, the great bedlam of Paris, which is described by M. Parient in the following revolting narrative:—

“Vice, crime, misfortune, infirmity, diseases the most disgusting and the most unlike, were there confounded under one common service. The buildings were uninhabitable. Men covered with filth covered in cells of stone, narrow, cold, damp, without air or light, and furnished solely with a straw bed, that was rarely renewed and which soon became infectious; frightful dens where we should scruple to lodge the vilest animals. The insane, thrown into these receptacles, were at the mercy of their attendants, and these attendants were convicts from prison. The unhappy patients were loaded with chains and bound like galley slaves. Thus delivered, defenceless, to the wickedness of their guardians, they served as the butts of insulting raillery, or as the subjects of a brutality so much the more blind as it was the more gratuitous. The injustice of such cruel treatment transported them with indignation; whilst despair and rage, finishing the work with their troubled reason, tore from them by day and night cries and howlings that rendered yet more frightful the clanking of their irons. Some among them more patient or more crafty than the rest, showed themselves insensible to so many outrages; but they concealed their resentment only to gratify it the more fully. They watched narrowly the movements of their tormentors, and surprising them in an embarrassing attitude, they dealt them blows with their chains upon the head or the stomach, and felled them dead at their feet. Thus was there ferocity on the one hand, murder on the other. This atrocious course once commenced, how could it be arrested? and what could be expected for the amelioration of mental disease from such abominable reciprocities?”

Pinel entered upon his duties in 1792, and with him entered pity, respect, discretion, and justice, modes of treatment, or rather virtues, whose soft control he had recognized, even over madmen, the most ungovernable. The account of his first entrance into the institution, accompanied by Couthon, as related before the Academy of Science, by Scipio Pinel, is so graphic as to warrant its introduction here. It says:—

“They were received by a confused noise—the yells and angry vociferations of three hundred maniacs, mixing their sounds with the echo of clanking chains and fetters through the dark and dreary vaults

of the prison. Couthon turned away with horror, but permitted Pinel to incur the risk of his undertaking. He resolved to try his experiment by liberating fifty madmen, and began by unchaining twelve. The first was an English officer, who had been bound in his dungeon forty years, and whose history everybody had forgotten. His keepers approached him with dread; he had killed one of their comrades by a blow with his manacles. Pinel entered his cell unattended, and told him that he should be at liberty to walk at large on the condition of his promising to put on the *camisole*, or straight waistcoat. The maniac disbelieved him, but obeyed his directions mechanically. The chains of the miserable prisoner were removed; the door of his cell was left open. Many times he was seen to raise himself and fall backwards—his limbs gave way; they had been fettered forty years. At length he was able to stand and stalk to the door of his cell and gaze with exclamations of wonder and delight on the beautiful sky. He spent the day in walking to and fro, was no more confined, and, during the remaining two years that he spent at Bicetie, assisted in the management of the house. The next madman liberated was a soldier of the French Guard who had been in chains ten years, and was the object of general terror. His disorder had been kept up by cruelty and bad treatment. When liberated he assisted Pinel in breaking the chains of his fellow-prisoners; he became immediately kind and attentive, and was ever after the devoted friend of his deliverer. In a few days Pinel liberated fifty-three madmen. The result was beyond all hope. Tranquillity and harmony succeeded to tumult and disorder; even the most furious maniacs became tractable.

“The face of things changed entirely, though by insensible transitions, for great changes, though for the better, should not be dangerous. The first experiment had been happy, the rest was accomplished under the enlightened direction of Pinel. The inmates, no longer disfigured by traits of exasperation, anger, fear, or terror, which bad treatment had impressed upon them, regained their natural physiognomy, and, from that time, allowed this wise physician to observe them with order and to sketch faithful likenesses. After two years’ stay, which were years of kindness to Bicetie, he was called to carry into a second hospital the happy revolution he had brought about in the first. I refer to the Salpetriere, where reigned the same abuses. There were received here only such as had undergone treatment at the Hotel Dieu; the

common and imperfect treatment which rendered the state of the patients more difficult and dangerous. To restrain their fury they were crushed under the same rigors, or rather they were irritated by the same sorts of violence. Sometimes chained naked, in the almost subterranean cells, worse than dungeons, they had their feet knawed by rats, or frozen by the winter's cold. Thus injured on all sides, their imbittered hearts breathed only vengeance, and intoxicated with hatred, like the bacchantes, they burned to tear in pieces their attendants, or to destroy themselves before them. Who will recount the thousand obstacles which sprung up before Pinel? Though he had experience on his side, the practice he wished to destroy gained credit so as to perpetuate the mischief itself had created; for it is thus, says Montesquieu, that cruelty reasons. However, the administration at length comprehended that the treatment of the insane requires more than any other, *a great unity of design*, as much as it does *a variety in the means*. Pinel succeeded in dispelling as empty shadows the opposition of habit and the lies of interest. He substituted order for confusion, rule for caprice, and the holy duties of humanity for the shameful excesses of barbarism. That spirit of reform has been maintained to the present time."

This happy theory of Pinel at once found hearty supporters throughout France and England, and it was not long before the active mind of the American people became acquainted with the beneficence of his ideas. Here, as in the old country, asylums have ceased to be considered prisons, and have become known for what they are, — hospitals for the afflicted, where all that means can provide or science can suggest, may be found to alleviate suffering. The whole mode of management has changed, and men of mind and scientific acquirements have taken the places of those formerly in charge, who made no profession of medical skill. The care of the insane, and the requisite conveniences for hospitals for their treatment, has commanded and received the attention of the benevolent, which has resulted, in our own State at least, in an advanced knowledge and improvement in hospitals, that is not surpassed in the world. In this country all the free states and many of the slave states

have established public hospitals, in a style and extent of accommodations commensurate with the importance of the subject.

With the customary earnestness of our people in all good works, the superintendents of the various American institutions for the insane, several years since, formed themselves into an association for mutual improvement. They met once a year to compare notes, give the results of their experience, and to report essays on subjects assigned them the year before. Who can doubt the benefits derived from their research and united counsel? A few years since the mode of construction for hospitals, the quantity of grounds, and other necessities and conveniences required for the best treatment of the insane, engaged their attention, and resulted in the adoption of a report which is so germane to the subject under consideration, that we submit it at length.

ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF HOSPITALS FOR THE INSANE.

I. Every hospital for the insane should be in the country, not within less than two miles of a large town, and easily accessible at all seasons.

