" Si quid novisti, rectius istis,
" Candidus imperti, si non, his utere mecum."

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PROSPECTUS.

From the time when Pinel obtained the permission of Couthon to try the humane experiment of releasing from fetters some of the insane citizens chained to the dungeon walls of the Bicêtre, to the date when Conolly announced, that in the vast Asylum over which he presided, mechanical restraint in the treatment of the insane had been entirely abandoned, and superseded by moral influence, a new school of special medicine has been gradually forming.

That period which is marked in the annals of France as the Reign of Terror, saw the star of hope arise over the living sepulchre of the lunatic. Pinel vindicated the rights of science against the usurpations of superstition and brutality; and rescued the victims of cerebro-mental disease from the exorcist and the gaoler. But the victory was not gained in one battle; the struggle was carried on with undulating success, until in this country the good work was definitely consummated by the labors of Conolly.

The Physician is now the responsible guardian of the lunatic, and must ever remain so, unless by some calamitous reverse the progress of the world in civilization should be arrested and turned back in the direction of practical barbarism. Since the public in all civilized countries have recognized the fact, that insanity lies strictly within the domain of medical science, new responsiblities and new duties have devolved upon those who have devoted themsevles to its investigation and treatment. Many circumstances have tended, not indeed to isolate cerebro-mental disease from the mainland of general pathology, but to render prominent its characteristics and to stamp it as a specialty.

When *The Citizen of the World* exclaimed, "Is the animal machine less complicated than a brass pin? Not less than ten different hands are required to make a pin, and shall the body be set right by one single operator?" he forgot that "the physician who pretends to cure disorders in the lump," does not pretend to *make* the animal machine, but only to set it to rights when it may be somewhat out of repair. The division, however, of medical science into the numerous specialties at present existing, may in some respect be expedient, but in others cannot fail to be disadvantageous. The

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exclusive study of a specialty may enable the practitioner to become more adroit, but will at the same time almost compel him to become less profound. Exclusive devotion to one disease or set of diseases, may produce marvellous accuracy of diagnosis, but will infallibly retard the study of general pathology and therapeutics. Under an impartial estimate, reasonable doubts may therefore be entertained to which side the balance of good or evil results will incline.

But the treatment of insanity has not alone become a distinct branch of medical science, in the same manner as other specialties have done so; namely on account of the greater convenience and practical address attainable by division of labour. In parts of the country thinly inhabited and unable to maintain any other special division of medical practice, the specialty of lunacy treatment is strictly maintained. Laws, therefore, affecting the treatment of insanity must be in operation more general and imperative than those which in great cities divide the profession into coalescing sections. These laws appear to be twofold, as they relate to the physician himself, and to the means needful for successfully treating the malady.

Concerning the first, the profound Feuchtersleiben makes the following judicious remarks. "Since in the so-called psychical mode of cure, one personality has to act upon another, and since in this case the vehicle, as it were, in which the medicine is exhibited is the person of the administering physician himself, this is the first point to be considered. His circumstances (*i. e.* those of the psychiatric physician) must be such as to allow him to devote himself more or less exclusively to this branch of medicine; that is, to give it the greater portion of his time, which is more necessary in this than in other branches, because the treatment in most instances demands a *second education*. He must be able by his personal demeanour to obtain influence over the minds of other men, which, though in fact an essential part of a physician's mode of cure, is a gift that nature often refuses to the most distinguished men, and yet without which mental diseases, however thoroughly understood, cannot be successfully treated."

The necessity of such exclusive devotion to the study of insanity, of such a second education, would by itself of necessity constitute diseases of the mind into a strict specialty: and it would be difficult to instance any physician, who has ever become celebrated in the treatment of mental disease, or has written any work of standard authority thereon, who has not previously separated himself from the wide field of general medicine.

Another potent reason for the constitution of cerebro-mental diseases into a strict specialty, exists in the demand they make for separate and peculiar institutions for their treatment.

