The Friends' Asylum
for Insane
at
Frankford Philadelphia.

by
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Class of '98

Haverford College, Pa.

Fourth Month, twenty-second
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Of all misfortunes which may befall a human being none is more to be dreaded than the loss of the understanding. When the mind is deprived of its own proper function of thinking rationally and properly directing the movements of the body, man is reduced to a position equal to man, far inferior to that of the dumb beasts. For animals have at least sufficient intelligence to perform the necessary duties of life; but the insane man
often refuses to eat and do the simplest things. The desire to live, that impelling force which urges on all organic life, this desire is often found wanting in the insane man, and he constantly seeks to take that life, which it should be his highest ambition to nourish.

How to treat these unfortunate is a problem, which only in this century is beginning to be rightly understood.

Not ages ago the insane in all countries were treated as criminals or men possessed by the devil himself. Consequently they were flogged, placed...
in the stocks, imprisoned with the basest criminals and banished from society. In some countries lunatics were shown to the public in cages as tho they were strange animals; and in all countries they were treated as culpable for their strange and injurious actions. Gradually however as the moral tone of Christian nations has been raised, noble men and women have championed the cause of the persecuted innocents, and seeing the folly and brutality of torturing these irresponsible brethren, have built homes and hospitals for their care and protection.
In very early times the insane were chained and fettered and banished from the towns, as the man at Genesee from whom Christ cast out the devils. Later they were confined in cells and dungeons; now they are nourished and protected by the state and private organizations as objects of sympathy and benevolence. But surely no man has the right to deprive an innocent individual of all his inherent rights of liberty, especially in a republic like our own. It is only the state, and that only when the general good
of the community as a state, that has this right. Moreover it is the individual acts which should be the ultimate criterion for committing him to an asylum. We are all somewhat eccentric in our thoughts and conversation, but only when our actions or our attempts to act interfere with the peace and settlement of the community has the state the right to interfere with our personal liberty. It is a fact that many of the so-called ‘crimes’ are simply due to insanity, although trial by jury is necessary in all criminal cases, yet would it not be
advocable to require the examination of these criminals by competent physicians, in order to determine whether the jail or the insane asylum were the proper destination?

It is a very serious thing to pronounce any one insane, and hence it is very important that no asylum should be permitted to receive an applicant without good proof of the applicant's insanity.

In volume 144 of the North American Review there is an incident related from her own experience by Adriana P. Brinkle.

She was committed to the state asylum at Harrisburg, where she remained.
for more than twenty-five years until after the passing of the Lunacy Law in 1883. Under that law she was released.

Owing to some family difficulties her father had secured her commitment to the asylum after a very hasty and superficial examination; and there she remained during the prime of her life in perfect sanity with no means of escape. To be sure such cases are rare, but they prove the importance if examining every patient applying to a hospital by competent unbiassed physicians.

The Lunacy Law of Pennsylvania, passed in
1883, has had a great influence for good in the Pennsylvania Insane Asylums, and it practically prevents malicious commitment of sane persons. Among other specifications, this law requires that a special committee of five be appointed by the Board of Public Charities. This committee is required to visit all the asylums in the state and inspect their inmates as well as the general workings of the establishment. The portion of the law regarding the admission to an asylum follows:
"No person shall be received as a patient for treatment or for detention, into any house or place where more than one insane person is detained, or into any house or place where one or more insane persons are detained, for compensation, without a certificate signed by at least two physicians resident in the Commonwealth, who have been actually in the practice of medicine for at least five years, both of whom shall certify that the disease is of a character which, in their opinion, requires that the person should be placed in a hospital or other establishment where the insane are detained for care or treatment, and that they are not nearly related by blood or marriage to the person alleged to be insane, or in any way connected, as a medical attendant or otherwise, with the hospital or other establishment in which it is proposed to place such person. The certificate above provided for shall have been made within one week of the examination of the patient, and within two weeks of the time of the admission of the patient, and shall be duly sworn to or affirmed before a Judge or magistrate of this Commonwealth, and of the county where such person has been examined, who shall certify to the genuineness of the signatures and to the standing and good repute of the signers."

Some maintain that

the insane should be guarded
and nourished by their relatives and friends; and only those
whose means were limited
or who were left alone in
the world should be sent to
an Insane Hospital.
necessity. Certainly disapproves this; for in many cases it is only after fruitless endeavors to care for the patient at home that he has been sent, at last, to the hospital. As a rule the home is a bad place for a demented person.