II. No hospital for the insane, however limited its capacity, should have less than fifty acres of land, devoted to gardens and pleasure-grounds for its patients. At least one hundred acres should be possessed by every state hospital, or other institution for two hundred patients, to which number these propositions apply, unless otherwise mentioned.

III. Means should be provided to raise ten thousand gallons of water daily, to reservoirs, that will supply the highest parts of the building.

IV. No hospital for the insane should be built without the plan having been first submitted to some physician or physicians, who have had charge of a similar establishment, or are practically acquainted with all the details of their arrangements, and received his or their full approbation.

V. The highest number that can with propriety be treated in one building is two hundred and fifty, while two hundred is a preferable maximum.

VI. All such buildings should be constructed of stone or brick, have slate or metallic roofs, and as far as possible, be made secure from accidents by fire.

VII. Every hospital, having provision for two hundred or more patients, should have in it at least eight distinct wards for each sex, making sixteen classes in the entire establishment.

VIII. Each ward should have in it a parlor, a corridor, single lodging-rooms for patients, an associated dormitory communicating with a chamber for two attendants, a clothes-room, a bath-room, a water-closet, a dining-room, a dumb-waiter, and a speaking-tube leading to the kitchen or other central part of the building.

IX. No apartments should ever be provided for the confinement of patients, or as their lodging-rooms, that are not entirely above ground.

X. No class of rooms should ever be constructed without some kind of window in each, communicating directly with the external atmosphere.

XI. No chamber for the use of a single patient should ever be less than eight by ten feet, nor should the ceiling of any story occupied by patients be less than twelve feet in height.

XII. The floors of patients' apartments should always be of wood.

XIII. The stairways should always be of iron, stone, or other indestructible material, ample in size and number, and easy of ascent, to afford convenient egress in case of accident from fire.

XIV. A large hospital should consist of a main central building with wings.

XV. The main central building should contain the offices, receiving-rooms for company, and apartments entirely private, for the superintending physician and his family, in case that officer resides in the hospital building.

XVI. The wings should be so arranged that, if rooms are placed on both sides of a corridor, the corridors should be furnished at both ends with movable glazed sashes for the free admission of both light and air.

XVII. The lighting should be by gas, on account of its convenience, cleanliness, safety, and economy.

XVIII. The apartments for washing clothing, &c., should be detached from the hospital building.

XIX. The drainage should be under ground, and all the inlets to the sewers should be properly secured to prevent offensive emanations.

XX. All hospitals should be warmed by passing an abundance of pure, fresh air from the external atmosphere, over pipes or plates, containing steam under low pressure, or hot water, the temperature of which at the boiler does not exceed 212 degrees F., and placed in the basement or cellar of the building to be heated.

XXI. A complete system of forced ventilation in connection with the heating, is indispensable to give purity to the air of a hospital for the insane; and no expense that is required to effect this object thoroughly can be deemed either misplaced or injudicious.

XXII. The boilers for generating steam for warming the building should be in a detached structure, connected with which may be the engine for pumping water, driving the washing apparatus and other machinery.

XXIII. All water-closets should, as far as possible, be made of indestructible materials, be simple in their arrangement, and have a strong downward ventilation connected with them.

XXIV. The floors of bath-rooms, water-closets, and basement stories should, as far as possible, be made of materials that will not absorb moisture.

XXV. The wards for the most excited class should be constructed with rooms on but one side of a corridor, not less than ten feet wide, the external windows of which should be large, and have pleasant views from them.

XXVI. Wherever practicable, the pleasure-grounds of a hospital for the insane should be surrounded by a substantial wall, so placed as not to be unpleasantly visible from the building.

Dr. Ray, of the Butler Insane Hospital at Providence, who ranks amongst the first of American superintendents, in an article published in the "Journal of Insanity," entitled "*Observations on the Principal Hospitals for the Insane in Great Britain, France, and Germany*," thus describes the sites, grounds, and airing-courts of the institutions he visited:—

“SITES OF THE EUROPEAN ASYLUMS.

“No one who visits the English asylums, can help being struck with the beauty of most of their sites, and the good taste that presides over

all their outside arrangements. Many of them are placed on eminences which command an extensive view of the adjacent country, the field of vision embracing hill and valley, wood and water, in their most agreeable combinations; while fields of grass and tillage divided by hedges and trees, grazing herds, cottages and country-seats, form the nearer features of a landscape reposing in the softened light of an English sun. The Leicester Asylum is peculiarly fortunate in its site, which must be a source of unfailing interest to its inmates, — some of them at least, — who could never tire of the rich variety of the scene around them. The country too seen from the asylum at Perth, though marked by the bolder features that characterize Scottish scenery, is perhaps unrivalled for its beauty, while its interest has been heightened by the witchery of the poet's spell. The Tay and its lovely valley, Scone, High Dunsinnane, and the Grampian Hills, invest with a moral charm a view whose lengthened outline, stretching far away in the distance, reminds one of those masterly pieces of perspective in Ruysdael's pictures, where the eye ranges along an interminable line of objects which gradually fade away with such a natural indistinctness, that it strains itself unconsciously to penetrate through the deepening obscurity. The site of Jacobi's Asylum, at Seigburg, does infinite credit to the good taste of the monks who selected it for their abode. Perched upon a rock that rises abruptly from the plain, it overlooks a scene of remarkable richness and variety. Below, at the base of the rock, lies the little village, while farther on the country opens into a wide expanse of richly cultivated fields through which the Sieg rolls its placid waters. Beyond these to the west, the observer may discern the spires of Bonn and the height of Krewzberg rising behind it, and catch an occasional glimpse of the Rhine until it is completely shut out of view by the lofty range of the Seven Mountains and the Drachenfels.

“It may not always be in our power to select a beautiful site, but there are other requisites which we can and ought to obtain. An asylum should have plenty of land and an unfailing supply of water, and a light, dry soil is to be preferred, for the greater facilities it presents for draining and making clean dry roads and walks. A clayey soil about an asylum is a source of perpetual annoyance. It should be near, but not too near a town whence the means of subsistence, mechanical labor, &c., can be readily obtained. If too near, it has not the necessary degree of seclusion, and this evil is liable to be increased by the growth

of the town, until the establishment is completely surrounded by shops and houses. Nothing can be so misplaced, so abhorrent to all our ideas of propriety, as an asylum for the insane, in the midst of a busy town, especially in this country, where the grounds are seldom enclosed by a wall, and consequently freely open to the idle and curious.

“ GROUND.