A general hospital will admit cases of all other forms of disease to which mankind are liable. Patients suffering from mental disease are obviously inadmissible, and were it otherwise could not there be successfully treated. The distraction produced in the wards of a general hospital by one of the patients becoming insane under treatment, is greater than can readily be imagined by those who have not witnessed such occurrences. Distinct hospitals for the insane are not less a medical than a social necessity of the times. The State absolutely forbids the detention and treatment of pauper lunatics out of asylums; therefore, as insanity pauperizes all except the positively wealthy, the strong arm of the law accumulates such patients in special institutions, and interferes to mark the disease as a medical specialty. If the public has any right to expect from the physicians and surgeons attached to the great general hospitals, such efforts to promote the advancement of medical science, as their advantageous position enables them to make; still more has it a right to expect such efforts from the medical officers of lunatic asylums; seeing that the diseases to be found in general hospitals are to be met with and studied elsewhere, whereas the diseases of the mind cannot to any extent or with any facility be studied, except in the public institutions devoted to their treatment.

The medical officers of lunatic asylums have not only a right to speak with authority on the subjects of their vast and privileged experience, but the public have a right to expect that they shall so speak. They do the public, not less than themselves, injustice, if they stand by in silent disdain, whilst in medical societies and ephemeral books, crude theories of insanity, founded on the observation of a few isolated cases, are propounded with all the positiveness of inexperience.

Their own especial interests, not less than those of humanity, would eventually suffer from such silence. If it has to any extent existed, the causes of it may not be very hard to discover.

The medical officers of asylums are daily engaged in active and engrossing duties; their occupations of governing large establishments, and of bringing themselves beneficially "*en rapport*" with many diseased minds are greatly antagonistic to literary habits. Daily work like theirs, while quickening the perception and strengthening the judgment, can scarcely fail to take off the edge of the theorizing, or even

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that of the recording faculty. The rector of a populous parish conscientiously discharging the duties of his cure, has seldom either time or taste for polemical divinity. If the polemics of psychiatric medicine were of no greater value, than those which render the simple questions of loving one's God and one's neighbour subjects of recondite disputation, it might, perhaps, be well to imitate the silent teaching of those who adopt the short road of example, rather than the long one of precept. But this cannot for one moment be admitted. The All-wise Ruler Who has not left the paths of godliness uncertain, even to the most simple enquirer, has enveloped the nature of cerebro-mental disease in so much obscurity, that through all past ages it has been completely misunderstood; and not until a recent period has the gloom been penetrated by some beams of truth from the lamp of science.

The nature of insanity is a subject of abstruse enquiry; and upon the proper answer to this enquiry, depends the application of a right and wrong method of treatment. The Canons of the Church of England recognized the priestly exorcism of devils from the insane; if the evil spirits would not come out, can we be surprised at any amount of hard usage to which a body possessed by the enemy of mankind should have been subjected? These theories are now practically exploded, and their terrible results are in this country unknown.

Perhaps another efficient reason for the literary inactivity of asylum superintendents is to be found in the fact that they are *benefited*. Our position is for the most part taken, and our ambition lies within the boundaries of the particular institutions over which we preside. Our rivalry with each other depends upon the comparative degrees of excellence to which these institutions can be brought. Having no private asylums to fill, and no private fees to attract, we have no personal motives to obtrude ourselves on the notice of the public by any literary announcement for the purposes of individual gain.

Such briefly appear to be the most obvious of the impediments to the advancement of psychiatric literature by the official psychiatrists of this country. In other countries, where it is not the custom strictly to debar the medical officers of public institutions for the insane from private practice, these impediments are not found to exist.

We do not stop to enquire into the relative merits of the different arrangements for the medical care and treatment of the insane, but merely indicate the influence of the one prevailing in England in the advancement of mental pathology.

It must not be understood, that the medical officers of lunatic asylums have overlooked the importance of these institutions as the true school of mental pathology in this country, or their own responsibilities as workers, if not as teachers in this field of science.

The establishment of the Association of Medical Officers of Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane in the year 1841, was a practical announcement of opinion on this subject.

The periodical meetings for the interchange of experience and opinion, and the discussion of disputed points, which formed one main object of the Association, have fallen into disuse. The exigeant duties of the members, and the system which prevails in this country of vesting in the medical superintendent the entire management of an asylum and the treatment of the patients, have rendered it impossible that any large proportion of these officers should ever leave home at the same time.

In France and America, where it is the custom to attach several physicians to one asylum, and not unfrequently to restrict their duties to the medical treatment of the patients, similar associations have maintained their periodical meetings, simply because the members find that occasional absence from their duties is neither difficult nor disadvantageous.