In the first place he impairs the life of his neighbors as well as of those of his own household. Many a valuable life has been wasted in caring for a helpless or insane relative, who would have received much better care at a hospital. That brings us to the second point: An insane man or woman needs the discipline and medical
skill which are possible only at a hospital. His friends may have the desire, but they seldom have a reasonable knowledge of the peculiarities of the disease, which can only be met by the greatest tact and practical experience. Hence the patient is liable to grow worse and worse. His peculiarities are more emphasized by those about him, and this only tends to fasten them more firmly upon him. On the other hand were he committed to a hospital, the practical tact and the experience of the physicians and nurses would give him
great relief and very likely would cure an otherwise hopeless case of insanity.

In his book entitled "Hospitals for the Insane" Prof. S. Kurlievich, superintendent of the Pennsylvania hospital for the insane says that within a few years he has "by a careful comparison of lives lost and persons injured by this class of irresponsible people" (referring to the insane) being at large, as reported in the newspapers during a twelve month, found that these cases actually exceed in number all the deaths and injuries from railroad accidents.
occurring in the United States during the same period."
Now surely for these insane criminals the jail is not the
proper place. They need care and scientific treatment
just as much as sufferers from any other bodily ailment.

In 1751 the first hospital for the insane in America was established. This
was in connection with a hospital for the ordinary sick,
but first; the Pennsylvania Hospital at Philadelphia is the
present survival of this establishment. At first
nearly all of the hospitals for
Insane were merely adjuncts
of the other hospitals. In
time however the inutility of this plan became obvious; and now nearly all of the insane hospitals and distinct establishments.

Among the first institutions founded exclusively for the care of insane patients was the Friends' Asylum for the Insane. This institution was established in 1813 as a place where "the insane might see that they were regarded as men and brethren." As its name implies it was founded by and for members of the Society of Friends, and for some time no one not a Friend was admitted to the
Asylum. Later however this restriction was removed.
The institution is a corporation with a president, secretary and treasurer and a board of twenty managers, three of whom visit the asylum every week. There resident physicians together with a corps of men and women nurses have charge of the patients.
The buildings are situated near Darneford, Philadelphia within easy reach of the Philadelphia & Reading, and Pennsylvania railroads. The property consists of about eighty acres of land a large proportion of which is de-
voted to lawns, walks and groves for the enjoyment of patients.
Great care is taken to make the grounds as beautiful as possible. Many large and beautiful trees surround the buildings and offer abundant shade.

Three large conservatories have been constructed which supply flowers, all through the winter months, to the patients' rooms. In the summer time much labor and expense is devoted to beautifying the lawns and garden beds.

On the whole every effort is expended to make the internal surroundings as bright and cheerful as possible for the poor unfortunate inmates.
The original and main building containing most of the patients. It consists of a central building with two wings extending to the right and left. The central part is devoted to the offices and administration of the Asylum. The two wings are the wards for the patients. The following is a rough diagram of the first floor:

Diagram of First Floor of Main Hall.
Entering in front one passes the Superintendent's office on the right and the Visitors' parlor on the left. The latter is very nicely fitted up. Beyond these two rooms the two wards branch to the right and left, the women's and men's respectively. Passing along the main hall two other doors open one on the right into the dining room for the Superintendent's family, the housekeeper, steward and other officers; another on the left side into a drugstore, thoroughly equipped. The hall continues past these two doors as a bright and cheerful parlor for the use of the nurses and some of the
Convalescent patients. The least violent patients are mostly on the first floor, except at the extreme end of the men's ward where the most violent men are confined. The second and third floors have a similar plan, except over the main hall are bedrooms etc for the officers of the institution. There are also second and third stories to the wings where somewhat less violent patients are confined. Great care is taken to prevent intercourse between the violent patients and those more peaceful. Wherever it is safe pictures and other decorations make the
wards very attractive. The building was constructed according to the old methods, and, as a consequence, the bedrooms resembled prison cells rather than civilized apartments. However, paint, artistic decorations and a few alterations have very materially remedied this fault.

A broad passage runs the length of the wings. Into this hall on one side open the bedrooms. Hence the patients have a bright and cheerful sitting room to sit in whenever they wish to leave their own rooms. Then there are, in addition, about eight
potatoes which are enclosed with glass in the winter. The patients do not all eat in a single dining room but are distributed according to their degree of lunacy to six or seven different rooms.

