

WORKHOUSES (IRELAND).

ABSTRACT of a RETURN to an ORDER of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 15 March 1847;—for,



A COPY “ of the REPORTS made to the BOARD OF HEALTH in *Dublin*, by the
Medical Officers sent to inquire into the State of the WORKHOUSES in *Cork*,
Bantry, and *Lurgan*.”

Board of Health Office, Dublin, }
27 March 1847.

ARTHUR MOORE,
Secretary.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed, 31 March 1847.

CORK UNION.

Cork Union

REPORT from Dr. *Stephens* to the BOARD OF HEALTH, on the CORK
WORKHOUSE.

Sir,

Cork, 17 February 1847.

I HAVE the honour to state, for the information of the Central Board of Health, that in obedience to their orders I visited the Cork Workhouse with the least possible delay after having received them, and having made inquiry on the character of the disease prevalent therein, and on the points mentioned, I now beg to enclose, for the satisfaction of the Commissioners, the document marked No. 1, with reference to the ages of patients who died within the week specified, ending 30th January, the duration of their stay in the workhouse previous to death, and the nature of their diseases. The document, marked No. 2, contains the cubic feet allowed to each inmate in the sick and healthy wards.

In addition to these, I send a return of cases of sickness, and the mortality of the two succeeding weeks, which I considered might be interesting to the Commissioners, if not already before them.

The causes of this mortality, I apprehend, will be found to arise, in the first place, in the utterly wretched and deplorable condition of those lately admitted into the workhouse; many in a dying state, or in a state surely leading to death; in the next place, the overcrowded state of the house at any time must be unfavourable to health, but under existing circumstances peculiarly so, from the state of the house as to the want of proper and sufficient ventilation, imperfect and deficient sewerage, and the vitiation of the atmosphere, within and without the house, from the existence of depôts of filth of all kinds immediately adjoining the house, and diffusing, even in the present weather, a stench almost insupportable, and of the most disgusting character. Upon these and other points I beg leave respectfully to direct the attention of the Commissioners to the information with reference to them, furnished by Mr. Burke from the examination of the officers of the house yesterday.

I have to bespeak the favourable consideration of the Board as to the hurried manner in which this Report must appear to be in, as I am just setting out for Bantry.

To A. Moore, Esq.
Board of Health Office.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Rich^d Stephens.*

Cork Union.

Enclosures in Dr. *Stephens'* REPORT.

(No. 1.)

ADULT MALES, SCHOOL BOYS, AND INFANTS.

- No. 1. Small Pox Ward: Acute cases, 4; convalescent, 14; marasmus, 3: total, 21.
 No. 2. School Boys' Fever Ward: Fever, 33; dysentery after fever, 10: total, 43.
 No. 3. Infant Ward: Measles, 6; convalescent, 10; fever, 9: total, 25.
 No. 4 & 5. Medical and Surgical Wards: Dysentery, 8; phthisis, 4; paralysis, 1; bronchitis, 7; chronic incurable diseases, 17.
 No. 6. Adult Fever Ward: Fevers, 89, of whom 36 are dangerously ill.
 Former Lock Ward, at present Children's Fever Ward: Fever, 34, of whom 3 are in marasmus and 20 convalescent.
 No. 8. Male Adult Infirm Ward: Aged and infirm, 68; chronic ulcers, 17.
 Infirm Infant Wards: No. 1, 19 children; No. 2, 56 ditto; No. 3, 27 ditto; No. 4, 30 ditto; No. 9, 33 ditto: total, 165.
 Small-pox Convalescent Ward, No. 8: 11 infants.

Fever adult convalescent not in hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33
Boys' fever convalescent not in hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	136
Infirm men not in hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77
								<u>246</u>
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	246

In addition to the above there are 70 patients affected with fever, more or less severe, detained in the lower house for want of accommodation in the workhouse, properly so called.

Age of Patients who died week ending 30 January 1847.

Under 2 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24
2 years to 5 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
5 " to 13 "	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
13 " to 50 "	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
50 " to 60 "	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
60 " and upwards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
								<u>91</u>
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	91

Duration of their stay in the Workhouse before death:

Under a week	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Under a fortnight	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Under three weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21
Under a month	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
Under two months	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Under three months	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Under six months	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Over six months	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28
								<u>91</u>
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	91

We refer Dr. *Stephens* as to the cause of mortality and the means of arresting its further progress, to our evidence given before him on yesterday, and our report read on last Monday.

(No. 2.)

CORK UNION.

RETURN showing dimensions of WARDS not in Charge of Medical Officer, and the Number of Cubic Feet of Air Allowed each Person.