Soon after the English Association was founded, the publication of papers written by the members was commenced, and the establishment of a Journal was strongly advocated, and only postponed because at that time no one could be induced to assume the responsibilities of editor.

This proposition has from time to time been again mooted; because the necessity of an organ of opinion could not fail to impress itself upon the minds of all who were desirous of seeing the Association something more than a list of members, and of feeling that to belong to it was something more than a nominal affair without honour and without usefulness.

A scientific association, the members of which are precluded by their duties from periodical meetings at any reasonable intervals, has but one mode of activity left open to it, namely, that of the pen.

Opinions and discussions which cannot be spoken, may be printed and circulated with this advantage, that at such discussion all the members will be present.

In associations where personal meetings of the members are possible, knowledge may be communicated and science advanced by discussion alone; though even under such circumstances the publication of transactions is not the least useful and important result of

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combination. But when the members of an association cannot meet, if no attempt is made to substitute the power of the printing press for that of the assembly, such an association cannot even claim an existence of decrepitude, it must be in a state of complete and absolute palsy; if it continues to hold together, it will do so from very want of the powers of decomposition.

Several of the most earnest friends of the Asylum Medical Association, who were impressed with the above views, corresponded with many of the members during the spring and summer of last year, on the absolute necessity of establishing an Asylum Journal, not only as being in itself a most desirable object, but as affording the only chance of rescuing the association from complete inanition.

By such correspondence it was ascertained that the great majority of asylum medical officers earnestly desired the establishment of such a Journal, and that two of them were willing to undertake the duties of editor.

These communications and enquiries of course took place before the meeting at Oxford: we apprehend that such preliminaries are not only usual, but essential to the discharge of business at all public meetings.

They have since been objected to by the editor of a Journal, of whom we desire to speak with all possible respect, and whose experience and calmer judgment must inform him, that the unremunerated labors of an editor are not of a nature to be hastily and without forethought undertaken at a public meeting, or indeed at any time without serious deliberation and self-sacrifice.

At the Oxford Meeting, owing to the combined attraction of the Provincial Medical Association, and the public spirit of W. Ley, Esq., the Superintendent of the Oxfordshire Asylum, (who not only exerted himself to bring the members together, but entertained them most hospitably afterwards,) the attendance of asylum officers was numerous and influential.

The following members of the association were present: Drs. Conolly, Davy, Dymond, Hitchman, Kirkman, Thurnham, Winslow, Williams, Wintle, Wood, and Bucknill; Messrs. Ley, Caleb Williams, Metcalfe, and Rice.

A long and interesting discussion on the best mode of establishing an Asylum Journal took place. One member alone thought that some portion of an existing journal might be made subservient to the wants of the Association. The other members expressed their conviction that a special Asylum Journal was urgently needed; that the magnitude of the interests at stake, the difficulties of asylum management and lunacy treatment, the residence of those engaged in overcoming these difficulties far from each other, the impediments of personal intercourse arising from their duties, the peculiarity of those duties, and of their professional experience, all made painfully evident the want of a medium of intercommunication, and a means of record for matters of practical importance in their department of science.

Dr. Conolly added the weight of his great authority, and spoke with much emphasis of the *treasures hitherto hidden in asylum case books*, likely to become known and useful to mankind through the intervention of such a Journal.

The Association came to an affirmative decision *nemine contradicente*, not only on the main question of establishing an Asylum Journal, but also on the secondary one of confiding the editorial labors and responsibilities to Dr. Bucknill.

The intervention of other duties postponed the immediate commencement of the enterprize, and in the meantime some doubts were felt, respecting the amount of literary support which could reasonably be expected from men so preoccupied as the medical officers of asylums.

To resolve these doubts, and to ascertain as accurately as possible the feeling of all the superintendents of asylums, on the propriety of carrying out the resolutions of the Association meeting, the Editor addressed to them during the past summer, a circular letter of enquiry, "for the purpose of ascertaining as accurately as possible, the amount of support likely to be rendered by the members of the Association."

The following paragraphs are extracted from the replies received from the medical superintendents of county asylums, and from the physicians and medical officers of hospitals for the insane.

1. "The proposed Journal has my best wishes for its success."