The culinary department is in the basement, underneath the central part of the building. An ammonium refrigerating plant has been recently introduced. According to this process practically all need of ice is dispensed with, thus causing a great save in expense. The refrigerator room is divided into two compartments, one for the meat and the other for the
dairy products etc. These rooms are easily kept at a temperature of 32°F. The building is being wired and already a part of it is lighted by electricity. The wards are heated by indirect radiation and are well ventilated by a large fan in the basement.

The water used in the establishment is derived from two sources. Spring water is obtained from the vicinity and is pumped into a reservoir for use in drinking and cooking. There is also a communication with the city water supply from the Delaware River. This water is pumped into a
separate reservoir and is used for washing etc.

A few years ago another building was erected for the use of female patients. This new building was named in honor of the late superintendent, the John C. Hall Memorial. It can accommodate about twenty-nine women and hence there are more women than men cared for at the Asylum. It is fitted up with many of the latest modern improvements and presents a very pleasing resort.

In 1897 Elmhurst was erected at a total cost of about $20,000. This building was
established for the convenience of the women nurses. A training school to teach nursing has recently been started under the care of the officers of the Friends Asylum. The pupils of this school reside at Elmhurst and serve as assistant nurses to the institution.

The course of instruction extends over about two years and at the end of that time a certificate is granted to those who have passed their examinations satisfactorily.

The first graduation from this training school took place in the sixth month, 1896, when two men and five women received...
Besides its accommodations for nurses Elmhurst contains three suites of rooms on the first floor. One of these suites is occupied by the assistant physician. The two others may be occupied by patients, one patient to each suite, by payment of an additional sum. Each suite consists of a parlor, private bedroom, nurses bedroom and bath room. In the second and third stories are twenty bedrooms devoted to the women nurses. Every modern improvement has been introduced into this new building and it forms...
a model of comfort and convenience.

One of the most useful features of the institution is the gymnasium building. The basement serves as a place of recreation for the men. A few shuffleboards and billiard tables afford amusement and diversion for rainy days.

On the first floor is the gymnasium itself, well lighted and equipped with all the main pieces found in a modern gymnasium. A lady instructor is employed by the Asylum, and she conducts a class for men and another for women.
every day except first day. About fifteen patients attend these classes besides all the nurses in the training school. The regular and systematic drill offered in these gymnastic classes has proved of great benefit to the patients. Their attention is diverted from themselves and their miserable condition for the time being at least. In this same building is a room fitted up with electrical apparatus and another furnished with a dentist's chair and the instruments necessary for the treatment of teeth. In these rooms the patients may
receive private treatment.

There is also a room where a number of the patients do wood carving and carpentry work to while away the weary time. Competent instructors in both these lines render the patients assistance whenever they wish it.

During the winter months various simple entertainments are given for the benefit of the inmates.

The officers of the institution give tea parties and socials every week, and those patients who are well enough are invited to attend.
Circles are conducted by some of the ladies, and one of these is devoted to making family work, and in the other many useful articles of clothing are made for the poor. A select library of good periodicals is at the disposal of the patients and a number of parlor games for amusement during the winter.

In fine weather every opportunity is given for outdoor exercise. Beautiful walks extend over the lawn in all directions. Picnics, excursions to objects of interest in the city and country, carriage riding, croquet, lawn tennis, base-ball, football.
etc. are enjoyed by many of the patients.

The following tabulated list is made up as an average of the number of patients variously employed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupied in ward</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in gymnasium class</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>art class</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>industrial class</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>needle work</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>out-door games</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in-door games</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading and writing</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out walking with attendants</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unattended</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>riding</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended entertainment</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stereopticon exhibition</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sociable</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weekly tea party</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entertainment in city</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A cozy little building is used as a smoking room for the men. It is brightened by large cases of birds against the walls. (The picture on the previous page gives a view of this building.)

Religious exercises are held in the evening in the family sitting room, and every first-day afternoon. Some of the patients attend these meetings.

On the whole it may be truthfully said that every effort is put forth to give the patients pleasure and to divert them from gloomy introspection to which not many of them are subject.
The free active life which many of the inmates are urged to lead, tells strongly in a large number of cases, and amply repays all cost and time and labor spent by the officers and managers of the institution.

