

to solicit the advice of the Commissioners as to the steps by which it may be practicable to place the matter on a footing more satisfactory to those whose pecuniary interests are so involved therewith.

LONDON, Dec. 2, 1863.

Chronic Lunatics.—Arrangements for their Removal from Asylums to Workhouses.

(Minute by the Commissioners in Lunacy.)

November, 1863.

The Board had under further consideration the provisions of the 'Lunacy Acts Amendment Act,' 1862, § 8, as explained by the 2nd section of the 'Lunacy Acts Amendment Act,' 1863, empowering the visitors of any asylum, with the approval of the Commissioners in Lunacy and the President of the Poor Law Board, to make arrangements with the guardians of any parish or union within the district for which the asylum has been provided for the removal from the asylum to the workhouse of such parish or union, and the reception and care therein of a limited number of chronic lunatics, chargeable to the same, or any other parish or union.

Resolved as follows—

I. The arrangements authorised are, in the opinion of the Board, intended to meet the deficiency of accommodation in asylums, and to enable visitors, in special cases, to make provision for the immediate reception into the asylums of all recent and probably curable cases. The Legislature clearly did not contemplate the reception into workhouses generally of the chronic patients referred to, and the constitution thereby of a number of small lunatic establishments; but the selection by the visitors of one or more workhouses, in which adequate accommodation, care, and attendance can be ensured. Consequently, all applications for the approval of the Commissioners must originate with visitors of asylums; and no such application, received directly from a board of guardians, can be entertained.

II. Proper rules and regulations, modified according to circumstances, will be required to be prepared and approved. In the mean time the Board consider and determine that the following conditions are (amongst others) indispensable, and will, in all cases, be insisted on, viz.—

1. Separate wards—properly constructed, arranged, and furnished for the patients of the respective sexes. The dormitories to be distinct from the day-rooms, and the former to afford cubical space per patient, of 500 feet, and the latter 400. Single bed-rooms to contain at least 600 cubic feet.

2. A liberal dietary, analogous to that of the asylums.

3. Ample means of outdoor exercise and recreation.

4. Due medical visitation.

5. Properly qualified paid attendants.

6. Medical and other registers; records similar to those in use in licensed houses.

The English Lunatic Hospitals.

"Of the fifteen or eighteen 'Lunatic Hospitals' in England, the majority are defective in their building, and seem to be restricted in usefulness by insufficient incomes. There are two, however, which are generally conceded to be among the best of their class, apparently containing every essential desideratum for the highest success. One of these, the Manchester Hos-

pital, at Cheedale, accommodates about eighty patients of the middle class; and the other, the Coton Hill Institution, at Stafford, a somewhat larger number, in a style with which, as to whether as to apartments, furniture, attendance, or facilities for rational discussion, any *reasonable* insane Englishman of those classes ought to be perfectly satisfied. Belonging to the same order of institutions is one possessing historical fame and interest, which yet retains its early popularity, as well as its excellent reputation among medical men. The York Retreat, founded by the Society of Friends at the close of the last century, and hallowed in the memory of every one who appreciates the spirit of beneficence which originated it and has ever since pervaded its halls, still pursues its sacred mission of removing and relieving mental disease. Nowhere did I observe clearer evidence of intelligent and conscientious fulfilment of the humane purposes of all such institutions. The older sections of the building were being gradually replaced by new constructions, which conform interiorly to the present standard of advancement; and as for that personal devotion of the chief officers, on which the welfare of patients must mainly depend, it was sufficiently apparent that the genius and the earnestness of Juke still abide among his successors.

“Bethlehem and St. Luke’s Hospitals still continue to be occupied as *receptacles* for the insane. Any term implying a more enlightened humanity than this, would seem an insult to English intelligence and philanthropy. The Commissioners in Lunacy, and other friends of the insane, have long sought to induce the removal of these institutions, from the densely built districts of London to the open country, but hitherto without success. The only prospect now presented from their windows are masses of closely packed city houses, and the usual scenes of city streets, while the range for outdoor exercise is restricted to the narrow limits of small and gloomy enclosures. Of course the great value of the sites now occupied by these buildings would enable the governors, in conjunction with their permanent funds, to provide in each case a model establishment, in the most eligible suburban positions. Each institution, however, possesses an income sufficiently generous to justify its governors in indulging the good old English trait of obstinate adherence to their own will, and it being their will to retain their institutions where they are—for the reason that they have existed where they stand from time immemorial; and as this reason gathers strength daily, there these hospitals will probably remain until the New Zealand artist, whose eventual arrival Mr. Macaulay has predicted, takes his seat on the ‘crumbling pier of London Bridge,’ to begin his sketch of the ‘ancient ruins of St. Paul’s Church.’

“If nothing else shall then be left of the present unornamented glories of the great city, Bethlehem and St. Luke’s will doubtless continue to stand, to prove that nothing can so long resist the tooth of time, or the encroachment of reform, as the conceit and prejudice of the governors of a well-endowed charity.”—*Dr. Tilden Brown, Physician to the Bloomingdale Asylum, New York (American Journal of Insanity, Oct. 1863).*

*Dr. Conolly on the Character of Hamlet.**

“A writer, who has made mental disease his peculiar study, and who ranks high among those who deal with it practically and theoretically, deserves attention when he takes the psychology of Hamlet or Lear for his theme. His opinion carries the greater weight when, with his proper science, he

* ‘A Study of Hamlet,’ by John Conolly, M.D., D.C.L., Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. Fcp. 8vo. London: Moxon, 1863.