2. "No one can more ardently desire success to such an object than myself. I should have much pleasure in being an occasional volunteer in the good cause, though I could not undertake to be a regular and punctual correspondent."

3. "I should be very glad to see the Journal you refer to started, and if in my power I would most willingly aid in the undertaking."

4. "I wish the Journal success that I may profit by it. Should I find myself in a position to become an occasional contributor, I should be most happy and should feel bound to do so."

5. "With ardent wishes for the success of such an undertaking, and with a strong in-

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clination to participate in its efforts, I have not the leisure, &c. . . . . Should the work proceed you will find me, if no a fellow labourer, a cordial well wisher."

6. "I think it would be the means of diffusing much valuable information, which, for the want of such a medium, is now locked up in the minds of individual superintendents. I shall be most happy to subscribe to the Journal, which I sincerely hope may be established."

7. "I am glad to find that you have undertaken the duties of Editor to the Journal; I wish you every success, and shall be glad to become a subscriber."

8. "Although I most cordially wish you success in the undertaking which you are about to embark, I fear it will not be in my power to offer you any efficient aid; nevertheless I am so much interested in the success of the Journal, that I will try to do a little towards promoting it."

9. That a Journal would be useful I have no doubt, I wish one could be founded. It is many years since I submitted the subject to a gentleman, who has always taken a warm interest in the advancement of science as applied to the insane."

10. "Should any practical or interesting case arise here, I shall be only too happy to place you in possession of the same."

11. I quite agree with you that such a Journal is much required by this particular branch of the profession. If I can in any way assist you, either by the contribution of occasional cases of interest, or by any other means, I shall be very happy to do so."

12. "I shall most gladly do what may lay in my power, to promote so desirable an object as that which you have in view."

13. "I will most readily cooperate in the working of the proposed Journal, and will contribute as much as I can. I sincerely wish you success."

14. "I shall be most happy to do my best in promoting the usefulness of the proposed Journal, which to be useful must be practical. When you want a page or two let me know."

15. "I should be glad not only to see the existence of a Journal such as that you mention, but also to contribute to the same."

16. "If found practicable, I am satisfied that the Journal would prove *the remedy* of the Association. From the anxieties I have had, I feel sure that the juniors of the profession would derive great benefit (from the Journal), and would probably return enthusiastic support.

17. "I will do all I can to help you, and I enclose an article."

18. "I wish you every success."

19. "If I can be of any service in assisting you I shall be most happy. I am convinced of the very great want of such a Journal."

20. "Your plan of it (the Journal) seems excellent, and I should certainly rejoice to see an independent Journal devoted to psychology."

21. "I approve most cordially of the establishment of the Journal. I shall be most happy to send any papers I may have for publication."

22. "I should not withhold my humble support from any periodical of which you were the Editor."

23. "I most cordially wish that it (the Journal) may be established and may succeed. In regard to my ability to contribute to it, I should be glad occasionally to send a short communication."

24. "I am very much pleased that the Society of Superintendents wish to establish a Journal. I hope the matter will not drop, as I think a great deal of useful knowledge may be brought forward on the treatment of insanity, by men more experienced on that subject than others possibly can be. I shall be most happy to forward cases, and to do all in my power towards the success of the work."

25. "I have always thought that a Journal of contributions from medical superintendants of county and other asylums should be attempted, and am glad to hear that you are willing to undertake the duties of Editor."

26. "If time and opportunity allow, I shall be happy to give my mite in aid."

27. "I trust that the proposed Journal may succeed."

28. "In reply to your circular I beg to say, that I fully intended to prepare a paper for your proposed Journal, and had already commenced one."

29. "I shall have much pleasure in contributing to your proposed Journal."

Three superintendents who did not send written replies to the circular, have given the Editor verbal promises of support; and four others whose appointments were very recent, were unfortunately overlooked in sending the circular.

The above passages—with one exception from the superintendent of a large private asylum—are extracted from the letters of men who have distinguished themselves as the superintendents and physicians of our county asylums and of the largest public hospitals for the insane. With the exception of one or two gentlemen exclusively engaged in private practice, they were received "*from all the members of any influence or status in the Association.*"

With this double call to the work, first at Oxford, and next in the replies to the circular, we cordially undertake the establishment and

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conduct of the Journal, feeling assured that the enterprise possesses the best wishes of our psychiatric brethren, and that we may safely depend upon them for an amount of literary assistance amply sufficient to maintain the useful and practical character of this publication.

