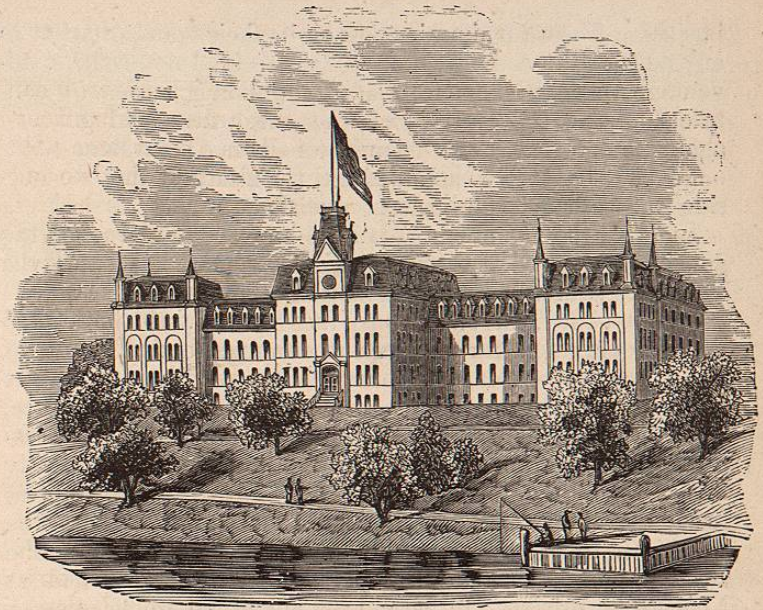


the clumsy executioner had placed the wrong head on him, which he had worn ever since. We saw a fine looking man at this Asylum who believed himself Jesus Christ, and was ingeniously inventing a language to address the world. Some believe themselves kings, queens, or angels; to be the Father of Light, the queen of heaven, the Virgin Mary, or the sister of Jesus. Inflated with such lofty conceptions they not infrequently remain speechless for months, counting it a disgrace to stoop to common mortals. We heard a friend describe an insane lady who for many months fancied herself a china teapot. She would sit for hours each day with her left hand resting on her hip, the arm bowed a little behind her to represent the handle, while the right arm she held upward in the opposite direction, to represent the spout. During all those weary months she suffered indescribable fear, lest some unwieldy foot should kick her over and she be broken to pieces.

As in the Almshouse and Penitentiary, most of the inmates are of foreign blood. Of the 680 admitted in 1869, only 157 were born in the United States, 308 came from Ireland, 156 from Germany, and 17 from England. Of the same class we notice that 375 were Roman Catholics, 206 Protestants, 27 Jews; the faith of the remaining 72 was unknown. Of these 284 were married, 267 single, and 46 widows. Of the 680 admitted 298 were males, and 382 females. 210 were between the ages of thirty and forty, 184 between twenty and thirty, 129 between forty and fifty, 30 were under twenty and 9 over seventy years of age.

The net expenditures of the Institution during 1869 were \$128,780.59 or a trifle more than twenty-eight cents per day for each inmate. The expenses of 1870 exceeded \$152,278.75.

The medical board is composed of cultivated physicians who with the accommodations now provided are certain to make the Asylum take rank among the noblest public charities of the world.



IMMIGRANT HOSPITAL.

CHAPTER VII.

INSTITUTIONS OF WARD'S ISLAND.

COMMISSIONERS OF EMIGRATION.

THE Board of Commissioners of Emigration consisting of six citizens of the State of New York, appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate, to which are added as *ex-officio* members, the Mayors of New York and Brooklyn, the Presidents of the German Society and of the Irish Emigrant Society, was first organized May 5th, 1847. The Legislature has at different times enlarged and modified its powers.

The Commissioners are charged with the reception of all immigrants landing at New York, their protection from swindlers, and also the protection of the State from financial burdens in consequence of their arrival.

The Act of April 11th, 1848, requires each member of the Commission to annually depose before a proper magistrate that he has not directly or indirectly been interested in the

business of boarding immigrants, or in their transportation to any part of the country, that he has received no profit or advantage through the purchase of supplies, granting of contracts, licenses, or privileges, the employment of officers, agents, etc. Hence the Commissioners not only serve without salary, but are so hemmed in by legislation that no outside "advantage" can be secured without perjury.