Number of Ward.	DIMENSIONS.	Occupied by at Present.	Cubit Feet of Air each.	Supposed to Accommodate.	Number of Ward.	DIMENSIONS.	Occupied by at Present.	Cubit Feet of Air each.			
1	50 × 18 × 10	-	38	225	40						
3	40 × 18 × 10	-	42	224	30						
4	60 × 18 × 10	-	57	180	40						
5	60 × 18 × 10	-	50	200	40						
8	40 × 18 × 10	-	29	225	30						
9	50 × 18 × 10	-	43	225	40						
10	100 × 18 × 10	-	81	225	80						
11	40 × 18 × 10	-	50	144	40						
12	50 × 18 × 10	-	45	200	30						
13	150 × 16 × 10	-	183	126	134						
14	40 × 18 × 10	-	79	179	30						
15	50 × 18 × 10	-	96	196	40						
16	100 × 18 × 10	-	186	186	140						
21	50 × 18 × 10	-	30	230	30						
22	60 × 18 × 10	-	75	160	40						
19	60 × 18 × 10 child ⁿ	-	97	120	60						
	Dining hall used as day room and dormitory for girls, 140—34—20	-	505	195	—						
	TOTAL	-	1,686								
Males:					Hospital:						
Boys from five years to fifteen years.	1	60 × 18 × 10	-	96	113	60	1	115 × 18 × 10	-	84	240
	2	60 × 18 × 10	-	104	110	60	2	115 × 18 × 10	-	88	240
	3	50 × 18 × 10	-	79	115	50	3	115 × 18 × 10	-	130	160
	4	Hall 50 × 32 × 10	-	144	112	—	4	115 × 18 × 10	-	68	300
	TOTAL	-	423				5	50 × 18 × 10	-	44	200
Adult males.	5	40 × 18 × 10	-	35	220	30	6	50 × 18 × 10	-	26	350
	7	100 × 18 × 10	-	108	169	80	7	30 × 18 × 10	-	16	340
	8	50 × 18 × 10	-	32	230	40	8	30 × 18 × 10	-	22	250
	9	Halls	-	252	200	—	9	30 × 18 × 10	-	17	240
		TOTAL	-	427				10	30 × 18 × 10	-	12
Lower House, Sick:					Lower House, Healthy Patients:						
							1	45 × 20 × 10	-	50	180
							2	45 × 20 × 10	-	37	245
							Lodge	45 × 20 × 10	-	48	200
							Board room	30 × 20 × 12	-	30	240
							Fever ward	18 × 14 × 12	-	23	133
							Lunatic ward	40 × 15 × 9	-	18	300
							5	36 × 20 × 12	-	32	260
							6	30 × 20 × 12	-	32	225
							Nursery	80 × 20 × 9	-	204	100
							"	30 × 12 × 10	-	32	120
							"	12 × 12 × 10	-	22	100
							"	12 × 8 × 10	-	12	80
							Aged wards	65 × 10 × 12	-	77	200
Able bodied -	95 × 15 × 10	-	122	130	80						

17 February 1847.

George Carr, Accountant and Storekeeper, Cork Union.

Cork Union.

(No. 3.)

MEDICAL WEEKLY REPORT for the 6th February 1847 :

Number in hospital on last Board day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	456
Then and since admitted	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	252
								708
Then and since discharged	-	-	-	-	-	-	44	
Died	-	-	-	-	-	-	127	
								171
								537

Number of infirm patients on Saturday, 6 February 1847 : 826.

MEDICAL WEEKLY REPORT for the 13th February 1847 :

Number in hospital on last Board day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	537
Then and since admitted	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	331
								868
Then and since discharged	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	
Died	-	-	-	-	-	-	164	
								314
TOTAL Remaining	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	554

Number of infirm patients on Saturday, 13 February 1847 : 889.

Deaths for present Week :

On Sunday, 14 February	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27
On Monday, 15 "	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
On Tuesday, 16 "	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	63

By order of Drs. Popham and O'Connor.

(No. 4.)

No. 1. Female Lock Ward :

16 patients ; 3 windows ; 3 ventilators.

Diseases : 9 syphilis ; 4 diarrhœa ; 1 anasarca ; 2 phthisis.

No. 4. Children's Fever Ward :

67 patients ; 15 beds ; 6 windows ; 1 ventilator.

Diseases : 12 marasmus from fever, 8 of these have diarrhœa ; 52 in mild fever.

Nos. 2 & 3. Female Medical Wards :

40 patients ; 32 beds ; 7 windows ; 3 ventilators.

Diseases : 10 diarrhœa ; 2 cholera ; 3 phthisis ; 5 bronchitis ; 20 various chronic diseases.

Lying-in Hospital :

12 women ; 8 children (4 still-born or premature) ; 9 beds ; 2 rooms ; 4 windows ; 3 ventilators.

Nos. 5 & 6. Female Fever Hospital :

125 fever patients ; 45 beds ; 18 windows.

Penitentiary :

41 patients ; 20 beds ; 2 windows ; 3 ventilators.
10 syphilis ; remainder healthy.

No. 7. Hospital infirm :

68 patients ; 41 beds ; 16 windows ; attached to this is an apartment used for heating diet.

No. 13. Workhouse Department ;

Room for dining-hall.

125 occupants ; 43 beds ; 7 windows ; occupied by females more or less infirm.

No. 4. Infirm.

100 occupants ; 41 beds ; 9 windows ; 1 ventilator ; occupied by infirm women.

No. 6. Infirm.

42 occupants ; 21 beds ; 4 windows ; 1 ventilator.

No. 19. Children's Infirm Ward, or Convalescents :

82 occupants or patients ; 25 beds ; 5 windows ; 5 ventilators.

No. 20. Children's Infirm Ward :

78 patients ; 20 beds ; 5 windows ; 5 ventilators.

SECOND REPORT from Dr. *Stephens* to the BOARD of HEALTH on the
Cork Workhouse.

Sir,

Bandon, 18 February 1847.