The aims and objects of the Asylum Journal will be, to afford a medium of intercommunication between men engaged in the construction and management of asylums, in the treatment of the insane, and in all subsidiary operations; it will therefore embrace topics, not only interesting to medical men, but to visiting justices, asylum architects, and chaplains; nothing will be excluded which is not foreign to the modern system of the care and treatment of the insane. It will be a record of improvements and experiments in psychotherapeutics; whether in medicine, hygiene, diet, employment, and recreation; or in the construction, fittings, organization, and management of asylums. It will notice new opinions in the physiology of the nervous system, and the neurological observations and discoveries of every kind.

It will be conducted with a studious regard to the principles of justice and fair play, in assigning to every labourer in its pages the credit due to his work.

"Palmam qui meruit ferat."

For this purpose, and for the satisfaction of the reader, all papers, except when an especial wish is expressed to the contrary, will have the names of the authors attached to them. By this warranty all statements of fact will be authenticated, and opinions be estimated.

It is hoped that it will afford a means of conveying to Visiting Justices and others, in whose hands is vested the ultimate authority in the government of asylums, much valuable information respecting their own duties, which has not hitherto reached them through any other channel.

That the governing bodies of lunatic asylums and hospitals are much in need of some instruction respecting the principles on which their duties should be discharged, is sufficiently evident, from the imperfect arrangements both of accommodation and management still to be found in many asylums; from the excessive expenditure which has often been permitted in the architectural department, and the contrasting, but not counteracting, parsimony in matters more immediately affecting the welfare of the patients; from their not unfrequently converting that which should be a hospital, even for patients incapable of perfect cure, into a great almshouse; from their forgetfulness that insanity is a disease, and their consequent want of the due appreciation of medical science in its treatment.

These allegations are indeed only true of a certain number of our governing bodies; we readily admit that, for the most part, they discharge their duties in a spirit of benevolence, justice, and sound discretion; and that they repose much confidence in, and are much guided by, their medical officers. The exceptions, however, are sufficiently numerous; and even in the most favoured instances, the opinions of a single superintendent expressed in the Board-room must possess much less weight than after having been communicated in a publication like the Asylum Journal, and tested by the examinations of his professional brethren in other counties.

An object of the Journal of much utility, though of minor importance to those above stated, will be that of making known throughout all asylums the want of any one of them; of supplying a medium for asylum advertisements.

The want of such an advertising medium has been pointed out to the Editor by several superintendents, by whom it has been much felt. The advertisements referred to were not those which are inserted as a matter of course in the weekly medical periodicals, but were those for fittings, clothing, servants, and the thousand little matters, in which the information of one superintendent may be of great economical service to others.

The Editor hopes that the superintendents of asylums will make use of the Journal for this purpose to the fullest extent in their power. He also trusts they will feel no disappointment at the unassuming garb in which the work is introduced to them. That it will not provoke the remark

"Amphora cœpit
Institui, currente rotâ, cur urceus exit?"

The Editor, remembering that *amphoric resonance* is often symptomatic of decay, has indeed thought it right in the commencement of his undertaking to begin almost from the gallipot; he however begs to remind his readers, not only that real utility dignifies all things, but also that should occasion require, and prosperity justify the use of a more pretentious vessel, such a change can always readily be made.

The issue of the Journal will at first take place once in six weeks, or at the semiquarterly periods; a less frequent issue having been thought incompatible with its mission as a means of intercommunication between asylum officers. Should it be found upon trial that this interval is too great, it will readily be shortened.

The Journal will be supplied to members of the Association through their booksellers, or on the receipt of sixteen pence in stamps for

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postage it will be supplied to them for one year by post; to other persons each number will be charged sixpence, or by post eightpence.

We have now only to beg the kind support of our brother officers; to promise a conscientious discharge of the responsible duties we have undertaken, and to begin.

Statistics of Land attached to the County Asylums of England, by JOHN THURNAM, M.D., *Medical Superintendent of the Wiltshire County Asylum.*

Having had occasion to enquire into the amount and appropriation of the land attached to the several County Asylums of England, and having, during the course of the past summer, had "Returns" from nearly the whole of these institutions obligingly communicated to me, I have been induced to throw them into a tabular form, and communicate the whole to the *Asylum Journal of Insanity*, in the pages of which they may perhaps prove useful to the committees of visitors and superintendents of such establishments. A few remarks are perhaps called for in illustration of the table.

