

(No. 11.)



1860.

T A S M A N I A.

HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE, NEW NORFOLK.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS FOR THE
YEAR 1859.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Henty, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
31 July, 1860.



Hobart Town, 8th June, 1860.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to enclose the Annual Report of the Commissioners of Lunacy for the year 1859.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

E. S. P. BEDFORD, *President of the Commissioners.*

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Hospital for the Insane, New Norfolk, 31st December, 1859.

THE Commissioners appointed for the management of the Hospital for the Insane at New Norfolk beg to present their first Report to the Governor in Council, as directed by Section 12 of the Act of Parliament, 22 Victoria, No. 23.

1. The present Board of Commissioners entered upon their duties on the 1st of January, 1859, when the above-mentioned Act came into operation.

In the year 1855, the Hospital, which up to that date had been an Imperial Establishment, was transferred to the Colony, and was then committed by the Government to the management of a Board of Commissioners similar to that now existing.

By that Board such improvements were introduced as the means at their command permitted; leaving, however, to their successors to suggest and carry into effect many important alterations to which their attention has been, and is now, earnestly directed.

2. The duties of the Hospital are conducted under a code of Regulations established by their predecessors, and adopted with slight modifications by the present Commissioners.

The meetings of the Commissioners are held at the Hospital, on the first Wednesday in every month.

Special meetings are sometimes found necessary, and convened accordingly.

The Commissioners residing in the vicinity of the Institution attend, when required, for the discharge of Patients: besides frequent visits at other times, a thorough inspection of the Establishment and its inmates is made every three months, by two Commissioners specially appointed by the Board for that duty, who furnish a written report of their observations to the Board.

3. The site of the Hospital is too well known to require many observations.

The Commissioners regard it as both salubrious and cheerful. It commands an abundant supply of the purest water, not only for the purposes of domestic use, but for irrigation. By the substitution of iron pipes for the wooden troughs in which the water had been previously conveyed from its source, nearly two miles distant, and which has just been effected by the aid of the Parliamentary Grant, fountains may be erected in any part of the grounds, and the most effective means obtained for the extinction of fires in any portion of the buildings.

The ground on which the Institution is placed is too limited in extent, and below what is considered necessary for the efficient treatment of the Insane.

The whole space included within the walls does not exceed 12 acres.

Adjoining these grounds, and separated from them only by a narrow street, is a small field of 6 acres, which has long been attached to the Establishment, and cultivated by the labour of the Patients.

This portion of land might at a trifling expense be incorporated with the Hospital grounds, and would remove to a considerable extent the inconveniences arising from the existing want of space.

Should the area even with this addition be still deemed too limited, no difficulty would be experienced in enlarging it.

In the immediate vicinity of the Hospital are several small private properties containing together about 20 acres, which the Commissioners believe could be purchased at a small cost, and which from their situation admit of being added to the present Hospital grounds in a convenient and compact manner.

The acquisition of these properties would have the further advantage of connecting the existing grounds with a field of 16 acres the property of the crown, and long attached to the Hospital; and would thus increase the whole area to 64 acres.

4. The Commissioners regret to have to report that, in addition to the too limited extent of ground attached to the Institution, the building itself is in many parts defective both in capacity and construction.

Having on other occasions expressed their views and opinions on this point, they do not consider it necessary to restate them on the present occasion.

Believing, however, that these defects might be corrected so as to render the Institution adequate to all the purposes to which it is devoted, in accordance with modern science and ideas, the Commissioners regret that they are precluded by the terms of the Parliamentary Resolutions of last Session from recommending, and the Government from sanctioning, the various extensions and improvements which are considered practicable and necessary.

The Commissioners, however, have not been slow to avail themselves of the sanction contained in these Resolutions for the execution of such alterations as are urgently and immediately necessary for the treatment and well-being of the Patients.

The recent completion of the detached Cottage, erected for the accommodation of Male Patients of a superior class of society, has enabled the Commissioners to remove to it Six persons of that condition of life, and to that extent to relieve the principal Building.

5. The prevailing idea of the Imperial Authorities appears to have been to guard against escape.

Under the influence of that idea a great extent of totally unnecessary and lofty brick walls were erected, with no better effect than to impair the salubrity, and injure the cheerfulness, of the Institution.

