

No. V.

**Memorandum on the Sanitary Conditions of Bethlem Hospital
and of the City House of Occupations. By Mr. Lawrence.**

AN open piece of ground, between fourteen and sixteen acres in extent, in the parish of St. George, Southwark, is occupied by Bethlem Hospital and by the City "House of Occupations," two institutions which, although totally different in nature and object, are situated near together, and are under a common government and administration. They have the advantage of being surrounded on all sides by a clear space; and, having been erected expressly for their present purposes, are found to answer very well. Their ventilation and draining have been most carefully attended to, and their condition in both these important points is perfectly satisfactory.

The number of deranged persons in Bethlem has fluctuated of late years from three to four hundred; the latter number having been sometimes exceeded by twenty or thirty. They consist of three classes: curable patients, who quit the hospital at the end of a year, if then uncured; incurables; and criminal lunatics, who remain for an indefinite period, frequently for life.

The House of Occupations is an asylum and training institution for neglected, destitute, and in many instances criminal children of both sexes, who are instructed in various useful employments, and in reading, writing, and arithmetic, if they should not have already made those acquirements. They have three meals daily of plain but wholesome and nutritious food, the bread and beer being made in the establishment and of good quality. Beside active occupation in open, airy, and light workrooms, they have two or three hours open-air exercise daily when the weather permits. Personal cleanliness is strictly enforced, and all have a warm bath once a month.

They are admitted between the ages of thirteen and sixteen, and remain in the institution on an average about two years. The average number is from 210 to 220, sometimes more, sometimes fewer; and the two sexes are in about equal number.

When the resident officers, attendants, and servants are included, the population of the two establishments is about 700.

For some time after the Hospital and House were settled in the parish of St. George they were supplied by the Lambeth Waterworks Company. The water, which deposited an abundant muddy sediment was very bad, and hardly fit for use, the supply being also precarious and insufficient. The governors being determined to remedy this evil, caused artesian wells to be sunk on the premises, and all the water used in both establishments for every purpose is now derived from a boring carried to the depth of 220 feet. Nothing but this pure kind of water has been used for nearly thirty years.

There has not been a single case of Cholera in the Hospital or House of Occupations either in the two former epidemics of 1832 and 1849 or in the present, although the disease has prevailed extensively in the parish of St. George, and many cases have occurred in the streets most nearly adjoining the establishments.

It must, however, be observed that there have been cases of diarrhoea in both institutions in each of the three epidemics; and two or three have occurred in Bethlem within the last few days with a severity of symptoms justly entitling them to be called choleraic.

The new comers both in the Hospital and House exhibit almost invariably, within a short time after their arrival, a marked improvement in health and appearance. The inmates of the latter are singularly healthy, almost free from attacks of active or serious disease, not plagued with scrofula, and affording very little occupation to their medical attendant. Since the year 1830 there have been only four deaths among the boys, and five among the girls.

WM. LAWRENCE.

Whitehall Place, Sept. 27, 1854.