“ The grounds around the British asylums are laid with great taste, and often in a style of elegance never witnessed in this country. The approach is generally by a serpentine, gravelled road winding along from the gate in the outer wall which always encloses the establishment, among trees, shrubbery, and flowers, which are well calculated to make an agreeable first impression, besides furnishing a delightful retreat to the inmates. At Wakefield, the carriage-road is bordered for several rods by a thick growth of shrubbery and forest trees, which completely conceal the buildings from the view. The approach to the Surrey Asylum is through a park whose fine, large trees secure it from the public gaze. I was particularly struck too with the grounds of the York Retreat, which have been laid out and embellished with remarkably good taste.

“ I saw no establishment however which, in this particular, could be compared with the private one of M. M. Falret and Voison, at Vanvres, near Paris. In addition to numerous gardens appropriated to the different classes of patients, there are about one hundred acres laid out in the finest style of landscape-gardening, and one might ramble about them for hours without exhausting all their beauties. The natural inequalities of the surface have been skilfully turned to account in magnifying the idea of its extent, and increasing the number and variety of its views. A path up the rising ground leads through a solemn grove to a view of Paris and its beautiful environs, and another brings us unexpectedly in front of an elegant little chapel embosomed in trees. Here a rivulet, guarded by rows of willows and poplars, rolls along its babbling waters; and there attention is arrested by a magnificent bed of flowers. Belts of the densest shrubbery line the walls, and completely hide them from the sight. Every turn brings some new feature of the landscape into view, and discloses some beauty not observed before. Grounds thus arranged are capable, if anything in nature is,

of arresting the attention of the violent and excited, diverting the melancholic from their distressing fancies, furnishing inexhaustible occupation and delight to the convalescent, and touching in all, even the least cultivated and refined, that strong feeling of sympathy with Nature which often survives the wreck of all other feelings.

“Esquirol’s establishment at Ivry, now in charge of M. M. Mitivie and Moreau, is placed in the midst of grounds which, though somewhat flat, are thrown into the various forms of park and garden, and by skilful planting have been converted into another Garden of Armida.

“The English especially attach much importance to gardens and highly cultivated grounds around their establishments for the insane. Habitually accustomed as they are to see their ordinary dwellings embellished in this manner, they cannot tolerate the nakedness of unplanted grounds; and associating all their ideas of comfort with retirement and seclusion, they implicitly require that these retreats for the afflicted and sorrowing shall be sheltered as much as possible from the public gaze. Hence, even the grounds of a hospital designed exclusively for paupers, are usually embellished in a manner that would excite universal admiration in this country in any connection. It would seem, at first sight, somewhat strange that a people so sensible as ours are to beauties of this description, when brought before them, should have done so little towards creating them. It arises in some degree, no doubt, from the want of a cultivated taste, but chiefly from a spirit of economy that grudges every dollar not devoted in our charitable institutions, to strictly useful purposes, and regards every provision for gratifying the sense of the beautiful as an unwarrantable luxury. Frequently, not a foot of land can be wrested from the purposes of tillage or pasture, over and above what is required for a carriage-road approaching the house by the shortest possible route, and terminating at the front door in a space just large enough for the carriage to turn around in. A foreigner, on visiting some of our establishments for the insane, and without any previous acquaintance with the country, would draw the conclusion that land is here an article of incalculable value, and that trees and flowers are a class of luxuries altogether beyond our means. It is to be hoped, however, that a better spirit will soon prevail, and that with the means at our very doors for embellishing the grounds around our asylums, we shall never be contented in any case with a bald and monotonous surface where no tree, nor shrub, no fountain, nor rural arbor,

no mound nor lake is allowed to add a single feature of beauty to the scene. It is a great mistake to suppose that such things are designed to please the taste of the sane members only of the establishment, and are not among the legitimate means and appliances for improving and restoring the insane. Insanity is so grievous a misfortune, asylums are so apt to be regarded in their least pleasing relations as places of confinement and restraint, and the pang is so sharp of parting with friends at the time they seem to need our attentions most, and entrusting them to strangers, that no means should be neglected to deprive our asylums of their prison-like features, and assimilate them to ordinary abodes of domestic ease and refinement. Let the unhappy sufferers see that, though in the midst of strangers who may be associated in his diseased imagination with the enemies of his peace, he is surrounded by the beautiful forms of nature in which his spirit may possibly rejoice and sympathize. And let his friends too, when they think of his abode, be able to dwell upon an image whose features are all pleasing and cheerful. Every one who has had charge of an asylum knows how important it is that the first impression it makes should be agreeable, for, in a large proportion of cases, we may be sure it will be of that character or the opposite. Approaching it as they do, with their minds full of apprehension and distrust, ready to torture the slightest displeasing circumstance into an augury of evil, it is doubly necessary that nothing in the outside arrangements should meet their sight calculated to cherish their delusions, but much on the contrary to strike their fancy agreeably, and awaken a healthier class of emotions. In selecting a site for an insane hospital, therefore, we should not only consider the prospect it affords, but its capability of being embellished by the art of landscape gardening. I do not propose that every establishment hereafter to be erected should, in the very outset, present a creditable and charming specimen of this art, for that would manifestly be beyond our means. But what we can do is to make a beginning, without which we shall do nothing — to obtain plenty of land and favorably situated, fix upon the general features of the landscape, and fill them up as means and opportunity permit.”

“ AIRING-COURTS.

“ A prominent feature of the foreign asylums is their airing-courts, which are numerous, spacious, and sometimes beautifully planted.

They are regarded as indispensable requisites in an establishment for the insane, no less necessary for their comfort than day rooms and galleries. The practice of dispensing with them altogether, as has been done in the most of our institutions of recent origin, was far from being regarded there as an onward step in the progress of improvement. In fair weather, few patients are seen in the house except such as are sick, or are engaged in work. The most of them are in the airing-courts, sitting in the shade, or promenading in the walks. The courts vary very much, in different institutions, in size and appointments. I heard much complaint of their being too small, though, with our ideas of size in such matters, they would seldom be obnoxious to this charge. They are often provided with a grassy mound in the centre, from which the patients can obtain a view of the surrounding country. At the Belfast Asylum is one ascended by a path winding around its circumference, through flowers and shrubbery, which I thought was the most beautiful thing of the kind I had ever witnessed. At the Gloucester Asylum, the airing-courts are on a magnificent scale, — very spacious, with mounds in the centre, and flower-beds, shrubbery, and trees of all sizes in unstinted abundance. Even those for the most excited patients, are scarcely less elegantly embellished than the others, and I saw in them not a single indication of mischief.

