indicated, and oil of turpentine, particularly if worms are supposed to exist.

Warm or vapour baths, or fomentations in cases of a suppressed eruption, may be found beneficial. Blisters and sinapisms as counter irritants are often applicable.

The Military Lunatic Hospital. By C. LOCKHART ROBERTSON, M.B., F. R. C. P. Edin.; sometime Assistant-Physician to the Military Lunatic Hospital at Yarmouth; Honorary Secretary to the Association of Medical Officers of Hospitals and Asylums for the Insane.

In a former number of this Journal (No. 11) attention was drawn in a leading article to the breaking up of the Military Lunatic Hospital at Yarmouth, Norfolk, and in the next number I was led to make one or two remarks on the question, actuated by a natural sympathy with the present sad state of my former patients.

The interest thus excited in their favor led to a question in the House of Commons on the 20th July, 1855, which is thus reported in the *Times* of the 21st.

"*Military Lunatics.*

"Mr. MOODY inquired of the Under Secretary for War "whether any alteration had taken place in the treatment "of military lunatics at Fort Pitt, since the last Report of "the Commissioners in Lunacy upon it; also what pro- "vision was made for military lunatics generally; and "what appropriation had been made of the £60,000, voted "a few years since, for the erection of a military lunatic "asylum?

"Mr. PEEL said, when military lunatics arrived at Chat- "ham they were detained there, pending an inquiry as to "whether they were fit to be sent to their respective homes, "or to the military asylum. During the period of their "detention at Chatham, the accommodation provided for "them was at present very imperfect, but the Com- "missioners in Lunacy having reported the circumstance, "it had been determined to erect a separate house for the "temporary reception of the soldiers. Plans had been "obtained, and instructions had been given to the Board of "Ordnance to proceed at once with the works. He was not

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2.15.31 Published online by Cambridge University Press

"aware that any portion of the vote had been applied for "the erection of military asylums, nor of building a district "asylum at Chatham."

The question, I trust, will not be allowed to rest under this unsatisfactory reply, The whole of the vote referred to should surely be applied to the purpose for which it was voted. The public will look to Mr. Moody to endeavour next session to obtain some more satisfactory information on this important subject. In the meantime a brief survey of the history of the establishment may be not uninteresting.

The first public reference to the existence of such an establishment as the Military Lunatic Hospital is contained in the first Report of the present Lunacy Commissioners in 1844, when, under the provisions of the 5 & 6 Vict., cap. 87, they were by the Lord Chancellor empowered for the first time to visit that hospital. The result of their visit is thus reported. "The Military Hospital at Fort Clarence,* near Chat-"ham, is well situated. That part of the fort which is appro-"priated to the residences of the officers is very gloomy and "ill suited for a receptacle for insane soldiers. Some of the "sleeping rooms for the private soldiers are sufficiently "good, but others are dull and cheerless. The exercising "ground for the officers and the yards for the soldiers are "cheerful, but are not sufficient in number or size. The "buildings and grounds admit of great improvement; "but we understand that the inmates of this hospital are "about to be removed to a new asylum."—*Report of the Metropolitan Commissioners in Lunacy to the Lord Chancellor.* 1844.

It was in 1819 that at Fort Clarence an asylum was first opened for the reception of insane officers, soldiers, and women belonging to the army; and in that year four officers, sixty-two non-commissioned officers and privates, and two women were admitted into this hospital.

I have in former years read through more or less the annual reports furnished by the medical officer in charge, to the Director General of the Army Medical Department, from the year 1819 downwards, and my impression strongly is that the treatment, moral and medical, of the patients at Fort Clarence, was in every way superior to that pursued in the few existing public institutions of that date, as for example the York Asylum, and of course much more so to that of the mass of private asylums of the period.

* Fort Clarence is now used as one of the New Military Prisons: a purpose for which it is well adapted.