In 1855, the Commissioners leased Castle Garden, for the general landing depot of immigrants. This occupies the extreme southern point of Manhattan Island.

In May, 1807, this site was by the city ceded to the United States government for the erection of a fortification, but after the "Battery" had been erected, it was found that the foundations were not sufficiently strong for heavy ordnance, and it was reconveyed to the Corporation by Act of Congress passed March 30th, 1822. The building was subsequently used for the public reception of distinguished strangers, and for concerts, operas, public meetings, the annual fairs of the American Institute, and similar purposes, until leased by the Commission. The total number of passengers landed at New York during the year 1869 amounted to 307,454, of whom 48,465 were citizens, and 258,989 aliens. Of these 257,188 stepped on shore at Castle Garden. The arrivals during 1870 were considerably less, in consequence of the European war, amounting to 255,485, of whom 72,356 were from Germany, 65,168 from Ireland, and 33,340 from England. Over five-sevenths of all the immigrants entering the country land at New York. On the arrival of a vessel containing immigrants at the Quarantine Station (six miles below the city), it is visited by an officer of the Boarding Department, who ascertains the number of passengers, the deaths if any during the voyage, the amount and character of the sickness on board, the condition of the vessel in respect to cleanliness, etc. He also receives complaints, of which he makes report to the General Agent and Superintendent at Castle Garden. This officer remains on board the ship during her passage up the Bay, to see that the law prohibiting communication between ship and shore before immigrant passengers are landed is enforced. On casting anchor convenient to the landing depot he is relieved by an officer of the Metropolitan Police force, and the passengers are transferred to the Landing Department. The Landing Agent, accompanied by an Inspector of Customs, next proceeds to the

vessel, where the baggage is examined, checked, and with the passengers transferred by barges to the Castle Garden pier.

Here the passengers undergo another thorough examination by a medical officer, to see if any have escaped the notice of the Health authorities at Quarantine, and if so, they are immediately transferred by a steamer to the Hospitals on Ward's or Blackwell's Island.

He also selects all blind persons, cripples, lunatics, or others likely to become a future charge, and who by law are subject to special bonds.

After this examination is passed, the immigrants are conducted to the Rotunda, a large roofed circular space in the centre of the Depot, with separate compartments for the different nationalities. Here the name, nationality, former place of residence, and intended destination of each, with other particulars, are taken down.

Agents of the railroads are admitted, from whom tickets are procured to all parts of the country, also exchange brokers, who buy their foreign money. Boarding-house keepers of good character and licensed by the Mayor, are admitted to the Rotunda. All these persons are under the scrutiny of the Commission, rendering extortion nearly impossible. The depot also contains a telegraph office, by which the immigrant on landing can communicate with his friends in any part of the country without leaving the building; also a letter-writing department, with clerks understanding the different continental languages, who assist them in conducting their correspondence. A Labor Exchange bureau has recently been added, which during the year 1869 furnished employment to 34,955 immigrants free of charge. From registered entries made in 1869, of the avowed destination of immigrants, the following is a summary: 85,810 reported their intended destination to be the State of New York; 40,236 to be Pennsylvania and New Jersey; 15,613 to be New England; 10,061 to be the Southern States; 96,646 to be Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and California; and 8,822 to be Kansas, Nebraska, Canada, &c. The alien immigration during 1869 was 45,303 in excess of the previous year, and 75,399 greater than the average of several former years. In regard to the nationality of these arrivals, Germany, Ireland, and England show the same pre-eminence and in the same rela-

tive order that they have since 1865, the first named having sent, of the number landed in 1869, 99,604, Ireland 66,204, and England 41,090, while all other countries contributed 52,090.