“In France there is the freest communication between the house and the courts, the doors being open, and the patients allowed to go in and out at pleasure. At Charenton, the doors of the rooms open directly upon the covered colonnade which runs around the quadrangle. At the Salpetriere, I observed in the airing-courts of the refractory class, several patients sitting in strong chairs, enjoying the air and light, if nothing else ; and it struck me as a much better method of disposing of such cases than secluding them in their rooms.

“The objection urged in this country against airing-courts, that the patients lie about on the ground, and thus contract slovenly habits, I never heard in Europe ; and though I occasionally observed a patient lying on the grass, it needed only a little more vigilance on the part of the attendants to have prevented it. But lying about on the floors of a gallery is no less objectionable than lying down in a clean, well-kept court, and if it can be prevented in the one case, so it can in the other. If patients are turned into the courts and left to their own discretion, they may indulge in some improprieties, as they would anywhere else ;

but why should they not be subjected to constant supervision, like any other part of the establishment? For reasons which will appear in the sequel, airing-courts would not be required in our asylums for so large a proportion of patients as they are in the European; but I cannot resist the conviction that more or less of them are indispensably requisite in every asylum. True, they cannot be used in the winter; but does it follow that we should not avail ourselves of their benefits when we can? We have many a demented patient who would enjoy walking in the sunshine, or breathing the free, pure air of heaven, and many of a different class unable or unwilling to work, who would prefer circulating freely about a spacious court, to monotonous walks from one end to the other of a narrow gallery. My observations have led me to believe that many an excited patient would soon become more calm by being allowed to range at will through a yard, than when confined to the narrower limits of a gallery, where doors and windows excite his fury at every step. I do not doubt that every one who could see the beautiful courts of the Gloucester Asylum, and witness the evident enjoyment experienced by the patients while in them, would agree with me in opinion on this subject."

We have cited Dr. Ray upon these three points, because they are really the most important to be considered in establishing a new institution. Of matters of architectural construction, heating, and ventilating, and general internal arrangements, of which he also treats, we have not thought necessary to quote. The knowledge of our own superintendents, and the skill and experience of our architects, can better appreciate the needs in these respects for a hospital in this country, than anything found in the arrangements of the institutions mentioned by him.

We have thus endeavored to show what a proper hospital should be, and also how generously the unfortunate lunatic is provided for in Great Britain. A hospital in this country to be beneficial needs more of home-like comfort, more of the ordinary amenities of civilized life, than is required for the generality of insane in England. It is a remarkable fact that the

inmates of American and English asylums present a characteristic difference in the outward manifestations of their disease. Says Dr. Ray, —

“ The spirit of the American patient is fresh and buoyant, and his energies in full vigor. Bright prospects were before him ; he had laid plans reaching far ahead, and commenced undertakings that demanded unremitting effort and attention. Suddenly, in the midst of his exertions, and in the full bloom of hope, he is arrested and cruelly and unlawfully, as he conceives it, torn from his pursuits and deprived of his liberty. Can he help thinking of his business which he knows full well none but himself can conduct to a successful issue—of his farm—of his workshop—and perhaps of a family dependent on him for support ; and when thinking of these things can he help writhing with feelings of sorrow and anger? Is it strange that like the newly-caged bird, he should madly beat against the bars of his prison-house, and fill the air with his complaints and reproaches? How different from this is the case of the English patient? Relieved of the necessity of unremitting toil, spared the constant sight and feeling of suffering, better fed and better clothed than ever before for the same length of time, addressed in tones of kindness and compassion, and knowing that his family suffer no privation by his absence, why should he be discontented? Why should he be anxious to renew the fierce death-grapple with cold, hunger, and nakedness—with carking care, the oppressor’s wrong, and the proud man’s contumely? To him the hospital is an asylum from more woes than one, for within its walls he may, for the first time, have enjoyed a truce from the sharp conflicts of life.”

Has the city of Boston a suitable institution, or is she remiss in providing properly for her unfortunate insane? Up to 1837 she had made no special provision whatever. In that year the Worcester Hospital being crowded beyond its utmost capacity, and the statutes providing, in such cases, that lunatics should be returned to the counties from which they were sent, the City was called upon to receive back a large number of which it had been previously relieved. As Boston had no hospital they

were distributed to the jail, house of correction, and almshouse. This addition, to those already there, rendered the number rather formidable. The difficulty of caring for them and the trouble they occasioned, to say nothing of the discomfort to which they were necessarily subjected under such circumstances, was brought to the notice of the authorities.

A committee of the Council was instructed to consider “the expediency of erecting a suitable hospital for insane persons and idiots, in the Houses of Industry and Correction.” In April of that year the committee, of which Hon. S. A. Eliot, the Mayor, was chairman, reported as follows:—

“That the City is required by law to provide *suitable* accommodations for persons of the description mentioned in the order, who may be confined in the House of Correction, and however great may be the difference of opinion as to what is suitable, it can scarcely be supposed by the committee that the accommodations now provided would be regarded by any one as *suitable* for idiots or insane persons. They are but slightly, if at all, different from those provided for all others confined there, and the committee cannot but think the City is called upon by a proper regard to its legal liabilities, to erect a hospital for persons of the description referred to.

“If that is to be done, as the committee presume it will be, at as early a period as may be practicable, the question arises whether it would be expedient to connect with it one for the idiots and the insane of the House of Industry.

“The want of proper accommodations for this unhappy class of human beings, in that house, is very painful to all who witness it. Humanity requires in this case what the law requires in the other; and the committee cannot doubt every member of the City Council, who would take the trouble to visit the institution, would return with the conviction that it was his duty to do something for the relief of those who, however low in the scale of intellect, are still their fellow-creatures.

“If anything is to be done, is it not best to do the work in such an ample manner as will be satisfactory to the community hereafter, as well as at the present moment?”

Accompanying this report was an order authorizing the building of the present hospital, which was completed and opened in 1839. It was intended mainly for the custodial care of those unfortunate sufferers of a malady to which humanity is heir, for then science had not demonstrated that it was curable by human agency, — that it was possible to restore the insane man to health and usefulness, and return him to the community of sound mind.

Since then insanity has grown to be better understood, and its needs in treatment appreciated. Science has demonstrated that in many cases it is an affection caused by a departure from or abuse of the organization of our nature, and as curable as any other disease; that they have not lost their rights as members of the great human family, but should be as carefully provided for as any one else, and that to treat them properly they should at least have the comforts of an ordinary hospital for the sick.

Animated by this principle, the former Visitors of the Hospital, and subsequently the Board of Directors, have endeavored to make such improvements to enlarge the usefulness of the institution, as the capacity of the building and the limits of the grounds would admit. Comforts and conveniences have been from time to time added to meet the pressing wants of the community as far as possible, till at length the Board of Directors find the conviction forced upon them that no more can be done. The necessity for new and enlarged accommodations, for more house room and more extended grounds, is so pressing that they believe it cannot be avoided.