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2.15.31 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Sir James M'Grigor, like his patron the Duke, was in his prime a man essentially ahead of his age,

"Like some of the simple great ones gone
"For ever and ever by,"

and the old regulations drawn up by him for the government of Fort Clarence breathe a spirit of scientific humanity, which it required twenty years of progress to infuse generally into the civil establishments for the insane. Throughout his long tenure of office he was ever anxious to adopt into the Military Asylum every modern improvement in the treatment of the insane. The fittings and furniture of the Yarmouth Hospital, for example, were under his directions, (and those of the then Secretary at War, Lord Panmure, who dealt most liberally by the establishment,) prepared at the Tower, after the most approved models at Hanwell; and at his frequent personal inspections at Fort Clarence he evinced a warm personal sympathy with its afflicted inmates, which in after years I have often heard spoken of with grateful remembrance.

The new asylum which the Commissioners in their Report for 1844, which I have quoted above, refer to, was to have been erected between Maidstone and Chatham, with a sum, I believe, of £60,000, voted by the House of Commons for the purpose. A site was purchased but ultimately abandoned, and the Naval Hospital at Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, selected to replace permanently for the benefit of the insane patients of the army, that establishment which the Commons had decreed should be built.

It was fitted up under the directions of the staff surgeon then in charge of the establishment, Dr. Sillery, aided by the experienced counsel of Dr. Southey, of Harley, the Chancellor's adviser in cases of lunacy.

The patients were all removed under Dr. Sillery's personal superintendence in October, 1846, from their temporary hospital at the Shorncliffe Barracks (where the Foreign Legion now lies) in one day, without one untoward accident, to Yarmouth. I do not believe that a better conducted asylum, or one more open to progressive improvement existed in the kingdom, than that I found at Yarmouth under Dr. Sillery's most able management, when in February, 1847, I joined the establishment as assistant physician.

In my former Letter, as also in a correspondence which I published in the *Provincial Journal* in October, 1851, I have related the history of the Military Lunatic Hospital, subsequent to its removal to Yarmouth.

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2.15.31 Published online by Cambridge University Press

It is to me so involved with personal considerations, now long past, that I am unwilling to enter again on the question; suffice it for my present purpose to make the following extract from the last report of the Commissioners in Lunacy, (May 1855,) which relates the final closure of the establishment: "The Yarmouth Hospital ceased in May, 1854, to be "occupied as a hospital for military lunatics, possession of it "having been resumed by the Board of Admiralty for the "purposes of a general hospital for the sailors of the Baltic "fleet. The improvements, therefore, which we anticipated "in our last report, as likely to arise from the appointment of "Mr. Dartnell, as permanent medical superintendent of "the institution, and which were in progress when the hospital "ceased to receive lunatics, were only partially carried out. "At that time the lunatic patients at Yarmouth consisted of "19 officers, 69 soldiers, and 5 women; for whom it became "necessary to provide elsewere without delay. The Secretary "at War having requested our opinion as to the best mode of "providing for those inmates, we named Grove Hall, Bow, as "a well-conducted asylum, and capable of affording proper "accommodation* for the soldiers and women; and we, at the "same time, named Colton Hill Lunatic Asylum Hospital, (an "institution under good management, near Stafford,) for the "officers. The patients were removed to these establishments "accordingly. *But we trust the arrangements thus made are "merely of a temporary character, inasmuch as we should be "unwilling to abandon the hope that a distinct asylum will be "established for insane soldiers, for whom no public provision "at present exists, except the very inadequate and unsuitable "accommodation appropriated to them at Fort Pitt, Chatham.*"

Any such retrospect as I have now taken would merely be a useless effort at fault-finding, did it not lead to practical inferences, and point to future amendment. The errors which history relates are of value—not as records of error, but as warning lessons for the future. Likewise it is my object, on the present occasion, to endeavour to give to this paper a practical result, and to briefly, in conclusion, enunciate the principles on which *the future Military Lunatic Hospital* should be established and conducted.

1.—*The intentions of Parliament should be carried out, and*

*Colney Hatch Asylum was built at a cost of £286,865, in order to afford to the Pauper Middlesex Patients better accommodation than they had at Grove Hall, Bow, and other such private pauper asylums. Accommodation which the legislature thus considers improper for the paupers belonging to the County of Middlesex, cannot, save in the qualified sense evidently implied by the Commissioners, be viewed as proper for the soldier when mentally afflicted.

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2.15.31 Published online by Cambridge University Press

a hospital specially built for the accommodation of the insane patients of the army. It seems almost strange in a country where the authority of the Parliament is received as supreme, that the press should be called upon thus to advocate its liberal intentions towards the afflicted and the unfortunate, and to protest against the official routinists, who have dared to neutralize and set at naught the declared intentions of the legislature.