IN the hurried letter which I had the honour of transmitting to you yesterday, written as I was just about to leave for this town on my way to Bantry, I endeavoured to supply the information required by the Central Board of Health, as stated in the letter of their instructions. I now take advantage of the short time before the departure of the coach, to submit to the notice and consideration of the Poor Law Commissioners the circumstances and state of the Cork Workhouse on the occasion of my visits to it.

On coming to the entrance-door of it, I first met a dense crowd of unhappy, wretched, and sickly looking beings, almost wedged together, who, when inquiring about, I was informed were persons seeking admission to see their friends and relatives, inmates of the house ; they were obliged to remain in this state for a long time, waiting for their turn, and rushing in upon the door being opened ; this I considered as injurious, both to themselves and the inmates of the house, bearing with them as they did the seeds of contagion, and thus increasing the amount of evil already existing.

When entering the house, all appeared to be in a state of confusion, no order ; indeed it might be said, that it was in a completely chaotic state ; the first place I entered was what had been the school-room for boys, but I was informed there had not been school for some weeks ; it has been converted into a dormitory.

Cork Union.

There were in it at the time of my visit on Sunday, at three o'clock, 150 boys; 102 slept in it the preceding night; for this number there were 24 beds; six generally slept together; length of the ward 45 feet by 30 in breadth; the air at this hour very impure; the beds and bedding are piled up in a heap.

The ordinary hall is now converted into a dormitory, 700 persons sleeping and eating in it every day; 600 slept in it the night before, for whom there are 130 beds; ages five to 13 years; five of the age from five to nine years sleep together, four of the age of 13; the beds piled up at nine in the morning, and laid down at six o'clock in the evening; a ceiling has been made in the dining-hall, forming a ward for 105 aged and infirm inmates. The ward is low, being close to the roof; 105 slept in it; the beds are quite close to one another, and the windows in it were not opened since it was first used on Wednesday last.

The female school-room is now used as a nursery for children with their mothers. No. 1 ward for children, 15 beds for 35. No. 2 for children in care of their parents, 21 beds for 72 persons; inside ward, 15 beds for 31 persons. No. 4, 17 beds for 37 children and 17 women. The general aspect of the children, unhealthy and drooping. No. 4, female infirm ward, 41 beds for 123; the beds quite too close; 30 remained sick in bed, the remainder sitting in the ward. No. 7, convalescent ward, five beds for 120 persons; all had been in fever, either in the hospital of the house, or in the Fever Hospital in the town; 45 beds for 120 persons; the beds so close to each other, that not another could be added; it is entirely overcrowded. From the description given of these wards, the condition of the rest may be understood. I visited every one in the house, and took notes of them, which I can forward if wished for. The female side of the house is much more crowded than the male side, and is in a much cleaner and orderly state.

The ventilation of the house is very deficient, the position of the windows appearing to me very unsuited to the purpose. They are so low that the wind blows directly on the patients, whose beds are immediately under them; the atmosphere of the wards generally may be judged of, in the first place, from the numbers congregated in them; and in the next place, when it is known that all the discharges of the inmates are retained in the wards in buckets which are carried through the corridors in the morning, diffusing a stench most disgusting, which continues until a late hour of the day.

The sewerage of the house is in a most objectionable state, leading to a state of things most revolting, and so disgusting that I will not here enter upon it. Some details on the subject will be found in Mr. Burke's notes of the inquiry I deemed it advisable to enter upon with reference to the condition of the house. I must also refer to them on other points, as to diet, &c., which time will not now permit me to enlarge upon. I have here to remark that additions to the building are in progress of erection which are likely to interfere with the present state of ventilation, and so far increase the existing evil.

I visited the old workhouse, which constitutes a part of the union workhouse; it contains about 1,200 women; the air, upon entering it, is found at once to be most offensive, from a most abominable arrangement not necessary further to advert to here.

I have been requested to attend the meeting of the Board of Guardians on Monday next in Cork, which I hope to be able to do. I write this in Bantry, where I arrived this evening, having commenced it in Bandon this morning, where, as it may be perceived, the stationery is very indifferent, but which I thought it better to use than delay this report, written under every disadvantage.

I have to offer every apology for presenting such a document as this appears to be; in truth I could not transcribe it in time for the post in this distant quarter.

A. Moore, Esq.,
Board of Health Office.

I have, &c.
(signed) R. Stephens.

BANTRY UNION.

REPORT from Dr. *Stephens* to the BOARD OF HEALTH on the BANTRY WORKHOUSE.

Sir,

Bantry, 20 February 1847.

Bantry Union.

I HAVE the honour to state for the information of the Central Board of Health, that pursuant to their orders I visited the Bantry Workhouse yesterday, and made inquiry into the character of the sickness prevalent in it, also as to the ages of patients who died within the week ended the 6th instant, the duration of their stay in the workhouse previous to death, the state of the house as to ventilation and the diet and drink for the sick, together with the number of cubic feet allowed to each inmate in the sick and healthy wards.

With reference to the workhouse, I find it clean and orderly; the wards are spacious, and not having the number of beds they are capable of accommodating without inconvenience; the air of the house generally good, with the exception of the male infirm ward, in which the air was most impure from want of ventilation, as also the male dormitories for boys from six to ten years of age, whose habits are filthy; the same to be said of the female day-room, which is also a nursery for children and their mothers; the air of this room was most impure, the women being very inattentive to the habits of decency, which the matron, who is herself most orderly, finds it very difficult to make them observe.