A considerable portion of these walls have already been removed, with a striking improvement in the aspect of the Establishment.

In the Female Division some of the gloomy apartments hitherto designated Cells are, under the direction of the Director of Public Works, in process of being converted into comfortable Rooms, well ventilated, and amply lighted. Believing that these ameliorations are strictly within the sanction of the Parliamentary Resolutions, and will be approved by the Government as of an urgent character, it is the intention of the Commissioners to carry them through the whole of the Female Division, where they have been commenced, and to extend them as speedily as possible to the Male Division, where they are not less necessary. By these alterations the capacity of the Building will not be extended, but will be to a small extent diminished, so that eventually some increased accommodation may have to be provided.

6. The Commissioners earnestly hope that on the re-assembling of Parliament no delay will take place in deciding the question between the retention and further improvement of the existing building on the present site, and the removal of the Institution to another locality.

7. The Hospital Staff comprises—

MALE DIVISION.

1 Superintendent and Medical Officer.
1 Clerk and Storekeeper.
1 Head Keeper.
3 Under Keepers.
1 Baker.
1 Cook.
1 Tailor.
1 Barber.
2 Watchmen.
1 Dairy-man.
1 Gatekeeper.
18 Attendants.

FEMALE DIVISION.

1 Matron.
2 Sub-Matrons.
1 Gatekeeper.
1 Laundress.
1 Washerwoman.
9 Wardswomen.

The following Table shows the Admissions, Discharges, and Deaths from 1st October, 1855, being the date the Hospital was handed over to the Colonial Government, to 31st December, 1859.

	Males.	Females.	Admissions.	DISCHARGED.						DEATHS.			Rate per cent. of Recoveries.		Rate per cent. of Deaths.	
				Recovered.			Transferred.			Males.	Females.	TOTAL.	On Admissions.	On Total treated.	On Admissions.	On Total treated.
				Males.	Females.	TOTAL.	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.							
Remaining 30th September, 1855....	95	72														
Admitted during three months.....	6	4	10	—	4	4	—	—	—	—	—	40	2·54	—	—	
TOTAL.....	101	76														
Remaining 31st December, 1855....	101	72														
Admitted during the year 1856.....	43	24	67	17	8	25	11	—	11	10	6	16	37·21	13·56	23·59	8·96
TOTAL.....	144	96														
Remaining 31st December, 1856....	102	86														
Admitted during the year 1857.....	26	19	45	18	5	23	—	—	—	6	11	17	51·5	11·177	27·35	8·156
TOTAL.....	128	105														
Remaining 31st December, 1857....	104	89														
Admitted during the year 1858.....	20	10	30	10	3	13	—	—	—	6	1	7	43·10	6·82	23·10	3·91
TOTAL.....	124	99														
Remaining 31st December, 1858....	108	95														
Admitted during the year 1859.....	32	17	49	6	1	7	9	—	9	10	8	18	14·14	3·46	36·36	8·56
TOTAL.....	140	112														
Remaining 31st December, 1859....	115	103														

The Number of Patients in the Hospital, on the 31st December last, was 218, being an increase of 15 on the number of the previous year.

From this Table it will be seen that, during the period which it embraces, the number of the cured amounts to 35 per cent. on the number admitted; and this, considering the class of persons from which the greater part of the Patients are supplied (a large proportion of those being well known to be of defective physical and mental organisation), cannot but be regarded as a successful result.

The Return exhibits 49 Patients admitted during the past year. The greater portion of these are cases of a chronic and hopeless character, 6 only out of the 49 having been suffering for periods less than one month, and 2 of the 6 being relapses.

8 of the 49 admissions were re-admissions, 4 of whom had been four years and upwards from the Hospital, 2 more than two years, 1 nine months, and 1 three weeks.

Of the 49 admitted 3 have been discharged cured, 3 have died, and 43 remain.

9. The sanitary condition of the Hospital during the year has been satisfactory, and the inmates generally present a healthy appearance.

The deaths, however, have been more numerous than in the previous year, when the total number was but 7, out of 223 treated; whilst this year, out of 252 treated, 18 have died, 5 of these being old persons of the respective ages of 53, 59, 63, 67, and 73.

10. Comparatively few instances have occurred during the past year in which it has been found necessary to place patients under mechanical restraint, either by the application of the strait waistcoat or seclusion.