Admission of patients to the Friends Asylum is regulated by the Summary law of Pennsylvania. Two trustworthy persons are required to be surety for the payment of board, and one of these must live in Philadelphia. Board includes medicines, medical attendance etc. If it is desired patients may
REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

REQUEST FOR THE ADMISSION OF A PATIENT

To be Signed by a Guardian, Relative or Friend.

(State Degree of Relationship, or Other Circumstances of Connection with the Patient)

I, the undersigned, hereby request that an insane person, be received as a patient into the "Friends Asylum for the Insane"; believing that such detention is necessary for his benefit.

Subjoined is a statement respecting the said

Dated this day of one thousand eight hundred and

To Frankford.

CERTIFICATE OF PHYSICIANS

We, the undersigned, residents of Pennsylvania, hereby certify that we have, within one week prior to the respective dates hereinafter mentioned, at in the County of , separately examined of and do verily believe that the said is insane, and that the disease is of a character which, in our opinion, requires that the person shall be placed in a Hospital or other establishment where the insane are detained for care and treatment.

We further certify that we have been actually in the practice of medicine for at least five years, and that we are not related by blood or marriage to the said nor in any way connected, as medical attendants or otherwise, with the Hospital or other establishment in which it is proposed to place the aforesaid.

(Signed) M. D.

Dated this day of one thousand eight hundred and

Residence, M. D.

Dated this day of one thousand eight hundred and

Residence,

CERTIFICATE OF A JUDGE OR MAGISTRATE

I, of County, in the State of Pennsylvania, do certify that the foregoing certificate was duly before me, by the above named , and on this day of IS ; that the signatures thereto are genuine, and that the signers are physicians in good standing and repute.

[Seal]

LUNACY LAW OF 1883

Note—The Certificate must be signed by at least two physicians, and made within one week of the examination of the patient, and within two weeks of the time of the admission of the patient, and shall be duly sworn to or affirmed before a Judge or Magistrate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and of the county where such person has been examined, who shall certify to the genuineness of the signatures and to the standing and good repute of the signers.

And any person falsely certifying, as aforesaid, shall be guilty of misdemeanor and shall also be liable civilly to the party aggrieved.

The Certificate of a Notary Public will not be received.
STATEMENT

[If any particulars in this statement be not known, the fact to be so stated.]

1. — Name of patient, with Christian name at length.

2. — Sex and age.

3. — Residence for the past year, or so much thereof as is known.

4. — Occupation, trade or employment.

5. — Parents, if living.

6. — Husband or wife.

7. — Children.

8. — Brothers and sisters, and the residences of each of these persons.

9. — If not more than one of these classes is known, the names and residences of such of the next degree of relations as are known.

10. — A statement of the time at which the insanity has been supposed to exist, and the circumstances that induce the belief that insanity exists.

11. — Name and address of all medical attendants of the patient during the last two years.

(Signed), Name.

[When the person signing the statement is not the person who signs the order, the following particulars concerning the person signing the statement are to be added, viz.:]

Occupation, if any.

Residence.

° Degree of relationship, if any, or other circumstances of connection with patient.
have their own private nurses.

Inmates may be visited by their friends and relatives between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. every day except first day, but in cases of sickness there is no such restriction.

In comparing some of the tabulated statistics which have been compiled, it is interesting to note that in 2810 patients, the duration of insanity in 1694 patients was less than one year. In 49 patients it was from 20 to 30 years. 1110 have been discharged restored and 642 improved. These numbers, of course, only refer to the Friends' Asylum.
But we feel sure that the statistics in other similar institutions show like results.

Can we say then that a hospital for the care and protection of the insane is a useless waste on useless persons.

Surely if only one person a year were restored to his right senses by this means it would repay all the labor that has been expended.

We are taught to love and take care of our neighbor regardless of his condition, and surely the insane man is our neighbor as much as any man and we dare not let found wanting in our obligations to him.
References:
"Hospitals for the Insane," Kirkbride
Sanitary Jour. Spectator Vol. 07
Treatment of Insane
Life Among Insane N. Am. Review Vol. 144
Reports of Friends Asylum for 1896 and 1897.
"General Information about the Friends Asylum" (a pamphlet)
I spent about four hours one afternoon at the Friends Asylum. I was taken into all the wards and through all the establishment.
I conversed with three or four of the managers, Dr. Chase, physician-in-chief, Dr. Winter, assistant physician, lady, physician and the steward.