The enclosed paper contains the ages of patients, their stay in the house, and the number of cubic feet allowed to each lunatic.

Language would fail to give an adequate idea of the state of the Fever Hospital; such an appalling, awful, and heart-sickening condition as it presented I never witnessed, or could think possible to exist in a civilised or Christian community. As I entered the house, the stench that proceeded from it, and prevailed through it, was most dreadful and noisome; but oh, what scenes presented themselves to my view as I proceeded through the wards and passages: patients lying on straw, naked, and in their excrements, a slight covering thrown over them; in two beds, living beings beside the dead in the same bed with them, and dead since the night before. I saw a woman who had been delivered but four days, almost expiring, with her wretched infant nearly suffocated; I administered at once wine, and had warmth applied, as there had been no medical attendant appointed during the illness of Dr. Tisdall, one of the medical men of the town, I was told had been there two days before; no medicine, no drink, in dirt, no fire, the unhappy beings who were able to express their wants crying out for drink; water, water, asked for, but no one to give it to them; others crying out for something to eat, as they said they were starved; many imploring to be taken out of it as they were not sick, but weak; thirty soon were found fit to be removed. The prevailing disease is dysentery, rendered highly contagious from the fetid state of the several wards. The wards are saturated with wet and ordure, the walls marked with the same. No nurses in the house except one of the paupers, totally unfit for the duties, every person being afraid to enter what was considered a pest-house; it is useless to enlarge or dwell further upon this revolting subject. I directed the clerk of the union to bring to the board room any guardian or guardians he could find; three came, and in the presence of the chaplains of the house, and the master and matron, I laid before them the state of things I had just witnessed, with feelings I will not attempt to describe, and stated to them what should be done to arrest the frightful evil so widely spreading. In the yard, filthy beds and bedding were heaped up and allowed to remain there; the same state of things in the infirmary, where dysentery was almost universal.

The supply of water for the workhouse is by means of being carried by women; the want of it at present was great, from the great increase of washing. It is said to be not good; it is impregnated with iron, and much disliked.

Having done all that was possible for me to do here, I purpose to proceed to Cork, to attend the meeting of the Board of Guardians there on Monday, after which I shall proceed to Mitchelstown, where I hope to be on Tuesday to comply with the wishes of the Central Board of Health.

I have, &c.
(signed) *R. Stephens.*

A. Moore, Esq.

Bantry Union.

Enclosures in Dr. *Stephens'* REPORT ON BANTRY WORKHOUSE.

NUMBER of DEATHS Fifty-six, for the Week ending 6 February 1847, with their respective Ages and Time in Workhouse.

NAMES.	AGES.	Time Spent in Workhouse.	NAMES.	AGES.	Time Spent in Workhouse.
	<i>Years.</i>			<i>Years.</i>	
1	70	4 days.	29	2	6 days.
2	3	7 weeks.	30	4	4 months.
3	5	8 days.	31	50	16 days.
4	40	1 day.	32	5	3½ months.
5	10	12 days.	33	8	2½ "
6	3½	12 "	34	14	16 days.
7	32	29 "	35	5	23 "
8	2	19 "	36	60	2 "
9	80	6 "	37	1	20 "
10	39	2½ months.	38	1½	15 "
11	½	8 days.	39	5	24 "
12	40	2 "	40	57	3 "
13	12	1½ months.	41	6	8¾ months.
14	6	3¼ "	42	74	3¾ "
15	7	10 days.	43	10	7 days.
16	50	13 "	44	36	3¾ months.
17	1	13 "	45	14	5½ "
18	2½	28 "	46	4½	17 days.
19	1½	3 months.	47	1	16 "
20	60	22 days.	48	¼	2¾ months.
21	8	22 "	49	¾	6¾ "
22	13	3½ months.	50	1¼	3¼ "
23	11	3 days.	51	1½	1¼ "
24	10	1½ years.	52	½	23 days.
25	20	1 day.	53	70	3¼ months.
26	5	1½ months.	54	10	1½ "
27	40	14 days.	55	3	8 days.
28	13	39 "	56	3	1½ months.

BANTRY WORKHOUSE.

	Measure-ment.	Inmates.	Cubic Feet.		Measure-ment.	Inmates.	Cubic Feet.
Old Women's Day Room :				Old Men's Day Room :			
Height	- - 12	} 90	—	Height	- - 12	} 48	—
Length	- - 38			Length	- - 38		
Breadth	- - 16½			Breadth	- - 16½		
Girls' School :				Boys' School :			
Height	- - 12	} 78	—	Height	- - 12	} 60	—
Length	- - 46			Length	- - 46		
Breadth	- - 16			Breadth	- - 16		
Old Women's Ward, No. 1 :				Old Men's Ward, No. 1 :			
Height	- - 12	} 18	—	Height	- - 12	} 14	—
Length	- - 36			Length	- - 36		
Breadth	- - 16			Breadth	- - 16		

BANTRY WORKHOUSE—continued.

Bantry Union.