The Commissioners hope, by providing padded rooms, that all necessity for mechanical restraint will be entirely superseded.

11. Employment as far as practicable is provided for all the patients who are willing or can be induced to work.

In addition to the ordinary domestic occupations of cleaning wards, utensils, &c., the male patients cut up all the firewood, work in the garden and fields, and perform all ordinary jobs of

carpenter's and blacksmith's work, painting and glazing, repairing shoes and clothes, besides, under the tailor's directions, making the greater portion of the new clothes.

Labour also during the past year to the amount of £79 has been supplied to, and paid for by, the Contractor lately engaged in erecting the new building.

The Female Patients, besides numerous domestic offices, perform all the ordinary washing of the Establishment; while those who prefer needlework, or to whom it is most suited, make up the whole of the female clothing, besides shirts, flannel clothing, &c., for the males.

They also occasionally work for private individuals under the regulations laid down by the Commissioners.

A Return of the different articles made by the Patients is appended. The value of the labour thus performed is of very considerable amount, and makes an important reduction in the expense of the Establishment.

12. As a means of mental occupation and amusement, the Patients are supplied with books, draughts, dominoes, magic lantern, &c., of which a considerable number avail themselves.

It is the desire and intention of the Commissioners to add considerably to the existing means of amusement.

13. Divine Service is conducted for the Protestant Patients every Sunday by the Reverend Mr. Murray, or should he be unable to attend, by the Medical Officer; and prayers are read every morning after breakfast by the Under Keeper of each division respectively.

The Matron also reads prayers daily to the Protestant Female Patients; and the Reverend Mr. Murray likewise attends for that purpose once in the week both in the male and female division.

A Roman Catholic Priest performs service one Sunday in the month, and also generally once during the week.

On the intervening Sundays Roman Catholic prayers are read to the Male Patients by the Head Keeper, who is a member of that Church.

The behaviour of the Patients during Divine Service is usually quiet and attentive.

No proper accommodation for the performance of Divine Service exists in the Establishment. The erection of a suitable Chapel has long been contemplated, and must soon be provided.

14. The Provisions supplied to the Patients have been of the best quality. Wine and porter are issued at the discretion of the Medical Officer; and an abundance of milk for all, with butter for the sick and females, is furnished from the Dairy of the Institution.

15. The Commissioners have every reason to be satisfied with the zeal and attention displayed by the Superintendent and Medical Officer in the performance of his important duties. That Officer has also made a very favourable report of the manner in which the Matron and Head Keeper, with their assistants, have performed the duties confided to them.

The Attendants have been selected from the best class of persons willing to undertake those duties, and their conduct on the whole has been satisfactory.

16. The total cost of the Establishment for the past year has amounted to about £8000, and the expense of each Patient to about 2s. 1d. per diem.

Of the whole number of Patients four partially pay the expense of their maintenance in the Hospital, and eight the whole charge.

Of the Pauper Patients 72 are maintained at the expense of the British Government, and 134 by the Colony.

17. The Commissioners cannot but regard the rule laid down by the British Government, for regulating and limiting their liability to maintain paupers belonging to the Convict class, as highly oppressive and unjust.

Of the whole number of Pauper Lunatics now maintained at the expense of the Colony, 53 have

come free to the Colony, and 81 have been Convicts. And these are the just proportions according to which the Commissioners conceive the expenses of the Establishment ought to be divided between the Imperial Government and this Colony.

E. S. P. BEDFORD, *President.*
 WILLIAM HENTY.
 R. OFFICER.
 W. S. SHARLAND.
 W. TARLETON.
 J. TURNBULL.
 JNO. A. MOORE.
 HENRY BUTLER.
 † R. W. WILLSON, *Cath. Bishop of Hobarton.*

APPENDIX.

RETURN of ARTICLES of CLOTHING, &c. made and repaired by the Patients in the Hospital for the Insane at New Norfolk, from 1st of January to 31st of December, 1859.

