

VERMONT ASYLUM FOR THE INSANE.

WE know not to whom we are indebted for a copy of the first annual report of the Trustees and Physicians of this infant institution, which was presented to the legislature in October. It has been a long time on the way from Montpelier—two months to a day. However, it gave us pleasure to read it, because it shows the progress of humanity, and the triumph of science in ameliorating the sufferings of a class of human beings who have been most woefully neglected in this country, till within the last few years.

Dr. Rockwell, the Superintendent and Physician, has hardly had an opportunity of showing what, we have no doubt, he will ultimately accomplish, viz. the complete restoration of many who are now totally lost to the world. We perceive, in the report, that he is perfectly familiar with the duties of the responsible office in which he has been placed, and we doubt not that the Vermont Asylum will hereafter become eminently distinguished for its success under his administration. A want of room is already discoverable; patients have been denied admission because there was no place to put them. This has been the case in all the insane establishments in New England; they were too small in the beginning, and the enlargements have been, in most instances, sadly at war with all architectural effect. Whether the Vermont legislature voted anything towards the construction of another edifice, we have no means of knowing; it is presumed that they acted wisely on Dr. Rockwell's recommendation, and that a new building is already in progress.

The asylum was first opened for the reception of patients on the 12th of December, 1836. The whole number has been forty-eight: eleven of these have recovered, and sixteen have improved. But the fact is worth recording, and is of itself worth the cost of the entire asylum—that *eleven have recovered*.

From the commencement, say the trustees, an excellent farm, of fifty acres, was procured, as a necessary appendage, the importance of which is daily felt in the management of the insane. Vermont is principally an agricultural State, and the probability is that most of the male patients will be farmers; this, therefore, is a commendable provision. The Mc Lenn Asylum, at Charlestown, as well as the State Lunatic Hospital, at Worcester, have both been prodigiously cramped for land, and both have been compelled to purchase, at very high rates, in consequence of not at first appreciating the importance of horticultural labors in the moral treatment of the insane.

The current expenses of the Vermont Asylum, which is located in the beautiful town of Brattleborough, up to September, were only \$3,484 71. There were received, within the same period, for the board of patients \$1,866 73.

In conclusion, we hope the State of Vermont has given the Superintendent a generous salary. There never has been a man in the United

States, fully competent as a medical officer, who has been paid one half as much as he merited. They should be cheered continually with the bright prospect of retiring, before they have lost all relish for society, with a competency. It is a life of unceasing anxiety, fatigue, watchfulness, and painful responsibility.

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