—	Measurement.	Inmates.	Cubic Feet.	—	Measurement.	Inmates.	Cubic Feet.
Old Women's Ward, No. 2 :				Old Men's Ward, No. 2 :			
Height	- - 11	} 22	—	Height	- - 11	} 14	—
Length	- - 36 $\frac{1}{2}$			Length	- - 36 $\frac{1}{2}$		
Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{3}{4}$			Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{3}{4}$		
Ditto Ward, No. 3 :				Ditto Ward, No. 3 :			
Height	- - 11	} 24	—	Height	- - 11	} 14	—
Length	- - 38 $\frac{1}{2}$			Length	- - 38		
Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{1}{2}$			Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{1}{2}$		
Ditto Ward, No. 4 :				Ditto Ward, No. 4 :			
Height	- - 11	} 26	—	Height	- - 11	} 6	—
Length	- - 36 $\frac{1}{2}$			Length	- - 36 $\frac{1}{2}$		
Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{1}{2}$			Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{1}{2}$		
		90				48	

WORKHOUSE SLEEPING WARDS.

—	Feet.	Inmates.	Cubic Feet.	—	Feet.	Inmates.	Cubic Feet.
Front Dormitory :				Back Dormitory :			
Height	- - 11	} 48	—	Height	- - 11	} 20	—
Length	- - 73			Length	- - 55		
Breadth	- - 17			Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{1}{2}$		
No. 1, Girls' Ward :				No. 1, Boys' Ward :			
Height	- - 11	} 39	—	Height	- - 11	} 20	—
Length	- - 46			Length	- - 46		
Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{3}{4}$			Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{3}{4}$		
No. 2, Girls' Ward :				No. 2, Boys' Ward :			
Height	- - 11	} 48	—	Height	- - 11	} 20	—
Length	- - 46			Length	- - 46		
Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{3}{4}$			Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{3}{4}$		
Female Dormitory, No. 5 :				Male Dormitory, No. 5 :			
Height	- - 11	} 18	—	Height	- - 11	} 17	—
Length	- - 38			Length	- - 38		
Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{1}{2}$			Breadth	- - 16 $\frac{1}{2}$		
		163				77	

Bantry Union.

BANTRY WORKHOUSE INFIRMARY.

	Feet.	Inmates in each.	Cubic Feet to each.		Feet.	Inmates in each.	Cubic Feet to each.
Male Side, Ground Floor :				Upstairs :			
Height - -	11 $\frac{3}{4}$	} 25	169	Height - -	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	} 17	217
Length - -	21 $\frac{1}{2}$			Length - -	21 $\frac{1}{2}$		
Breadth - -	16 $\frac{3}{4}$			Breadth - -	16 $\frac{3}{4}$		
Small ditto :				Small ditto :			
Height - -	11 $\frac{3}{4}$	} 3	672	Height - -	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	} 23	87 $\frac{3}{4}$
Length - -	10 $\frac{3}{4}$			Length - -	11 $\frac{3}{4}$		
Breadth - -	12 $\frac{3}{4}$			Breadth - -	16 $\frac{3}{4}$		
Female Side, Ground Floor :				Small ditto :			
Height - -	11 $\frac{3}{4}$	} 20	211 $\frac{1}{2}$	Height - -	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	} 25	147 $\frac{3}{4}$
Length - -	21 $\frac{1}{2}$			Length - -	21 $\frac{1}{2}$		
Breadth - -	16 $\frac{3}{4}$			Breadth - -	16 $\frac{3}{4}$		
				Lobby :			
				Height - -	- -	} 5	-
				Length - -	- -		
				Breadth - -	- -		
		48				85	
						48	
				Total - - 133 in Infirmary.			

FEVER HOSPITAL.

	Feet.	Inmates.	Cubic Feet.		Feet.	Inmates.	Cubic Feet.
				Upstairs :			
Height - -	11	} 25	-	Height - -	12	} 33	-
Length - -	24 $\frac{1}{2}$			Length - -	24 $\frac{1}{2}$		
Breadth - -	17			Breadth - -	17		
Female Side :				Small ditto :			
Height - -	11	} 37	-	Height - -	12	} 25	-
Length - -	24 $\frac{1}{2}$			Length - -	24 $\frac{1}{2}$		
Breadth - -	17			Breadth - -	17		
		62				58	

LURGAN UNION.

REPORT from Dr. *Smith* to the BOARD OF HEALTH, ON LURGAN
WORKHOUSE.

IN accordance with the directions of the Commissioners of Health, dated February 8, 1847, requiring me to proceed to Lurgan, to visit the Lurgan Workhouse, and report to the Board of Health on the character of the disease at present prevalent there, and on the following points:

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1. Ages of patients who had died within the week ending February 6, 1847;
2. Duration of their stay in the workhouse previous to death;
3. State of the house as to ventilation, and the diet and drink for the sick;
4. Number of cubic feet allowed to each inmate in the sick and healthy wards;

and generally to report as to the cause of the mortality, and the means most likely to arrest its further progress,—I proceeded to Lurgan upon the morning of the 10th February, and upon the following morning met at the workhouse Lord Lurgan and two or three other members of the Board of Guardians.

With reference to the first and second subjects of investigation mentioned above, I subjoin a Table, which shows the names and ages of the 95 patients who died within the week ending February 6, 1847, the duration of their stay in the house previous to their death, their state upon admission, and the nature of the disease of which they died; from which it appears that

- 9 were above 60.
- 9 were between 40 and 60.
- 12 were between 20 and 40.
- 2 were between 15 and 20.
- 8 were between 10 and 15.
- 17 were between 5 and 10.
- 38 were between a few days and 5.