Arrangements were early made to establish an Emigrant Fund, to provide for sick and destitute emigrants until they should be able to support themselves, and by their industry add to the general prosperity of the country. A capitation tax of two dollars is now collected of each and all landing by the Commissioners, one-fifth of which they are required to set apart as a separate fund, for the benefit of each and every county in the State, except the County of New York, to be divided once in three months among them according to their claims for the relief of disabled immigrants, the remainder to be used by the Commissioners in the construction and improvement of their buildings and grounds. On the 25th of May, 1847, the Commissioners leased three large buildings near Astoria, formerly occupied as the juvenile branch of the Almshouse department of New York, for a fever hospital and other purposes, but the inhabitants, incensed at the project, assembled in disguise and destroyed the premises on the following evening. In the following December, a portion of Ward's Island was leased, and subsequently one hundred and twenty-one acres of it were purchased, with the whole of the water front toward New York City. A hand ferry connects the island with New York at One Hundred and Tenth street. About twenty different structures have been from time to time erected. The Verplanck State Hospital is the chief building of interest in the group. It is constructed of brick, on an approved modern plan, and consists of a corridor 450 feet in length and two stories high, from which project five wings, 130 feet long and 25 wide, each two stories high except the central, which is three stories. This building is used exclusively for patients suffering with non-contagious diseases, and surgical cases. The corridors afford ample room for the exercise of convalescent patients. The corners of each wing are surmounted with towers containing tanks for water, which is distributed to the bath-rooms and closets attached to each ward. Projecting from the corridor, in an opposite direction from the wings, is a fire-proof building which contains three boilers and the engine. A large fan, 14 feet in diameter, drives the hot air through 60,000 feet of pipe to all the departments

of the Hospital, and the same power secures a cool current through all the sultry season. Adjoining is the cook-room with eighteen steam kettles and ranges, where the cooking for all the buildings is done. Above is the bakery with four ovens, with a capacity each of 300 loaves of bread, also the wash-room with sixty-three tubs, and machinery for washing and wringing the clothing. This Hospital has accommodations for 350 patients, and often affords sleeping accommodations for the Refuge inmates.

The Refuge is a brick building three stories, with basement and three wings, and has accommodations for 450 persons. The first floor contains the steward's department, with store for Island supplies, matron's room, cutting-rooms, and sleeping departments. The upper floors are devoted to dormitories. This building is devoted, as its name indicates, to destitute cases, chiefly healthy women and advanced children.

The Nursery, or Home of the Children, is a three-story frame building with Mansard roof, 120 by 90 feet. In the basement are the dining, play, and bath-rooms. The first floor contains the matron's and the sleeping-rooms. On the second are the school-rooms, with every convenience. Their instruction is conducted by teachers supplied by the New York Board of Education. On the third floor is the Roman Catholic Chapel and its ante-rooms, dedicated in 1868, by Archbishop McClosky, assisted by a number of his clergy, in the presence of the Commissioners and other distinguished persons. It is a neat and commodious room with seating for 500 persons.

The Protestant Chapel occupies the second floor of a separate brick building, 25 by 125 feet, and in design and finish corresponds with the Catholic Chapel. Connected with it is a reading-room supplied with a large number of periodicals. The first floor of the edifice is used as a medical ward for women, and will accommodate forty-five patients.

The New Barracks consists of a plain brick edifice, with three stories and basement, with rear projection for boiler-rooms, bath-rooms, etc. The building is 160 feet by 44, is heated with steam, and contains berths for 450 persons. The dining-hall is a separate edifice, 50 feet by 125, with tables for the accommodation of 1,200 persons at one time.

A three-story and basement brick, 25 by 125 feet, is the Lunatic Asylum. This is under the direction of the physi-

cian-in-chief, and by him regularly attended. During 1869 there were 322 of this class under treatment, of whom 116 were discharged *cured* or improved; 21, whose term had expired, were transferred to the Blackwell's Island Lunatic Asylum, 31 to other wards for other maladies, and 16 died. At this writing it contains 86 insane women, and 64 men, one-half of whom are Irish; and the others represent nearly all the countries of Europe. The present building is entirely insufficient for the accommodation of this large and rapidly increasing class, and the Commissioners have set apart \$250,000 for the erection of a large and commodious Asylum.

Besides numerous other buildings, which we have not space to describe, we may simply state that the residences of the physicians, superintendent, and his deputy are all ample and well-furnished, in keeping with their wants and responsibilities.

Immigrants having paid their commutation fee are allowed to return, in all cases of sickness or destitution, for five years, and share without charge the treatment of the Hospital, and the comforts of the other Institutions. The farm is cultivated with this emigrant help, and as many as possible are made useful on the premises. The buildings form a village, surrounded with sloping lawns, fruit and shade trees, gardens and fields of high cultivation. In pleasant weather women and girls may be seen sitting in groups of fifties in the shade of the buildings. A Catholic and a Protestant chaplain hold stated services attended by their respective adherents.