The observations of the Commissioners in Lunacy in their Report to the Chancellor, of the 31st March, 1855, ought surely to be final on this question. "We trust that the arrange-"ments thus made (the farming out of the insane soldiers,) are "merely of a temporary character; inasmuch as we should be "unwilling to abandon the hope that a distinct asylum will "be established for insane soldiers, for whom no public "provision at present exists, except the very inadequate and "unsuitable accommodation appropriated to them at Fort "Pitt, Chatham.

2.—*The "very inadequate and unsuitable accommodation for insane patients at Fort Pitt, Chatham," should be closed.*

A plan exists in the Army Medical Department for treating the soldiers who shew symptoms of insanity for a month or two with their regiments, and then they are transferred to Fort Pitt, Chatham, where more than another month of valuable time often is lost as regards their treatment, while weary foolscap medical boards are being held on the ultimate destination of the patient—whether he be forced on the parish authorities,or cared for by the country, in whose service the loss of intellect befel him.

Now such a scheme of delays is fraught with imminent danger to the ultimate recovery of the patient. This fact is dwelt upon in the reports, I believe, of every county asylum. Were it not that, in dealing with a body so obtuse as the late Army Medical Board, the most elementary principles require enforcing, I should almost apologize for thus dwelling on so recognized a principle as that of the immediate removal of the insane to the special treatment and surveillance, which this class of disease demands.

Besides, the accommodation at Fort Pitt is quite unsuited for the purposes to which the Army Medical Department attempt to use it, even were the various medical officers, to whose charge these wards are entrusted, competent to treat such cases, which they are far from being. As regards the unfitness of the accommodatiou at Fort Pitt, it will suffice to quote one or two extracts from the last Report of the

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2.15.31 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Commissioners in Lunacy: "As regards Fort Pitt, in our "last report we remarked on the practice of placing insane "soldiers in a part of the building described by two members "of this Board, who visited it in July, 1853, as gloomy, damp, "badly ventilated, poorly furnished, and in other respects "very unfit for the reception and accommodation of lunatics. "And we observed that the patients had few opportunities "of taking the air, except what were afforded in the narrow, "damp passage, leading to the rooms occupied by them; "that no books were provided, that the patients never "attended divine service, that they were rarely visited by "the chaplain, that although Fort Pitt was intended as a "temporary provision for the insane patients, the accommo- "dation and treatment provided for them were defective, "even for that temporary purpose; although within a short "period, nearly 40 lunatic soldiers at one time had been "confined in Fort Pitt. We found on the day of our visit "(14th August, 1854,) only 13, four of whom being invalids "were in the ordinary wards of the hospital, and the remain- "ing nine were in the 'pit,' or casemate; the very objection- "able state of which was strongly animadverted upon in the "report of our visit in July, 1853. We found the patients "in good bodily health, clean in their persons, free from "excitement, and under no mechanical restraint. We regret "extremely to observe, that the accommodation provided in "this casemate is substantially no better then when seen by "us last year. The wards indeed were clean and less damp, "nevertheless, we consider this part of Fort Pitt altogether "most unfit for the reception of lunatics. The periods "during which insane soldiers are kept in Fort Pitt have "been considerably diminished; we found, however, that in "several instances, soldiers had been so kept for more than "a month, and we are of opinion, that even the temporary "confinement of a lunatic, in a place so destitute of the "means of ameliorating his mental condition, must materially "lessen the chance of his recovery."

3.—*The new Military Lunatic Hospital should be subject to the inspection of H.M. Commissioners in Lunacy.* Were the errors and faulty efforts of the Army Medical Board, in the matter of the Military Lunatic Hospital insufficient to convince us how unsuited any but *special* inspection and control are, in dealing with the peculiar difficulties of establishments for the insane, the sad disclosures at Bethlehem Hospital in 1852, must be held conclusive evidence on this point.

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2.15.31 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The practical reform thus briefly chronicled in the Commissioner's Report for 1854, "Bethlehem Hospital has by "the Act 16 and 17 Vic., c. 96, been placed under the juris- "diction of this Board, and has been duly registered as a "hospital accordingly," must be extended to the military lunatic hospital.