Of these 95, 52 were healthy at the time of their admission into the workhouse; 8 had dysentery; 19 were stated by the physician to have been labouring under bowel complaints, accompanying dentition; 10 had fever; 2 were in consumption; 1 paralytic; 1 bronchitis; 1 anasarca and diarrhœa, and 1 caries of the spine.

Of the 52 who were healthy at the time of their being admitted into the house, 27 died of dysentery, 8 of diarrhœa accompanying measles; 14 of diarrhœa accompanying dentition, 1 of cerebral disease (nature not stated), and 2 of fevers. The duration of their stay in the workhouse previous to the commencement of their illness, and also the duration of the disease of which they died, are given as follows:—

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No.	Period in the House before Illness.	Duration of the Illness.	No.	Period in the House before Illness.	Duration of the Illness.
1	13 days - - -	13 days.	27	7 days - - -	13 days.
2	7 weeks (nearly) -	23 "	28	11 " - - -	16 "
3	11 months (nearly) -	7 "	29	26 " - - -	22 "
4	7 weeks (nearly) -	11 "	30	29 " - - -	19 "
5	5 " - - -	15 "	31	5 weeks (nearly) -	1 month.
6	7 months - - -	19 "	32	2 days - - -	23 days.
7	5 " - - -	1 month.	33	1 week - - -	14 "
8	14 days - - -	1 "	34	1 month - - -	20 "
9	8½ months (nearly) -	27 days.	35	5 weeks - - -	10 "
10	3 weeks (nearly) -	8 "	36	9 weeks (nearly) -	23 "
11	2½ years - - -	12 "	37	4 months - - -	16 "
12	12½ months - - -	14 "	38	4½ months - - -	3 "
13	6 days - - -	12 "	39	8 days - - -	21 "
14	7 weeks - - -	14 "	40	9 weeks (nearly) -	16 "
15	7 weeks (nearly) -	13 "	41	12 months - - -	17 "
16	3 " - - -	9 "	42	5 weeks - - -	20 "
17	8½ months (nearly) -	14 "	43	6 " - - -	18 "
18	7 weeks - - -	21 "	44	1 month - - -	24 "
19	17 days - - -	9 "	45	1 month (nearly) -	25 "
20	3 weeks - - -	17 "	46	2 years (nearly) -	19 "
21	3 " - - -	14 "	47	7 days - - -	19 "
22	1 " - - -	16 "	48	3 months - - -	22 "
23	1 " - - -	16 "	49	2½ " - - -	19 "
24	1 month - - -	19 "	50	2½ " - - -	21 "
25	8 days - - -	3 "	51	6 weeks (nearly) -	11 "
26	13 " - - -	10 "	52	10 months (nearly) -	22 "

With respect to the remaining 43 who were ill at the time of their admission into the workhouse, the following Table gives the period which elapsed between the date of their admission and the time of their death :—

No.	Period from Date of Admission to Date of Death.	No.	Period from Date of Admission to Date of Death.
1	3 days.	23	27 days.
2	29 "	24	6 "
3	11 "	25	8 "
4	11 "	26	2 "
5	11 "	27	23 "
6	10 "	28	15 "
7	27 "	29	6 weeks.
8	25 "	30	6 "
9	25 "	31	3 months.
10	25 "	32	8 weeks.
11	13 "	33	15 days.
12	5 weeks.	34	2 "
13	10 days.	35	19 "
14	11 "	36	24 "
15	19 "	37	6 "
16	8 "	38	36 "
17	13 "	39	7 weeks.
18	11 "	40	22 days.
19	13 "	41	1 "
20	20 "	42	2 "
21	17 "	43	14 "
22	5 weeks.		

NUMBER of Cubic Feet allowed to each Inmate in the Sick and Healthy Wards.

The following Statement, of course, has reference to the Condition of the Wards, as regards the Number of Occupants in each of them, at the time of my Visit:—

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The Fever Hospital contains four wards and 56 beds.

No. 1 contains 14 beds, in which there were 16 people, 331 cubic feet to each.

No. 2 contains 13 beds, in which there were 21 people, eight adults and 13 children, 252 cubic feet to each.

No. 3 contains 15 beds, in which there were 16 people, 306 cubic feet to each.

No. 4 contains 14 beds, in which there were 14 people, 350 cubic feet to each.

Infirmary.

What was once the Idiot department is now filled with patients suffering under fever and dysentery; the former occupants, who do not, as I was informed, amount to a dozen, being placed in other parts of the institution. Ground-floor, female side of Idiot department, No. 1, consists of three cells, opening into a front room; each cell contained three children in measles, 234 cubic feet to each. The front room contained four adults, 500 cubic feet to each.

No. 2, an inspector's room, a small dark apartment, now used as a day-room for convalescent patients.

No. 3 contained seven beds and 14 fever patients, nine adults and five children, 315 cubic feet to each.

First-floor—Two wards, one containing nine patients, 157 cubic feet to each; the other, used as a convalescent fever ward, has 15 beds, but only six patients, 560 cubic feet to each bed.

Male Side.—No. 1, 12 beds; 26 patients in dysentery, principally children, 178½ cubic feet to each; seven of the beds contain three patients each.

Nos. 2 & 4, Day Rooms.—No. 3, 12 beds, 28 patients, dysentery, 160 cubic feet to each.