ARTICLES.	MADE.		REPAIRED.	
	By Males.	By Females.	By Males.	By Females.
Jackets, Cloth, Men's	72	—	123	—
Waistcoats, ditto, ditto	—	—	64	—
Trowsers, ditto, ditto	52	—	478	—
Cotton Shirts, ditto	—	—	190	—
Flannel Shirts, ditto	—	—	16	—
Flannel Drawers, ditto	—	—	7	—
Sheets	—	—	4	—
Bolster Cases -	—	—	4	—
Palliasses -	—	—	15	—
Linen Frocks, Men's -	—	—	17	—
Boots, pairs, ditto	3	—	244	—
Shoes, ditto, ditto	—	—	58	—
Shoes, ditto, Women's	—	—	88	—
Petticoats, Serge, ditto	—	122	—	—
Jackets, Serge, ditto	—	95	—	—
Jackets, Cotton, ditto	—	90	—	—
Caps, Women's -	—	220	—	—
Aprons, ditto	—	211	—	—
Chemises, ditto	—	135	—	—
Hoods, ditto	—	87	—	—
Towels, Hand	—	197	—	—
Towels, Round	—	113	—	—
Blinds, White	—	22	—	—
Blinds, Colored	—	18	—	—
Sheets	—	—	—	50
Shirts, Men's	—	569	—	187
Shirts, Boy's	—	12	—	—
Dresses, Serge, Boys	—	12	—	—
Flannel Drawers -	—	—	—	20
Flannel Shirts	—	—	—	58

G. F. HUSTON, *Supt. and Medical Officer.*



ADDENDUM to foregoing Report.

Hobart Town, 19th December, 1859.

SIR,

WHEN an error has been detected, especially if such error may lead to consequences of an unpleasant nature, it becomes the duty of any one who has unintentionally fallen into it openly and frankly to acknowledge it. Such is the position I am placed in at present; and believe me it is a satisfaction to my mind to be able to make such acknowledgment.

2. In the 7th paragraph of the letter addressed to you by the Commissioners of the Hospital for the Insane, dated New Norfolk, 6th July, 1859, occurs this passage—"It will be seen from the annexed Return, that the number of deaths during the two past years has amounted to only a little over 6 per cent. per annum, whilst the same number have been discharged either wholly cured or greatly improved." These calculations were made on the total number of cases treated during that period.

3. Having lately procured that excellent book entitled "A Manual of Psychological Medicine," by Dr. Bucknill and Dr. Tuke, reading the 2nd section on "Proportion of Recoveries and Relapses," I perceived the error I had inadvertently fallen into, by stating the number cured in these 32 Asylums was "on an average of daily strength," instead of "on admissions," and now unhesitatingly express my deep regret for having done so. For whilst, as a Commissioner, I believe I am under a deep moral obligation to use every legitimate effort and argument to ameliorate the unhappy condition of those under our charge, and in common charity to look forward for the best means to alleviate the sufferings of those who may be afflicted in after years, I trust I should shrink from entertaining wilfully the most remote intention of doing so, by any statement or argument not springing from the most correct and honourable motive.

4. But, Sir, allow me to remark, that whilst I make such reparation as I am able for this error on statistics, I would wish to impress on you that this book of Dr. Bucknill's and Dr. Tuke's only serves more strongly to convince me of the propriety, nay of the absolute justice to the afflicted, of having your Hospital for the Infirm of Mind so located, constructed, and fitted that we may look forward in after years, when a different class of patients shall follow the present one, for the greatest amount of cures such malady is capable of receiving, and where the incurable may be in possession of all those comforts and attentions their pitiable condition entitles them to, and where a wise and benevolent system can be carried out to the fullest extent. That such results cannot be looked for at New Norfolk, does not depend on my opinion alone, or on that of any other individual; the Report of the Joint Committee of our own Parliament bears overwhelming proof of that. That important record supersedes all that has been said by others on this painfully interesting subject.

5. Before concluding, allow me to add that, in a letter received by the last post from Dr. Gardiner Hill, dated 21st September, 1859, he says:—"A site on elevated ground and surrounded by picturesque scenery, with a gravelly soil and plenty of good water, ought to be the first consideration of a Government. * * * The Government may be certain that, although considerable loss may be incurred by removal, the first loss will be the least. Without plenty of fresh air, cheerful scenery, occupations, and amusements, cures cannot be expected. With a yearly increase of incurable, they would have of necessity increased expenses. The smallest outlay on the onset is not always the most economical. Cure should be the object, not confinement. It would be madness to patch up such place as is described."

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

† R. W. WILLSON, *Catholic Bishop of Hobarton.*

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary.