Lunatics at Home.

A Visit to the Famous Institution on Blackwell's Island.

Correspondence DESERET NEWS.

NEW YORK CITY, Sept. 15.—A gruesome subject—the insane asylum! Well, perhaps so, but nevertheless I am going to give you a description of my short trip to Blackwell's Island.

Our party took a "crosstown" car at Fifty-ninth street and went on past Jear old Central Park, with her magnificent and stately elm trees, and faced with the many hotels and large apartment houses—on past Fifth and Sixth hotels, on Fifth avenue, down into the dirty tenement district of the East river; then we walked up to Seventy-sixth street where after scrambling over a rocky, grass-grown sky-path, we climbed across an old dilapidated looking construction, called by courtesy a pier. No boat in sight, excepting a few dirty, sooty barges, from which peered dirty, sooty men. Just across the river round to seem the boats that contained so many lives, hopes and hair-lines.

What a strange thing is the human mind, when one tells its about it! A child is born, it cries, hopes and thrives with no thought of the morrow. Afterwards the little germ of knowledge begins to sprout, it is fostered by the tender parental hand. Little leaves and buds begin to peep above the soil. The mind or imagination spreads forth. The child lives in a fairy world in which wood, river and sky are filled with fairies of inexpressible beauty and terror. The growth goes on—the fairy world of the child fades into the background and in its place the youthful dreamer builds a bright airy castle of pure golden hope and enchantment only to vanish the instant some of the first crystal tears fall; still, the castle grows and is peopled with large ambitions, a great name, the victor's crown—all beautiful shadow forms of the coming future. On, on, goes the castle, nearly half way! Who or what yonder girl that hugs from summer in his hand? He stands straight up to the beautiful structure and—stop blind—strikes at the delicate, white foundation, and it is reached in many pieces. The youthful dreamer begins to mend the pieces, but the seams will show. He looks up and sees reality stamped on the forehead of the huge monster who has so marred his building, and on his brow, sorrow and disappointment.

Hope is ever the companion of youth. So he goes on to repair the injuries, but is always reminded by the stern old man, whose hammer strikes again, a sigh, a little crack, comes over the castle and under it lies buried all the dear shadow-forms of love, fortune and fame. If the branches are strong and the roots firm he begins anew to build a ladder into time of stronger iron, and suppose reason and better workmen. If on the contrary they are weak or brittle they bend down under the burden and end in misery and death, or else snap and live in a world of madness and lunacy. Which is the happier? O! What mortal can answer? We are like—

Thus, I have wandered far away from the island in spacious and we now brought oars up the Hudson and, not a fairy boat, but a row boat, manned by a crew of six sturdy-looking sailors, oars manipulating a large wooden oar, they have on the most post very fitted uniformes and are nearly all Italians. I find myself thinking of I step into the boat—"What a small chance one would have if labor mutiny, if by chance, they fell overboard and traded to the bottom of these seas." They were all covered across in coarse grey trousers, checked shirts falling back displaying their brawny necks, flat grey caps announced their stately shaved heads and the sole aim to complete the costume. My eyes glanced around at the other compants of the boat and found they consisted of just thirteen persons, which total number caused a thrill of terror in the breast of Miss T., our sweet sixteen little dark-eyed friend. To add to the comfort, we are now informed by the gentlemen of our party that the sailors are workhouse men, who have been sent up for petty crimes. The Italian is perfect, in the southern part of the island, a very large building of grey granite. In fact the island presents quite a charming picture in one from the river, with its dependent buildings concealed in trees, and every inch of the ground covered with a thick carpet of grass.

The river is very calm today, and we sail along fairly without motion, several "sights" glide near with their little impetuous noses and high in the with a few minutes notice to let pass us. In about five or ten minutes we are across to Blackwell's Island, and the boat is moored to an upright piece, and we prepare to take from on a narrow board.

We landed about in the center of the western shore of the island, and hence to by a large open grass plot, called, and with the sensible "Keep off" duty in which the modern country abounds. We were always so impressed that it is in the neatness of the grounds. We turned to our left and walked along towards the north about one-quarter and a half (half a mile) and [illegible] Red corridor, and a large granite building. We rang the door and [illegible] in the uniform of the large number who was spreading out clothes on the grass to dry. They all were red sleeving blue collar dresses and aprons. They seemed to work very slowly and gave each place a vicious little tug as it dropped.

As we near the building the path diverges in two directions, one going northwest from the building and the other along the south door near the tower to see a women. "No visitors allowed along the path." On the porch of a small structure a settee work we see several patients sitting with bowed heads and clasped hands, or pacing restlessly to and fro. We take the main gate, gaily, cap and apron. The doctor turned pleasantly as we pass we hear mumbling, shouting and screechings. This, we afterwards learned, was where the aged and incurables were confined, and that they are very noisy and troublesome.

When we reached the southeast part of the building we were one by one ushered, now directly on to walk up the east side of the building our we would reach the superintendent's office. We did so and found a tolerable entrance of some steps ornamented by a "disembodied genius." We stood for a few moments and gazed all around the river to the middle land—which is a wooded island and beside that tall shadow, for great trees and shrubbery, the a remarkable pleasure resulted, instead of an insane asylum!

Ornamenting we saw a long line of people of all sizes and in bewildering clothing very much like a procession in the box office of our Bijou Theater on "Press" days. This was in a large outer hall, and extended to the door of the office in front the room a long time this [illegible] hall. We were informed that these were people coming special patients, and that visits are received every day from 11 a. m. to 1 p. m. The effect of the day is one of the amusing attractions, who takes who turn in affidavits—an unpleasant duty, as it is once it is all to find out what is wanted, as there are so many foreigners who cannot express their wants in English. In the office also are kept complete records of every case entered in the asylum.

The gentleman of our party, Mr. C—, a young physician, has a friend, a brother physician, employed here, who, being "off duty" on the patients for day had sent him word he would be pleased to show us round and introduced the place. We left our party and started to enter the main building. Here we were met by a female attendant who inquired what we wished, she took possession of us through the hall, which is wooden floors and resembles our ferry of my first view of a ship's interior. Each floor is built around. It is of balcony form, supported by large pillars, so that it is some thirty large rooms each, and from one hundred to [illegible] in. These are very convenient in case of fire, as a good room for hall stairs is found in any part of the building. Our guide showed us a hospital room on the upper floor. This room was [illegible] with the exception of a few beds, occupied by the insane. Low windows covered with a few cots, chairs and a sofa, and a cabinet filled with our sheets and linen, everything was scrupulously clean from the white glass floor to the white walls.

Now the gentleman we visited to meet, Dr. Gerdsey, entered, and we were directly introduced by him. "You will be [illegible] to see some of our patients," he said. "I am glad to see that we have no [illegible] of the first floor, and we are in a small chamber, which was the reception room of our ward. Here a young woman (a silent) was being visited by her relatives. He had brought her out from Bed and was sitting by her side, holding her hand and looking sympathetically at her as she sat the front. She was very young and beautiful, and it was a sad sight to behold. A lady lawyer standing about four, attired in a plain cotton dress, with white collar, gaily, cap and apron. The doctor turned pleasantly as we passed us. We then entered a long hotel-like looking hall with small, white rooms on either side—each room provided with a small, white bed. Here the patients sleep. Sometimes they are so crowded that beds have to be placed in the halls. There are now 2300 patients and 300 attendants, while there is only comfortable room for about two-thirds of that number. The young women seated the work rooms. The inmates were busily engaged in making up white goods. The attendants cut them out and directed the sewing. The women did and look as all one or more cases, though some looked and defected and were a day or the difference in dress. I could not have distinguished the inmates from the other kids. "Fully," said the doctor, "as the sufferer wishes to be patient, fear to be clearly conscious of they will take their own lives. They are very cunning at devising methods. The most dangerous cases are given a table a knife with a button on the handle, and cup and spoon with bone handles and cut, and forks with bone [illegible] of an inch in length. After a meal sometimes a knife is a lost in missing. It is very serious, as the attendant is responsible for the number of knives, forks, etc., and [illegible] to be [illegible] by counting in these patients may easily [illegible] a knife. Our sleeping rooms [illegible] people having, in fact very special [illegible], and bring a very [illegible] away, some of the most [illegible] I have always entertained, and always [illegible] I have [illegible] reason, the spark of divinity burning within it. I noticed many [illegible] a religious character [illegible] the walls, such as, "I Love the Lord," "Jesus Loves Me," "O, Ye Weary, Come Unto Me."

We now left the main building and went to one of the "pavilions," where the convalescents were housed, there were patients, one all [illegible] a very well-looking old lady, well dressed, and with cap of lavender lace over her white hair, came and seemed to take with her hand in a large passage hall. The doctor chatted with her, and we saw she was quite well, and wished to keep all the friends she loved. "Oh, no," she replied, "you know we must be just like any organ of the body. It needs everyone to keep it well and healthy. Even a small toilet needs many tools. We have about 1700 in our large treated and we hope to by the grace of God to cure as many them." After we had left Dr. Gerdsey said, "Do you know you have just met the lady who is a divorced woman?" Such was the case. One very well dressed woman, with beautiful blue eyes, seemed so pleased as a child because we talked to her. She was a cutting, while another was sitting and sewing on her work when her mother, her mother sat with her hand lovingly on it, prayer in her black dress and snowy white cap, she would have made a picture worthy of an artist's brush. I feel my eyes grow dim.

Feeling so, and coming back to a chair, we arrived at the outlying houses, when some of the visitors in their were being taken from to their wards. It was a most painful sight and I could not look at them exactly. Their dress was very untidy; they made an earthly sounds and shuffled along as they walked, and one and all seemed intent on attracting our attention. As we passed them, one threw a [illegible] which barely missed the doctor's head. He did so but one thing in favor of the asylum was that the patients rarely if ever sick just against them, with their companions.

We now had arrived at the amusement hall. The lower floor was supplied with the manufacture of all kinds of articles, which were in various stages of completion. We were informed that all the clothes, bedding, mats, product matter, brooms, brushes, etc., were made by the inmates. "Why, my dear, my mattress and pillows are soft, I just wish I could move here to get them 'mashed over,' and the carpet in my [illegible] was made here." Just fancy charging to be made by a lunatic! It, nearly all the way everywhere we saw, the goods are soft, and stockings were carded for made, all carts of [illegible] were refitted and old Bloomer carpets were made over into a heavy fabric not unlike the "rag carpet" of our grandmothers. "Oh, most sad, I am so glad to say, my love pains." I remarked. "Oh, it was, we have [illegible] every Friday and all attendants are [illegible] each month. Just as serious [illegible] to some [illegible]. Now, how soon do you think the average [illegible] patient would be [illegible] enough to be [illegible] everything?" I had no idea. "Just twenty-four weeks, and that includes our vacation," declared the doctor.

Going upstairs we were ushered into a large hall with chairs around, and along the sides of the walls, a large pendulum fluid, upon which was to read the [illegible] of the hour, as the [illegible] to a [illegible] and note through gymnastics every day. At the further end of the room is a stage, and directly in front of it a Sun Connecting piano. Depending the walls are pictures of some of the institution. Once in a week they give a concert, and very often experimental plays, with stage performances and other diversions. Above is a balcony for visitors. A few years in the year Pictures Exhibition and they visits were entertained there.

We had now made the tour and there was nothing more but to go down and wait for the boat. We were cordially invited to return to see a dance or some game played "mumble peg." I never so old have imagined anyone doing such an ordinary thing to such a gruesome spot. But it was so in right and after we had each been presented with a sample of [illegible] as a souvenir of Blackwell's, we said good bye to our handsome escort with a twinge of regret.

Going back, New York did not present such an inviting picture as the other had done, and I wondered what is so that affected fortunate to the city when their eyes not such a dirty living lot of humanities in existence. A wind had sprung up and we went across in a "tug and" tumbles every yet Hence called "Hurricane." The tug is engaged to the [illegible] I know has what it saw than before the explanation, swing pretty more to my [illegible] entertaining then to his [illegible] looking [illegible]. Well, we finally reached the [illegible] "Gay" with an accident, deep the her hand [illegible].

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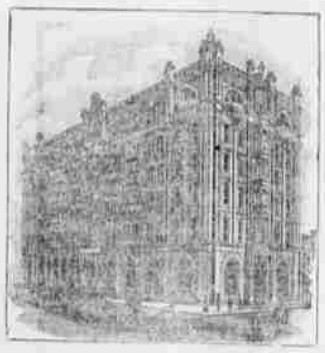
Deposits 1874,	11,076.72	Deposits 1884,	138,110.64
Deposits 1875,	18,119.70	Deposits 1885,	142,780.12
Deposits 1876,	19,148.92	Deposits 1886,	195,063.88
Deposits 1877,	21,038.84	Deposits 1887,	207,551.56
Deposits 1878,	20,612.71	Deposits 1888,	428,464.70
Deposits 1879,	42,763.56	Deposits 1889,	620,799.52
Deposits 1880,	60,071.64	Deposits 1890,	674,281.97
Deposits 1881,	90,457.30	Deposits 1891,	791,851.14
Deposits 1882,	133,078.06	Deposits 1892,	873,194.54

Deposits January 6th, 1893, $1,200,260.42.



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