The Convalescent Ward upon this side contained only three patients.

Of two wards upstairs, one was occupied by a wardmaster; the other contained 11 beds and 19 patients, 235 cubic feet to each.

Female Side of Infirmary.

No. 1, 13 patients, 156 cubic feet to each.

No. 2, 11 beds and 28 patients, 80 cubic feet to each. One bed has four patients in it.

No. 3, 14 beds, 27 patients, 76 cubic feet to each; six adults and 21 children.

Aged Female Ward—No. 1, 13 patients, 193 cubic feet to each; dysentery.

Ditto - - ditto - No. 2, 28 patients, 180 cubic feet to each; dysentery.

Aged Male Ward.—No. 1, used as a day-room.

Ditto - ditto - No. 2, 28 patients, 180 cubic feet to each; dysentery.

Ditto - ditto - No. 3, 9 patients, 516 cubic feet to each; dysentery.

Aged Male Dormitory.—No. 1, 23 people, 301 cubic feet to each.

Ditto - ditto - - No. 2, now used as a store-room for beds.

Boys' Dormitory.—Thirteen inmates, 441 cubic feet to each.

School Boys' Dormitory.—No. 1, 16 beds, 32 inmates, 207 cubic feet to each.

Ditto - ditto - - No. 2, 11 beds, 22 inmates, 301 cubic feet to each.

Two dormitories for female children, each containing 17 beds, and 34 inmates; 195 cubic feet to each.

A Female Sleeping Ward, 12 beds, 24 inmates, 193 cubic feet to each.

Ditto - - ditto - - 19 inmates, 140 cubic feet to each.

A Fever Shed for Females, 17 patients, 354 cubic feet to each.

Ditto - - for Males, 14 beds, 31 patients, 22 children and nine adults, 190 cubic feet.

With respect to the sick wards, as regards their ventilation and cleanliness, and the comfort of the patients, I regret to be obliged to report unfavourably. There are four wards in the Idiot department that are without any flooring but the earth, and in two of them there are no bedsteads, so that the beds lie up on the damp ground. One of them (in which at the time of my visit two wretched creatures were dying) was in an exceedingly foul condition; in one corner a pile of old

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filthy clothes, shoes, &c.; in another a large heap of straw; in another place a quantity of coals scattered about; the ventilation very imperfect. It presented altogether a picture of neglect and discomfort, such as I have never seen in any other charitable institution.

Generally speaking, the floors and walls of the ward in the infirmary were in a very discreditable condition; the windows were almost universally closed, the atmosphere close and foul, and the smell upon entering the rooms most offensive.

A long period has elapsed since some of the wards were whitewashed: I was told that it could not be done while there were patients in them, and also that no person could be got to do it, from fear of infection. The inmates of one of the wards, the walls of which were particularly dirty, applied to me to have the white-washers sent in.

In some of the dysenteric wards, I observed that the chamber utensils, when used, were not at once taken away and emptied. In one ward especially, a large uncovered bucket, nearly half filled with aloine discharges, was allowed to remain for hours; and I found that this was the case upon each day that I visited the ward. When I spoke of it, I was told that there had been no wardmaster for several days. One of the patients, who was able to be up, but was lame, complained that he was obliged to stay in bed day after day, because there was no person to bring him crutches. I observed in other wards also a want of attendants to look after the comfort of the patients, and the cleanliness and ventilation of the wards.

In another part of the infirmary I found, lying upon the lobby into which several wards opened, the bodies of two females, who had been eight hours dead.

There was a great want of night-chairs in most of the sick wards, and I do not recollect seeing in any of them a table or anything upon which to place the medicines or drink for the patients; in many of them the floor served the purpose, and in such especially the boards were in a filthy state. I was told there were no presses in which to keep the clothes of the patients.

The physician informed me that the sick had frequently to lie upon damp beds and damp straw, there being no drying-room. While I was there, a large quantity of fresh straw was brought into one of the yards, and left upon the wet ground, although close beside there was a shed under which it might have been placed. In this yard I also found a number of beds upon the ground, saturated with wet.

The fever sheds, which contained 48 patients in 31 beds, are without floor; the ground was very damp; there is but little ventilation in them; in one, many of the windows open into another ward, itself badly ventilated. They were both very dirty, and most uncomfortable in appearance.

A reference to the statement, with regard to the number of cubic feet allowed for each person, will show the greatly over-crowded state of the establishment.

With respect to diet and drink, the dysenteric patients for a long time used stirabout, but this has now been given up, and a tea diet given to the adults, and milk to the children; but milk in any form does not appear to agree. For drink they are allowed toast-water and rice-water, with sugar and lemon peel; the fever patients also use lemonade. Buttermilk is given to the healthy inmates.

As regards the medical treatment of the patients, there is, as far as I am capable of judging, nothing to be desired.

It has been the custom, until very lately, to bury the dead in the immediate proximity of the Fever Hospital; many of the recent graves are scarcely four yards from the building. In the centre of this burial ground is the well from which the hospital is supplied with water; the graves were dug so close to it, that the water became muddy and unfit for use. This being represented by the physician to the Board of Guardians, at last led to the discontinuance of the practice, to which I now only allude in order to prevent its being resumed.