During the five years I was attached to the military lunatic hospital at Yarmouth, we were only twice inspected, and that by a medical officer admittedly quite unversed in all that related to the treatment of the insane. Dr. Andrew Smith never once looked near the establishment.

Similar is the experience, according to the Commissioners in Lunacy, in the lunatic wards at Fort Pitt, Chatham. "Asy- "lums, registered hospitals, and licensed houses," they observe, "are by law made subject to official and independent "inspection, at uncertain times, and without previous notice. "The Board will, therefore, regret to learn that no such inspec- "tion takes place at Fort Pitt, and that as far as we are inform- "ed no official person connected with the War Office or Horse "Guards, has hitherto been in the practice of visiting the "insane soldiers confined at Fort Pitt." *Report of Commissioners in Lunacy*, 1855.

On like grounds, should the certificates and other documents in the army be remodelled on the legal forms now elsewhere required by the recent Act of Parliament.

4.—*The new Military Lunatic Hospital should be placed under the charge of a permanent medical officer, subject to the immediate control of the Minister of War.* Dr. Andrew Smith believes that the insane patients of the army are best cared for by a frequent change of medical officers, inexperienced as regards the treatment of mental disease.

This singular opinion hardly requires a refutation, the more so as Dr. Smith was in practice ultimately (after much unpleasant altercation,) forced to abandon his mischievous theory. In September, 1851, I brought the question to an issue in my own person: I failed, and consequently tendered the resignation of my appointment at the Yarmouth Hospital.*

* I make the following extracts from a letter, which on this occasion I addressed to the then Secretary at War: "It cannot, I think, be "questioned by any competent member of the medical profession, that the "practice of frequently handing over the insane patients of the army to the care "of officers quite unconversant with the practice of this special department of "medicine, is alike injurious to their interests, and to the scientific *status* of the "Military Lunatic Asylum. *So uniform is the opinion and practice of the "medical profession in this regard, that I deem it quite superfluous to enlarge on "it.* I would merely add, that any reference to H.M.'s Commissioners in Lunacy

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2.15.31 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The principle, however, for which I had contended, soon triumphed. The adoption of my views at the Military Lunatic Hospital followed within a year of my resignation, and is thus noticed by the Commissioners in Lunacy in their Report for 1854: "With regard to the "Military Hospital at Yarmouth, we have from time to time "made various recommendations to the Secretary at War, "one of the chief objects of which has been, to cause this "establishment to be placed in a position somewhat similar "to that at Haslar.† Between Haslar and Yarmouth an im- "portant distinction formerly existed; namely, as respects the "permanence of the medical superintendence. At Haslar both "the offices of resident medical officer and his assistant were "many years since made permanent appointments; whereas at "Yarmouth the gentlemen holding these offices were re- "movable to other duty, according to the regulations of the "army. The advantages arising from the adoption of the "one plan, and the disadvantages resulting from the other, "being very obvious, we strongly urged in our Report to "the Secretary at War, dated the 24th day of June, 1852, "the desirableness of appointing a fixed resident medical "superintendent to the Hospital at Yarmouth. To this "recommendation a ready assent was accorded, and towards "the close of the year 1852, Mr. Dartnell entered on his "duties as permanent medical superintendent, much to the "advantage of the institution."

5.—*The new Military Lunatic Hospital should be situated within ready access to London, and probably in the vicinity of Chatham.*

This is desirable both for readier communication with the authorities, and also as enabling the Minister of War entirely to dispense with those wretched wards I have already referred to at Fort Pitt, transferring to a ward in the new asylum set apart for that purpose, the soldiers under *observatio pro mania.*

"must necessarily support this view. . . . . Having been specially brought "into the service for the duty of the Military Lunatic Hospital, I feel that I "have been most hardly dealt with by the recent decision of the Superintendent "to remove me from the same, and I cannot—much as, for many reasons, I shall "regret leaving H. M.'s service—so long as the Secretary at War expresses his "approval of this step, in any way recede from the position I have taken. I feel it "to be a duty I owe, alike to the medical profession and to myself, at no cost to "compromise the principle which I hold to be violated by my removal from the "Asylum, viz., *the recognition of special professional fitness in the distribution of "the patronage of the Medical Department of the Army in place of that of mere "military routine.*"

† The Naval Lunatic Hospital, an admirably conducted establishment.