About fourteen thousand are annually cared for on the Island, the average family amounting to about twelve or fourteen hundred. As might be expected, the magnificence of this princely system is often imposed upon, both by the spendthrift and the miserly immigrant, who returns too frequently to be clothed and boarded through the winter season at the Refuge. Appropriate legislation only can check this growing abuse. We turn from the review of this interesting subject, feeling that the ample reception provided for our alien brethren is sufficiently worthy of our times, and of the great city and State whence it emanates.

THE NEW YORK INEBRIATE ASYLUM.

INTEMPERANCE has been for ages the withering curse of the race in nearly every part of this world. It has feasted alike upon the innocency of childhood, the beauty of youth, the amiableness of woman, the talents of the great, and the experience of age. It has disgraced the palace and crown of the prince, the ermine of the judge, the sword of the chieftain, and the miter of the priest. The temperance reform, commenced nearly fifty years ago, has awakened the public conscience, exposed these frightful dangers, and called into existence a multitude of agencies seeking in various ways the removal of this deadly plague. But though multitudes have been saved, the great sea of intemperance has been in no sense diminished, while the adulteration and drugging of ardent spirits in our day have greatly intensified the horrors of dissipation. Intemperance is a disease often inherited from ancestors, and otherwise contracted through the criminal indulgence and perversion of the appetites. The habitual drunkard is a wreck, as completely as the idiot or the maniac, and merits confinement and treatment. Drunkenness, like insanity, yields promptly to treatment in its early stages, but after long indulgence becomes well-nigh incurable. During the last quarter of a century, many humane and thoughtful persons, appalled with the havoc of this gigantic evil, have inquired anxiously for some system of treatment by which the recovery of the inebriate might be secured. In 1854, the New York Legislature chartered the State Inebriate Asylum, which was located on a large farm at Binghamton, and has become, through able management, a great and successful institution. One has since sprung up on the Pacific slope, and others in different parts of the country. In their annual report of 1862, the Commissioners of Charities and Corrections recommended to the Legislature the establishment of a similar institution in this city. As no action was taken by that body in relation to it, the Commissioners, in their report of 1863, renewed the subject with great earnestness and ability. In these appeals they showed that multitudes of persons went from the dram-shop to the police-station, and from the police courts to the Workhouse,

from whence, after a short stay, they returned to the dram-shop, to run the same round over and over again for years, until they at length died on their hands as paupers or criminals, and were laid in the Potter's Field. In 1864, the Legislature passed an act authorizing its establishment, and the Asylum was begun in 1866. The building stands on the east side of Ward's Island, on an elevated and beautiful site, which could scarcely be excelled. It was at first proposed to limit the size of the edifice to the accommodation of 150 inmates, but in view of the necessary outlay for the heating, lighting, washing, and cooking apparatus, it was finally decided to add two wings to the main structure, and thus provide accommodations for 400 patients. The Asylum is a three-story brick, with a front of 474 feet and a depth of 50 feet, and cost, in its original construction, exclusive of furniture, \$332,377.08. It is one of our best public buildings, and was erected for a noble purpose. Croton water is conducted to it through an iron pipe six inches in diameter, laid on the bed of the East River from One Hundred and Fourteenth street, which empties into a reservoir ten feet deep, and one hundred feet in diameter.

On the 21st of July, 1868, the Asylum was formally opened to the public, with appropriate services, and on the 31st of December the resident physician reported 339 admissions. During 1869, 1,490 were received, and during 1870, 1,270 more were admitted. The inmates are divided into several classes. The larger number thus far admitted have been transferred from the Workhouse, or some of the other institutions, and have returned to their vices, for the most part, as soon as their terms of commitment have closed. There are also three classes of pay patients—one class paying five, another ten, another twelve or more dollars per week—which are furnished with rooms and board corresponding in style with the price paid. Of the 339 admitted during the first six months, but 52 were pay patients; of the 1,490 in 1869, but 147 contributed anything toward their support; and of the 1,270 admitted during the year just closed, but 165 were pay patients, 30 of them being females. The rules of the Institution were at first exceedingly mild, the patients were relieved from all irksome restraints, paroles very liberally granted, and every inmate supposed intent on reformation. But this excessive kindness was subject to such continual abuse, that

to save the Institution from utter demoralization a stricter discipline was very properly introduced.

