

1855.

VICTORIA.

## LUNATIC ASYLUM AT YARRA BEND.

RETURN TO ADDRESS—MR. MOLLISON, 18TH DECEMBER, 1855.

*LAI*D upon THE COUNCIL TABLE by THE CHIEF SECRETARY, by command of HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, and ordered by THE COUNCIL to be printed, 18th December, 1855.

### REPORT No. 1.

Chief Medical Officer's Office,  
Melbourne, 7th November, 1855.

SIR,

I have the honor to report for the information of His Excellency the Governor that, in obedience to the instructions for the Visitors of the Lunatic Asylum, the Board, consisting of the officers named in the margin assembled at the Lunatic Asylum on the 2nd instant, and proceeded to inspect the state of the Asylum.

The Chief Medical  
Officer,  
Dr. Dick, 12th Regt.

2. The buildings and out offices are in good repair, and kept in a state of cleanliness and order conducive to the health of the inmates. The new building progresses rapidly, but its capabilities for accommodating lunatics will be insufficient for the rapidly increasing number of patients to be provided for.

3. The bedding and furniture are of a proper kind, are kept clean and neat, and are sufficient for all the purposes required.

4. The food supplied for the lunatics is of good quality and quite sufficient, it is well cooked, and the distribution of it is well adapted to the wants of the patients.

5. The patients are treated with kindness and humanity by the Surgeon Superintendent, and the attendants perform their duties with patience and temper; but the building is wholly inadequate to such a classification of the lunatics as would be desirable, in order that they should have the benefit of the modern improvements which have been found so beneficial in the treatment of the insane in Europe. During the month, fifty out of one hundred and thirty-two male patients have been employed in various ways about the Establishment. Their employment consisted in cleaning and whitewashing the wards, clearing and cleaning the grounds, gardening, carpentering, cooking, making and repairing the road, repairing clothing, and in domestic offices. The result of this employment has been the removal of two hundred and twenty-one loads of stone to mend the road, and ten loads of manure to the garden, six and a-half yards of stone have been broken, and fifty-eight yards of drainage made; all the green vegetables used in the establishment are now obtained from the garden, and in a short time all the vegetables required will be produced in it. Thirty-one out of eighty-six female patients have been employed in sewing, washing, and domestic offices, by their means thirty-eight beds, thirty-seven pillows, thirty towels, and three dresses have been made. The effect of employment on both males and females has been most beneficial.

6. Divine Service is regularly performed in the Asylum.

7. The Surgeon Superintendent has afforded every facility to the Board and the Visitors in the prosecution of their enquiries.

8. During the month of October six males and seven females were admitted, three males and four females were discharged, three males and one female died, and two males escaped, leaving the Asylum crowded with two hundred and twelve inmates.

9. Eleven males and eleven females have been restrained during the month, the nature of the restraint, in most cases, being the imposition of canvas sleeves for various periods, from two days to the whole month.

The number of violent patients has been much greater this month than the previous one, probably the result of the increased heat of the weather. There does not appear to have been unnecessary restraint imposed in any instance.

I have, &c.,  
(Signed) W. McCREA,  
Chairman of the Board of Visitors.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary,  
Melbourne.

C.—No. 3.

## REPORT No. 2.

Chief Medical Officer's Office,  
Melbourne, 4th December, 1855.

SIR,

The Chief Medical  
Officer,  
Dr. Wm. Dick,  
Dr. Eades.

I have the honor to report for the information of His Excellency the Governor that, in obedience to the instructions for the Visitors of the Lunatic Asylum, the Board, consisting of the persons named in the margin, assembled at the Asylum on Friday, the 30th ultimo, and proceeded to inspect the Establishment.

2. The buildings and out offices of the Asylum are in good repair, and are kept in a state conducive to health. The new building is in the process of completion, and the cells are occupied as they are finished.

3. The bedding and furniture are of a proper kind, and sufficient for all requisite purposes.

4. The food is of good quality, and abundant for all requirements; the cooking and distribution of it are well regulated.

5. The patients are treated with kindness by the Surgeon Superintendent, who is zealously devoted to the execution of his duties. During the month, fifty-five out of one hundred and forty-two male patients have been employed in various domestic offices—in carpentering, gardening, making roads, draining and improving the grounds of the Institution.

The effect of this out-door employment has been very beneficial to the lunatics, besides the saving of two thousand five hundred and twenty-five pounds of vegetables which have been raised in the garden. Twenty-five out of eighty females have been employed in making the clothes and bedding required in the Asylum, and in various domestic offices. A large number of patients remain, who are deprived of any chance of occupation or amusements; partly from the peculiar phases of their malady, and partly from the want of proper accommodation in the building, preventing such a classification as would ensure the greatest amount of good in this particular. A number of amusing books have been added to the Establishment during the month, from the perusal of which much good is expected to result to the patients.

6. Divine Service is regularly performed in the Asylum.

7. The Surgeon Superintendent has afforded every required facility to the Board and the Visitors in the execution of their duties.

8. During the month of November, fourteen male and four female patients have been admitted, one male and four females have been discharged, and three males have died, leaving the large number of one hundred and forty-two males and eighty females, in all two hundred and twenty-two at present in the Asylum.

9. Eleven males and eleven females have been restrained for various periods, from one to thirty days, during the month; the mode of restraint adopted has been mostly a canvas jacket, confining the hands in a continuous sleeve—a method which the Board are satisfied is the most humane that could be adopted. The causes of restraint were, in some cases, a disposition to maniacal violence, and among the men self-pollution; but more generally dirty and destructive habits made recourse to restraint necessary. In all instances, the Board are convinced that restraint has been judiciously administered.

I have, &c.,  
(Signed) W. McCREA,  
Chairman of the Board.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary,  
Victoria.

RETURN shewing the Names of the OFFICIAL VISITORS to the YARRA BEND LUNATIC ASYLUM, with the number of Visits paid by each, from the 1st January to the 15th December, 1855, inclusive.

Names of the Visitors.	No. of Visits.
John Thomas Smith, Esq., Mayor .. .. .	38
Richard Eades, Esq., M.D. ... .. .	36
William Dick, Esq., M.D. .. .. .	9
Total .. .. .	83

Chief Medical Officer's Office,  
Melbourne, 17th December, 1855.

(Signed)

W. McCREA,  
Chief Medical Officer.