Nor is this necessity for more extended accommodation any new thing. As long ago as 1853, the City Council was made aware of it in the annual address of the Mayor, (Seaver,) as follows: —

“Much painful embarrassment has been experienced the last year that so many pressing applications for admission to the hospital have necessarily been refused for want of accommodation. This has been

particularly the case in the *female* department, which has been so crowded that it has been impossible to admit any new patients since 1851, except to fill the vacancies of those discharged. Some speedy remedy for this sad state of things ought to be adopted. The Board of Visitors, after the most mature consideration, have come to the conclusion, as no enlargement of the present building can be made which will be at all satisfactory, to recommend that a *new* hospital be erected in some suitable location, within a convenient distance from the city, and that no time should be lost in taking preliminary measures to accomplish this object, so desirable and necessary.

“I *entirely* and *fully* concur in the views of the Board of Visitors, and *I am sure* that the citizens of Boston will cordially approve of any judicious expenditure for this object, which furnishes the only means that can be used for alleviating the most dreadful of all human maladies with which God in his wisdom sees fit to afflict so many families.”

This subject was referred to a joint special committee, who on September 12, 1853, submitted a report, from which is extracted the following:—

“That they consider the question of any enlargement of the present hospital at South Boston as settled, for no more provision can be made there to increase the capacity of the buildings. Under these circumstances the committee have come to the conclusion to adopt the recommendations of the Mayor, viz: that it is expedient, and, indeed, the imperative duty of the City Council to erect a new hospital building in some convenient and eligible situation, in the neighborhood of the city, with sufficient land to give employment for such of the male patients as may be able to labor. The committee are informed that the experience of every month and every week shows the most painful necessity for *immediate extensive additional accommodations*.

“The growth of our city, and the excitement in which we live, seem rapidly to increase the number of cases of insanity, and call upon us in the most *imperative* manner to provide all the remedial means in our power for its amelioration and cure.

“The committee cannot but think that any unnecessary delay in the prosecution of the object will be an act of cruelty to many deserving persons, and they are confident that any judicious measures that the

City Council may adopt to supply the existing pressing want for additional accommodations for the insane, will meet the cordial approbation of the people of Boston."

Subsequently, in the month of November, the same committee made another report, in which, after enumerating the several sites they had examined, their objections to locating at Deer Island, and the impossibility of providing suitably at South Boston, they say, —

"It cannot be doubted that some rural position would be altogether more desirable, — a position that would for many years, perhaps half a century, be suitable for it. It will be readily conceded by all that a retired situation, away from the noise and excitement of busy life, but yet so near as to be conveniently and easily accessible from the city, is the most suitable.

"It is a painful fact that all of the hospitals for the insane in our State have for a long period been overrun with patients. This terrible disease seems to be fixed upon our community, and the subject must be dealt with as a permanent evil to be provided for. Boston, which has heretofore been first in all its appointments for the relief of human suffering, is in this particular, far behind many of her sister cities, and she cannot be just to her high character and the Christian sentiment of humanity till she has a first-class hospital for the insane. The people of Boston have never failed to approve of the establishment of any necessary institution for the alleviation of human misery. Such a necessity now exists, and the committee commit the subject to the wise consideration of the City Council, with the hope that the proper preliminary measures may, without unnecessary delay, be adopted to accomplish the object."

Accompanying the report was a resolve that it was expedient to erect a new hospital at once, and an order authorizing the committee, in conference with the Board of Visitors of the hospital, to purchase a site recommended by said committee. This report reached the Council too late for action that year, and it was referred to the next City Council.

Unfortunately, in consequence of a radical change in the City Government next year, the subject was not agitated at all, and the matter has remained quiet to this time.

About this time the Taunton Hospital was opened, which for a while tended to decrease the pressure for admission to the Boston Hospital. In the fall of 1858 the Northampton Hospital was completed, and all the State patients were removed. This reduced the number of inmates so much that the remainder were made comparatively comfortable. The rapid increase of the insane in our State has at length crowded all the State institutions, and again filled the Boston Hospital beyond its capacity, without any prospect of relief. There are now in the several institutions of this State upwards of two thousand insane persons.

In May of last year a committee of the Board, consisting of Messrs. Moses Kimball, Justin Jones, J. P. Bradlee, and Jonas Fitch, was appointed to consider the subject of further improvements at South Boston. After a careful examination of the whole subject they made a report which gave so graphic a description of the hospital and its deficiencies, and of the impropriety of enlarging accommodations there; and its reasoning in favor of a new location is so strong, that we present the major part of it. It says,—

“ The committee have thoroughly considered the matters referred to them, and find that the necessary conveniences cannot be arranged for want of room. The result of their examination of the premises has satisfied them that another and more important subject demands attention. They find that the capacity of the hospital and grounds is totally inadequate for the present number of inmates. The building is improperly crowded, and so badly constructed and ventilated that its beneficial purposes are in a great measure defeated for want of conveniences such as insane patients require. Additional room is imperatively necessary for at least fifty inmates. Common humanity demands it. With accommodations intended for only one hundred, there are now nearly double that number. The city charges alone are upwards of one

hundred and twenty, or two thirds of the whole, and are constantly increasing in numbers. If we provide only for this class, the necessity for more room will still exist.

“The people of Boston have just reason to be proud of the public and private charities of the city. Blest as a wealthy, thriving, and prosperous community, their liberality in good works knows no bounds. Whenever suffering humanity appeals for aid it finds ready and generous sympathy. The Massachusetts Hospital and the McLean Asylum, both richly endowed, and constantly receiving assistance from the wealthy, contribute largely to relieve those able to avail themselves of the advantages they offer. As far as possible they also aid to alleviate the distress of those unable to pay for treatment. Extended as their conveniences are, however, they are not equal to the increasing demands of a fast-growing community.

“With all her existing charities, the City is constantly providing others. The authorities have taken the initiative for the establishment of a Free City Hospital. It is intended for the indigent, and also, at moderate charge, for persons of limited means, to whom the expense of medical or surgical treatment at home is more than they can bear. The premises will consist of costly structures, which are to be furnished with all the modern appliances that skill and experience can suggest. A square of some seven acres of valuable city land has been dedicated to the purpose; the foundations for the buildings laid, and the walls in rapid course of erection. By another year the whole will be completed and the institution a permanence.