It will hardly be contested, that with regard to the quantity of land, which it is desirable to attach to asylums for the insane, in different localities and for different classes of society, we are not in a position to insist on any fixed or determinate standard. This, indeed, should vary with the varying circumstances of districts and communities; and a diversity of provisions must itself be deemed useful, as promotive of experiment and enquiry, as to the development of agricultural as well as of other modes of employment. In this, as in all other respects, may the public asylums of this country be long spared the infliction of the *dicta* of an assumed optimism, which must be destructive of all individual efforts at advance, and must tend to reduce all to the common level of a self-satisfied mediocrity.

If we confine our attention to the circumstances of county asylums for the insane poor, it would be rash to assume any certain proportion of land as alike suitable in every instance. In their report for 1847, the Commissioners in Lunacy recommend that, in pauper asylums the proportion of land "should, as far as possible, be in the *ratio* of at least one acre to ten patients."* This, it may be presumed, is a *minimum* quantity; for in agricultural districts, there can be no doubt that a much larger proportion is really desirable.

I will now turn to the table itself, which comprises thirty-four asylums in England and Wales, being all the county asylums, together with the Borough Asylum for Birmingham, and the General Asylum at Northampton, which seem naturally to fall under the same head.

Of the nineteen asylums in existence, when the Commission of Lunacy assumed its functions, about two-thirds of the number fell below, and some very much below, the standard recommended: and only two of the number (15 and 28, *Leicester and Suffolk*) at all exceeded it.

The converse however obtains with thirteen asylums established since 1847, the date of this report of the Commissioners. In seven of these (Nos. 7, 16, 19, 26, 30, 31, and 33,) the proportion of land is higher, in six (Nos. 7, 16, 26, 31, 32, and 33,) very much higher, than that prescribed; in five (Nos. 3, 6, 13, 14, and 25,) is about that recommended; and in two instances only (Nos. 2 and 17,) falls below the required amount. There can be no doubt that it is to the judicious exercise of their functions by the Commissioners in Lunacy, that we owe the general recognition, which is here apparent, of the necessity for a sufficient amount of land being provided in connection with every pauper asylum. The inadequacy of the original provision in the case of many of the older asylums is the more to be regretted, as, in the majority of such instances, it appears hardly possible to remedy this defect, in consequence of the land in the immediate neighbourhood not being purchaseable; or if so, only at the most extravagant prices. The superintendent of one asylum complains, that he has space only for a few piggaries; another, that he has but just garden ground enough to find the establishment in vegetables; and several lament the utter inadequacy of their farms for the proper development of the industrial system among the patients.

In all cases it appears desirable, in an economic point of view, that the ground should be sufficient for the production of all the vegetables (including that most important vegetable, the potato), milk, and at least part of the butter, which would be required for the use of the establishment; for it is assumed, that it can hardly ever be other than more costly to purchase these necessary articles of consumption, than to produce them; to say nothing of the advantage and satisfact of securing the supply of fresh vegetables and unadulterated milk.

But the labour which an asylum can command from the male patients, ought to provide more than this, at least in agricultural districts, where some profit should be derived from the sale of farm produce, not required for the use of the establishment.

Whether it is expedient that corn should be grown for the consumption of the inmates, or for sale, must be regarded as an open question; and it is one which will probably divide the opinions both of experienced economists and farmers on the one hand, and of medical superintendents on the other. To be carried out advantageously, a much larger farm is of course implied, than that hitherto recommended by the Commissioners: but I am not prepared to say, that where opportunities exist for it, the plan is not worthy of a fair trial. One can hardly see why a profit should not be made; and I am sure, that by affording opportunities for agricultural pursuits on a more varied and extended scale, it would be beneficial and gratifying to many of the patients. When the tillage is not confined to spade labour, and when the plough and the harrow are brought into requisition, there is more scope for drawing out the capabilities of individual patients, and the pleasure connected with these various operations, and those of the stack-yard and barn-floor, is not to be slighted as a beneficial agent. With the

* Commissioners' Report, p. 333.

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