The physician informed me that in consequence of the crowding of the house, the supply of clothes was quite inadequate, and that it had hence become necessary to use the linen of some of those who had died of fever and dysentery, without time having been afforded to have it washed and dried; and that from the same cause, damp beds had in many instances been made use of.

From the foregoing statement, which I have endeavoured to make as accurate as possible, it is not difficult to deduce the causes of the mortality which has lately devastated the Lurgan Workhouse, and which still continues.

I am willing to admit the influence of external causes, but these at present operate

operate more or less throughout the whole country, and I am not aware that the Lurgan district is more distressed than many others in which the mortality is not nearly so great. I am of opinion that the chief causes of the evil in question are internal, and the result of defective management of the institution.

The misfortune seems to date from the death of the late master, who appears to have been a most efficient officer. Four or five weeks were suffered to elapse before his successor was appointed, and during this period the house became greatly overcrowded, about 200 having been admitted more than it was capable of safely accommodating; disease then broke out in an epidemic form, but the admissions continued to take place up to the end of January, so that there was very inadequate accommodation either for the healthy or for the sick.

The infirmary having thus become crowded to such an extent as to render it necessary to put in many instances three, and in some cases four patients into one bed, appears to have fallen into confusion; and ventilation, whitewashing, and cleanliness to have been neglected, at the very time when the strictest attention to these important means of arresting the spreading of disease were most imperatively called for.

These serious omissions are to a certain extent, no doubt, attributable to the want of subordinate officers, the matron and some of the wardmasters and their assistants being ill; but although I am free to acknowledge that from this cause the physician had considerable difficulties to contend with, yet I cannot help thinking that a little more activity upon his part, and a stricter surveillance upon that of the guardians, would in some measure, at all events, have prevented the mortality which has occurred.

It appeared to me (but in this idea I may perhaps may be mistaken) that the guardians had no knowledge of the state of the infirmary as regards cleanliness, ventilation, &c., either from personal observation or otherwise. The reports of the physicians informed them of its overcrowded state, and this was the only particular about it with which they seem to be acquainted.

I have already mentioned numerous other circumstances which are calculated to produce disease, and which show that the infirmary is not looked after by its various superintendents with that degree of care which is absolutely necessary to maintain it in a wholesome condition, and that the comforts of the patients might be increased without a corresponding augmentation of expense; I need not, therefore, again allude to them further than to observe, that although some of them may be considered trifling, it should be remembered that if minor matters be neglected in a hospital, the more important ones cannot be in a sound condition; the perfection of the institution as a whole must depend upon the perfection of its details.

Having now pointed out what I conceived to have been the chief causes of the origin and continuance of the mortality at present prevailing in the Lurgan workhouse, it only remains to allude to the means most likely to succeed in checking its further progress, and I am sure that these will at once suggest themselves to the members of the Board of Health.

No admissions into the workhouse should take place until the tendency to fever and dysentery ceases, and until the rooms which may have been occupied by the sick have been properly fumigated and whitewashed.

The crowded state of the infirmary should be relieved by removing some of the patients into the workhouse, in which there are, at all events, even three rooms available.

The wards of the infirmary should all be whitewashed immediately; the floors scoured and kept perfectly clean; proper persons should be appointed to see that the wards are ventilated as well as possible; they should, for this purpose, visit the wards repeatedly during the day. The ventilation of the wards should not be left (as is too much the case at present) in the power of or optional with the patients, who will be sure to keep the windows shut, and the ventilators obstructed.

The medical attendant should daily inspect the condition of the wards, as regards ventilation and cleanliness, and at once report to the Board of Guardians any neglect that he may observe in these respects.

One of the largest wards should be emptied as fast as possible by removing the patients into the workhouse, as far as the latter will accommodate them, and the remainder into such of the other wards in the infirmary as are least crowded. This ward should then be carefully fumigated and whitewashed, and the wood-

work either painted or well scoured. It should then be supplied with fresh and dry beds and bedding. The bedsteads also should be scoured. The patients of another ward can thus be removed into it, and the second ward, thus vacated, should undergo the same process. By carrying on this system, there will always be a fresh and pure ward available.

The ventilators of many of the wards require to be improved; I would recommend inserting into one or more of the windows of such wards, in place of one of the panes, a piece of window-blind wirework of the finest description.

I am not aware of anything else to which I have to call the attention of the Board of Health, which has not been already attended to in the body of the Report; but I cannot terminate without alluding to a custom which prevails, I believe, in all the workhouses in Ireland, and which I think highly objectionable; I mean the practice of employing the paupers as nurses. They are unfit for the efficient discharge of the important duties which devolve upon them; nor have they any motive for showing kindness or attention to the sick under their charge. Regularly educated nurses should be employed and paid for their services; the patients would be better attended, and the wards kept in a more wholesome condition. The only creditable portion of the sick department of the Lurgan workhouse is the fever hospital; the beds are comfortable, the walls clean, the floors white, the wards well ventilated, and the sick well attended; and why is this? because there is a respectable, kind, and intelligent nurse at the head of it.

(signed) *Robert W^m Smith, M. D.*

17 February 1847.

WORKHOUSES (IRELAND).

ABSTRACT

COPY of the Reports made to the BOARD OF HEALTH in *Dublin*, by the Medical Officers sent to inquire into the State of the WORKHOUSES in *Cork, Bantry, and Lurgan*.

(*Mr. Poulett Scrope.*)

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