“Important as medical hospitals are, they dwindle into insignificance when compared with the necessities for hospitals for mental disease. Insanity is no respecter of persons. The rich are no more exempt from its attacks than the poor. The histories of asylums record the wreck of many a brilliant intellect. Few persons, not connected with an institution for the insane, have any idea of the extent of this subtle and fearful malady. All know something of physical suffering, for that can be treated at home, while mental ills can be cared for only at an asylum. How important, then, that all in our power should be done for those thus afflicted. The sufferer may be the wife, the child, the parent, or the brother or sister of either of us. With a suitable hospital and proper treatment much of misery may be alleviated and many a mind, and even life, saved, that would otherwise be lost.

“Lunatic asylums are not prisons, nor their inmates convicts or criminals. They are places of refuge for the afflicted where they can receive the care and treatment necessary for their relief. Many places make liberal provisions for such, but Boston is remiss and backward. The Boston Hospital is not sufficient for its purpose, nor equal to the demands upon it. It is a city institution, and should be one in which the citizens might feel commendable pride. The tax-payers have a right to demand that it should be fully up to the time in all proper conveniences. They contribute to its support, and it should be an institution of such capacity as to afford them the opportunity, when unfortunately necessary, to avail themselves of its advantages at a moderate charge. They should not be compelled to carry their friends to private establishments, less accessible, and at a much larger cost for board. As the hospital now is, they cannot be so accommodated. Almost daily applications for admission are refused for want of room and proper conveniences.

“The original buildings were erected twenty-three years ago, for a county receptacle. At that time the mode of treatment of the insane was very different from that of the present day. In but few hospitals were any scientific efforts made for radical cure. The patients were generally supposed to be beyond the chance of improvement. If an insane person was sent to one of them, it was with a view that he might be restrained from injuring himself or others. The custody, rather than the cure, was the main object.

“In but few instances were the conveniences of home ever thought advisable in a hospital. Strong rooms were deemed a necessity, and many an unfortunate passed years of his life in cells with iron grated doors and windows. This course of treatment had a tendency to increase rather than diminish the excitement of the patient, and consequently instead of his condition improving he grew hopelessly worse. Many of our citizens remember the ‘Cottage,’ with its block of cells and its score of violent, naked, and filthy inmates, for whom it was thought no more could be done. Such cells and such patients were not uncommon. Every hospital had them. Fortunately this state of things has now passed away. It is a fact worthy of mention that the abrogation of ‘cells’ in Massachusetts institutions first began at the Boston Hospital, and it is due to Dr. Walker to say that he inaugurated the reform. For a long time many superintendents supposed that ‘strong

rooms' could not be dispensed with, and as late as the erection of the Taunton Hospital a block of them was built as a supposed necessity. Through the exertions of one of the Trustees, who was formerly a Director of the Boston Hospital, and had witnessed the success of Dr. Walker's experiment, their use was abandoned, and subsequently they were torn down.

"Dr. Walker's theory proved right, but it took time to demonstrate it. Kindness, confidence, and patience effected wonders. One after another the 'Cottage' patients were transferred to the halls and to companionship with the other inmates. Its good effect was soon visible. Desperation and despondency gave way to self-respect and hope, and even the 'madman' was at times ashamed to render himself ridiculous in the eyes of his fellows. A desire to appear less crazy than their associates began to possess them. Returning reason began to develop in many, and, aided by the skill of the attentive Superintendent, sound minds were restored to some, who, when confined in the 'cells,' were said to be incurable. Now such things as 'cells' and 'strong rooms' are not known in any hospital of character or importance.

"Humanity, in this branch of medical skill, may be said to be now in the ascendant. Men of science are making insanity a study. The people have begun to learn that the mind once thrown from its balance can be restored. To accomplish this the sufferer must be removed from the exciting causes of his injury. He must have quiet and regularity in his habits. He must be clear from the chance of unnatural stimulants, both physical and mental. He must have unceasing care and attention. This he cannot secure at home, but only in an asylum. There he must receive kindness, and as far as possible every comfort, for experience has clearly demonstrated that the nearer the hospital assimilates to the conveniences of home, so, just in proportion, is the chance of cure rendered more possible.

"The city institution does not meet these requirements. Its present capacity is not capable of furnishing the proper accommodations. It was up to the times when built, but is behind the necessities of the present day. Amongst other matters requisite to make a perfect hospital, according to recommendations adopted at a Convention of Superintendents of American Lunatic Asylums, and approved by all who have given attention to the subject, it is stated that, 'Every hospital having provision for two hundred or more patients, should have in

it at least eight distinct wards for each sex, making sixteen classes in the entire establishment.' Our hospital has but six wards in all, being three for each sex, and perfect classification is not possible.

"Each ward should have in it a parlor, a dining-room, a dumb-waiter, a bath-room, &c. Ours have neither. What were originally intended for parlors are necessarily used for congregate sleeping-rooms. Separate ward dining-rooms we have none, but as far as the capacity of the general dining-rooms will admit, the patients are compelled to take their meals together, be they the convalescents, the demented, or the violent. There is but one bath-tub to each wing, and the want of room prevents the introduction of more. To these the inmates of the three wards must resort for their baths. As many of them need bathing every day, and as the statute law requires that all must have a bath once a week, the inconvenience is manifest without further comment.

"No ceiling of any story occupied by patients should be less than twelve feet in height. Instead of meeting this requirement we have no room where the height is greater than nine feet and ten inches, and some are as low as nine feet. Proper ventilation in them is not possible.

"The main building should contain receiving-rooms for company.' Ours has no reception-rooms whatever. The only apartments available for visitors to the patients are the dining-rooms, and these can only be used the short time between the preparation for meals. As their capacity is very limited, visitors are compelled to be in such proximity to each other that conversation with their friends upon family or private matters is next to impossible. Convalescents and incurables, whether boarders or city charges, are all assembled together, for there is no opportunity to classify or accommodate them otherwise. The chapel also is inconvenient and insufficient. With a chaplain regularly engaged to perform services on each Sabbath, the room in which they are holden is not large enough to accommodate all who wish to attend.

"Thus much of the wants of the hospital in its bearing upon humane considerations. We come now to consider them in a financial view. In doing so we start upon a basis of facts established by the experience of last year."

(Here follows a series of statistics of the expenses of the hospital, the receipts for boarders, and of estimated expenses of

conducting premises admitting of the reception of more boarders, which would have the effect to reduce the cost of supporting the city charges to a mere nominal sum, even at the lowest rate for board.) With improved accommodations, they say, —

“It is believed a higher paying class of patients would be received in sufficient numbers to render the institution self-supporting.