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2.15.31 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The vicinity of Chatham presents among many advantages, that important one of rendering the new Military Lunatic Hospital, a school for the instruction in mental disease, of the candidates for commission in the medical department, on probation at Fort Pitt.

The importance of every medical officer in service, thus obtaining some acquaintance with the elements of mental pathology, cannot be overrated. In the colonies, at the seat of war, the medical officer is frequently called upon to deal with incipient cases of mental disease.

6.—*The building should be adapted for the ultimate reception of* 300 *patients.*

The numbers at the Yarmouth Hospital never exceeded 130. Looking however to the mass of insane pensioners scattered throughout the country, occupying place in our county asylums, otherwise so needed, *and whose pension would moreover pay the expense of their maintenance,* it may be fairly asserted, that any new arrangement for the reception of the insane patients of the army should be large and wide enough to include all who may through service have earned a just claim on their country's care. I have ventured in the above number to indicate my impressions of the proportion of insane out-pensioners and soldiers who have a claim to be cared for by the state.

I would thus conclude my appeal for justice to the insane patients of our army. This appeal I conceive to be doubly well timed. Old forms are going out, and new life is being infused into the public departments of the Government. Moreover, there presides at the War Department a responsible cabinet minister, alike able and anxious rightly to fulfil the varied duties of his office. Already in the subordinate office of Secretary at War he evinced an enlightened interest in the prosperity of the Yarmouth Hospital. The revolving years have again placed Lord Panmure—now with enlarged and absolute powers—at the head of the War Department, and thus is reserved to him the privilege of founding the new Military Lunatic Hospital, and of so perpetuating amid those, the sorest afflicted of mankind, the memory of his enlightened administration.

I cannot better bring these hasty observations to an end than by commending to the consideration of the Minister of War the following well-weighed opinion of Her Majesty's Commissioners in Lunacy: "WE HAVE BEEN ESPECIALLY "ANXIOUS TO RENDER EVERY ASSISTANCE IN OUR POWER TO-

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2.15.31 Published online by Cambridge University Press

"WARDS PROMOTING THE IMPROVEMENT OF THESE HOSPITALS,* "AS WE ENTERTAIN A STRONG OPINION THAT THE MAINTENANCE "OF WELL CONSTRUCTED, WELL MANAGED, AND COMPLETE ASY- "LUMS, AFFORDING THE BEST ACCOMMODATION AND TREATMENT "FOR BOTH OFFICERS AND MEN WHEN ATTACKED WITH INSANITY, "ARE INDISPENSABLE TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE."

1, *Charles Street, Berkeley Square,*
September, 1855.

I have, since the above remarks were written, had an opportunity through the courtesy of Dr. Stewart, the Physician in charge, of personally visiting the Naval Lunatic Hospital, at Haslar. I have rarely seen a more admirably conducted institution. Moreover it bears, what I regard as most essential to its usefulness, a marked professional character. The insane sailor still finds himself under the control and care of the Admiralty. From the ample grounds overlooking the waters of the Solent, all the familiar objects of his profession meet his eye. The Portsmouth harbour, the moorings at Spithead, the Admiral's flag-ship, the men of war passing out on their glorious career; all recall the daily occupations of his life. So too, the sound of the evening gun breaking through the still summer night, while further out on the horizon, rise the towers of Osborne, recalling thoughts of Her whose service he has sworn to, and who recently indeed graced those very grounds with Her royal presence.

Compare this with the *entourage* of Grove Hall, Bow, the dismal London suburb.

Yet what opportunities does the vicinity of Chatham lying too in the fair Kent, garden of England, afford for similarly placing the insane soldier under his professional influences. The bugle call, from the heights of Chatham, sounds far up the valley; the daily passing to and fro from the depots of men belonging to half the regiments on foreign service, and all the varied military character of the place, present elements of treatment to the hand skilled to minister to the mind diseased, in my judgment, of the highest value. May they not long thus lie unused.

* The Military and Naval Lunatic Hospitals at Haslar and Yarmouth.

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2.15.31 Published online by Cambridge University Press