The Asylum is furnished with an excellent library of solid standard volumes, with billiard-room, and other forms of amusement. It has an immense chapel, in which divine service is regularly conducted. As the inebriate patients have not filled the building, the Commissioners have temporarily assigned the eastern wing to a class of disabled, indigent soldiers, citizens of New York, who are organized into squads, and perform such light labor as their wounds and infirmities will permit.

Of the success of the New York Inebriate Asylum, it is perhaps too early to speak. We could but notice, however, the great disparity between the faith of the Commissioners, in their appeals to the Legislature in 1862-63, for authority to found an asylum, and their report of the same Institution in 1869, when they "deemed it their duty to thus frankly state their views, that the streams of public beneficence be not unduly diverted from objects of great and permanent utility to those the benefits of which, in their opinion, are largely factitious and imaginary." The resident physician, in his very thoughtful and carefully prepared report of the same year, declared his entire loss of faith in the "voluntary system" generally adopted in these asylums, and introduced at the opening of the Institution on Ward's Island. Still, the undertaking is too important to suppose these gentlemen likely to relinquish their endeavors, or to admit the possibility of ultimate failure. This entire scheme for reforming the inebriate is yet in its early infancy, and must, like every other system, meet with much baffling and difficulty. We think a stricter discipline, and more positive self-denial and rigor, would be an improvement in every inebriate asylum. Children who grow up under wise but positive laws exhibit more self-control and self-denial all through life, than those who have lived under the *voluntary* system. Inebriates for the most part have grown up without restraint, the principles of which they must somewhere master, before they can attain to real manhood, and without which they must forever remain in their sunken, enslaved, and demented condition. And while we regard facilities for amusement and pleasure desirable in an institution, we still believe *labor* immensely more likely to contribute to one's reformation; and the more one has been addicted to softness and pleasure, in consequence of his wealth, the

greater the necessity for arduous exercise, which shall harden his muscles, invigorate his intellect, and strengthen his will. Reformation, when one has been long and woefully corrupted, is not a holiday recreation, but a manly and deadly struggle, taxing to the utmost the finest faculties of the soul. Little can be expected from young men of wealth, who, while they voluntarily shut themselves for a time from the intoxicating bowl, live at ease, indulging every other appetite. Their reformation is not sufficiently *deep* and *general* to resist the shock of subsequent temptation. And no more can be hoped for those who enter an asylum simply to gratify the wishes of friends. These belong to that class who will also enter a billiard saloon and a beer garden when invited by an old companion. Still less can be expected from those floating human wrecks on the sea of life that drift once a month into the Workhouse, for their lewdness and habitual dissipation. Coming from the most abandoned classes in the community, utterly improvident and reckless, their involuntary abstinence for a brief period is likely to be followed by deeper dissipation when opportunity offers. The New York Inebriate Asylum is not to be judged from its fruit in the treatment of these. To rescue many of them requires a miracle as great as the raising of Lazarus.

It is conceded that there is no medicine which acts specifically in drunkenness. The physician can only assist nature in its work of repairing, by slow processes, the ravages dissipation has made in the system. The appetite must be conquered by *voluntary abstinence*, which is greatly assisted by good society, means of culture, toil, and prayer. The treatment in an institution of this kind is eminently *moral*, hence too much pains can hardly be taken in the selection of its officers. The superintendent, physician, and chaplain are not dealing largely with matters of physical science, but with the perverseness of the human mind, requiring, besides a knowledge of the strange contradictions of human nature, a *magnetic influence* calculated to attract and mold. The success of an institution depends more upon the men to whom its management is committed than upon the technicalities of the system adopted within its walls, its convenience, or its location.

The principles, practices, and spirit of a genuine heart-piety, more than any or all other things combined, give success to an inebriate asylum; and we have known few examples of genuine reformation among inebriates, without a moral regen-

eration. A change of life is difficult without a change of heart, but with this it becomes comparatively easy. Change the fountain, and the bitter water will cease to flow.

We are thankful that the attention of thoughtful men throughout the civilized world is being concentrated on this great problem: how to successfully treat and reform the inebriate. It is, indeed, a vital question, involving the happiness of the individual and the family, the wealth of the community and the strength of the State. A system based on truly scientific and moral principles will certainly be evolved sooner or later, and we trust that at no distant day the New York Inebriate Asylum will rank among the best of its kind in the world.