“In view of the foregoing facts and suggestions, the committee submit that judicious economy, throwing aside all considerations of humanity, demands that the additional accommodations for at least one hundred patients should be provided. To meet this exigency, it was thought that improvements might be made in the old buildings, and new wings erected that would furnish the necessary conveniences, and also render the hospital comparable in a measure with similar institutions elsewhere. To that end the committee directed the preparation of plans for two wings, to run northerly from the present wings. When these were completed, it was found that a greater space of land would be required to carry out the contemplated improvement.

“Can the necessary quantity be obtained upon the present location? On the easterly side, the grounds of the House of Correction are within twenty feet of the hospital. There is not room for a wing there without the annexation of a strip of land from the former establishment. On the westerly side it is still worse. M Street as laid out, but not opened, runs within about twelve feet of the end of the building. To place a wing there would encroach upon it. There seems to be no valid reason why it may not be discontinued, and the Board of Aldermen have been petitioned to that effect. Even with that accomplished, there will yet be a lack of extent of premises. The whole quantity of our grounds is a little over four acres. An institution to accommodate three hundred patients should not have less than twenty acres. More would be better, for there cannot be too much.

“The inmates of a lunatic asylum require out-of-door exercise. They should be in the open air as much as possible. The limits afforded them should be rendered inviting by abundance of pleasant walks, ornamented with attractive shrubbery and flowers. The beauties of nature go further towards calling back reason to the beclouded mind than any other appliance.

“The adjoining estate westerly is that formerly occupied for the

Almshouse Department, and was sold in 1857 to Harrison Loring, Esq. It is greatly to be regretted that the city authorities, instead of disposing of it, did not connect it with the hospital premises. Had they realized the importance and necessity of extensive grounds for such an institution, they undoubtedly would have done so. The idea of the hospital being hemmed in so closely, and particularly with business pursuits, evidently occurred to them when they negotiated the sale. One of the conditions of the bond for a deed, and which is to go into every conveyance, provides that, 'In case it shall appear to the satisfaction of the Board of Directors, or a majority of the same, that the patients in the Lunatic Hospital shall be injuriously affected by the noise, or from other causes growing out of the business operations on the said lands, then the said sale shall be void; and the City shall take possession of the same, giving the parties interested six months' notice of such intention.'

"It is the duty of the Board to study the interests of the institution and the welfare of the inmates. While the City should protect itself in all its rights in the premises, care should be taken not to injure those of others.

"A portion of the premises might perhaps be secured without recourse to the bond; but the question naturally arises whether it would be more than a temporary relief, and whether it would be advisable, with only such advantages, to incur the expense of any extended improvements. To make the best use of the present lands, and such additions as might be acquired, and the improvement of the old buildings with new extensions, would not upon the whole render the institution what it should be. The old building cannot be suitably modernized, and any attempt to make the new part conform to it, would render the latter much less suitable than it should be. It would require a large outlay to complete the improvements, and when finished the hospital would be at best but a patched up concern. It would fail to meet the requirements of its purpose, and would be unworthy of the enlightened intelligence and liberality of our citizens.

"As anything done now should be with a view to a permanency of, it may be, half a century or more, the committee may well hesitate in recommending improvements at the present location. The city is but as a giant in its infancy. The next decade, should our national troubles be happily settled, will be likely to double its population, and roll

up its numbers with accelerated speed in succeeding years. With the proportion of the business of the great teeming West, which, for the want of seaports elsewhere to accommodate the trade, must come here, nothing can stop her progress in commercial importance. It cannot be many years before the entire water front of that section may be required for shipping, and perhaps converted into a dock with a basin and wharves.

“With this change would come the necessary storehouses and workshops, and sooner or later, it may be in five or ten years, the institution would be found almost surrounded by an active business community. As a lunatic asylum should always be situated so that the patients may be free from the chance of any kind of annoyance or excitement from outside, it will readily be seen how improper the present site would be under such circumstances as we have suggested.

“The more the committee examine the subject, the more they are embarrassed by its magnitude and importance, and the difficulties attending it. That something must be done is apparent to all who have given the matter any attention. The want of more accommodations is pressing and daily augmenting. The excitements consequent upon the present war will, when peace is restored, tend largely to increase the demand.

“It is for the City Council to say what shall be done, and not for this Board to dictate. It may not be improper, however, to suggest the consideration whether good economy and a regard for the future does not commend a removal and the erection of suitable buildings elsewhere.”

This report was accepted and a copy of it ordered to be sent to the City Council, where it was referred to the Committee on Institutions. On the 15th of December last the committee reported as follows : —

“That upon giving the Board of Directors, through their President, a hearing upon their petition, they abandoned the advocacy of the project of enlarging the present Lunatic Hospital, and urged upon the committee strong views in favor of erecting an entirely new building, more commodious and suitable to the wants of the institution than the present building, however enlarged and improved, could possibly be.

“They also recommend the removal of the institution, if a new building should be decided upon, to a site more eligible and less contracted than the present one. Whatever alterations or improvements, if any, are required in the Lunatic Hospital Building, the committee are of opinion that, as the term of office of the present City Council is rapidly drawing to a close, they ought not to recommend any action at this time, lest, in the haste to consummate it, some injudicious or ill-advised scheme might be undertaken.

“Impressed, however, with the importance of the subject, they recommend it to the early consideration of the next City Council.”

The more prominent defects of the hospital, as we gather from Dr. Walker, the Superintendent, from Dr. Tyler, of the McLean Asylum, and others, and by our own observation are, —

First. The entire insufficiency of house-room for the present number of inmates. The building was originally intended for one hundred patients, a much larger number than can be properly accommodated there, and it now has nearly double that number. It is unjustifiably crowded in every part. Rooms that should not contain more than one patient are occupied in many cases by two, three, and even four each. The larger rooms, originally arranged for other uses, than sleeping-rooms, are now necessarily devoted to that purpose, and contain from eight to twelve beds each. This crowding of sleeping-rooms is most severely deprecated by both Drs. Tyler and Walker, as is also the compelled necessity for all the patients of each sex being served with their meals at a common table. They deem such a course especially injurious to the patients, and tending, in a great measure, to retard their recovery. So serious an evil is this felt to be at the hospital, that Dr. Walker has long found it necessary, at great inconvenience, to provide meals to many of the inmates in their own rooms. The want of a suitable room where patients can receive the visits of their friends, is another crying evil that should be remedied.

Second. The want of space in the grounds to allow of proper

airing-courts, and for out-of-door exercise. The two airing-courts in the rear of the building occupy all the available room; and yet that for the males covers only 8,373 feet, and the one for the females only 10,204 feet, when of right they ought to comprise not less than five acres each. These small spaces are the only conveniences for exercise of more than an hundred patients, who must be kept within an enclosure. Here they wander from day to day, from week to week, and, it may be, from year to year, till every inch of the ground, every board and nail in the fence, every tree and shrub, and almost every spear of grass, has become as familiar to them as the fingers upon their hands. Can it for one moment be supposed that such treatment can be at all beneficial in restoring reason? Must not the tendency be rather to deaden and destroy the enfeebled intellect, which might perhaps be quickened into activity by the more cheering influence of Nature's loveliness? The better class of patients and the convalescents, it is true, are allowed to roam about the garden in front; but this, too, is of contracted dimensions. It has also the serious objection that there is no opportunity to separate the sexes. Drs. Walker and Tyler, and, indeed, all superintendents, agree that large extent of grounds for the use of patients is one of the most beneficial of all accessories for an institution for the insane.

Third. The danger of loss of life in case of fire, as the building is constructed, is most imminent. The only means of escape for the patients, in case of fire, — the windows being all strongly grated with iron, — is down a flight of stairs, only three feet in width, of which there is but one to each wing. The stairs are at the ends of the wings next to the main building. Should the centre take fire, their only retreat might be cut off, and a scene ensue too horrible to contemplate. In such a panic, what could be done with a large party of such sick, imbecile, demented, and furious patients, and particularly if it occurred in the night? It would be an utter impossibility to remove them all safely, and even once out, and the building

destroyed, how would they be disposed of? The Superintendent and the Directors have long felt this evil, and have taken all the measures in their power to provide against such a possible catastrophe.

There are numerous other objections to the present institution, such as the noise and bustle occasioned by the increasing business at Mr. Loring's Iron Steamship Works, upon the immediate adjoining premises; the imperfect ventilation of the wards, which it is impossible to remedy; the danger and improper mode of warming, by heated air from coal furnaces, &c., which it is unnecessary to enumerate in detail. Enough has been stated to prove the absolute necessity of reform. If it is doubted by any member of the City Council, they need only to make a personal examination of the premises. Such a course cannot fail to convince the most sceptical.

It may be urged that the expenses of a new hospital may be avoided, by declining to receive boarders, and making the institution solely a pauper hospital. To such a course there are four very serious objections.

First. There are already in the institution, chargeable to the City, and which the law compels shall be provided for, more persons than the building can properly accommodate; and the number is rapidly increasing. To provide for this class alone more space is demanded.

Second. The introduction of boarders tends to improve the general character of the inmates, and consequently to benefit the institution and the patients. The advantage in this respect is very great, and ought not to be overlooked.

Third. Boarders contribute largely toward defraying the expenses of the institution, and thus reduce the *pro rata* cost of the support of inmates chargeable to the City.

Fourth. Citizens of Boston who are afflicted, and able and willing to pay for treatment, have a right to demand that accommodations shall be furnished for them, as well as for those receiving support from the public.

Others, while they admit the pressing necessity of the case, may conceive that in consequence of the state of the times, and the large expenditures on account of the Free City Hospital and the new City Hall, action ought to be deferred. With better reason might they oppose all expenditures for paving, or for constructing sewers, or for other sanitary measures. The necessities for new school-houses, which are being built every season, dwindle in importance, when considered beside the demands for this object. The citizens of Boston, when they established the present hospital, intended it should be "*a suitable place for the insane,*" and that it should "*furnish ample accommodations for this unfortunate class.*" It was such when built, but in the rapid flight of time the numbers of the insane have so vastly increased, and the mode of their treatment has been so much improved, that the hospital has outgrown its usefulness.

The "Inspectors of Prisons of the County of Suffolk," in their report, made by Judge Ames, for the year 1861, thus mention the hospital:—

"It is not too much to say that this hospital is admirably conducted, and is deserving of the confidence of the public. No appliance for the restoration of the unfortunate patients seems to have been overlooked. But the best results never can be reached while the management has to struggle with a very unsuitable building, contracted grounds, and the innumerable disadvantages that flow therefrom. These are so apparent from the most cursory examination that no detail or argument are necessary. We desire to call the attention of your honorable Board to the matter, believing that at the earliest proper time suitable measures will be taken to afford appropriate accommodations for a class as unfortunate as any that addresses itself to the higher and nobler feelings of a common humanity."

The report of the Inspectors for the present year, made by Judge Rogers, has the following upon the same subject:—

"But some things are wanting which should be found in a charitable institution, even if supported by taxation. There ought to be sufficien

room, of more convenient construction, more air, and better ventilation. The rooms are too low, and the building needs many comforts and conveniences, which have been introduced into similar buildings, since this was built, and have now become common. A great change has taken place in the treatment of the insane, since the erection of this building. Less confinement in cells, less personal restraints, more gentle methods of treatment, and more general liberty. All these changes make it necessary to have more room. A building is not economical unless it promotes the cure and dismissal of patients in the shortest time; and thus more patients are cured at the same expense. It ought also to produce the earliest and greatest improvement, where a perfect cure cannot be obtained. Without sufficient room and an abundance of good air, how can these effects be produced?"

It is not to be believed that the people of the present day will consent to be considered behind the men of 1839, in matters of humanity. In the opinion of the Board, the community have a vast responsibility in this matter, that must be met. It cannot longer be avoided. A new hospital for the insane is an imperative necessity. Humanity and the public good require that the matter should be inaugurated at once. So urgent is the necessity that the Directors do not believe that any citizen, acquainted with all the circumstances, would object to pay his proportion of a direct tax for the purpose, if it should be necessary.

It will take a long time to procure an eligible location and prepare plans; and time is valuable while things remain in their present condition. The opportunity to procure a suitable site, within a short distance of the city, is every day growing less, and the prices of such property rapidly increasing. The Board therefore earnestly recommend that an appropriation be made for the purchase of a suitable location, and to procure plans for a building which shall meet the pressing demand, and assist medical skill in the restoration to reason of the unfortunate lunatic. The old lot and buildings would sell for a large sum, and go far toward the probable expense of a new institution.

The Board of Directors feel that they would be derelict in

their duty, and neglectful of the honorable trust which has been confided to them, if they did not make the foregoing representations at this time. Having done so, they submit the matter to your judgment, being fully satisfied that the subject is thoroughly investigated and un-der-see this most important charity assume a hospital worthy of the City, and of the Community, and in accordance with the Spirit of the Age.

Respectfully submitted,

MOSES KIMBALL, *President.*

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