

THE COMMISSIONERS OF CHARITIES

OF THE

COUNTY OF KINGS, 1871.

The prejudice against the Board of Superintendents of the Poor on the one hand, and the efforts of the friends of that body on the other in its favor, was, for several years, the cause of a contest more or less intense. At length the act of April 14th, 1871, to which we have referred, gave a turn to the matter by establishing a Board known as the *Commission of Charities*. At first the advantage gained by the friends of that Commission was little more than nominal, excepting that it rendered that Board a corporation, the powers and immunities of which were very favorable to the friends of the Superintendents. The act creating the Board provides :

That the County Superintendents should hereafter be known by the above title, and all laws relating to the election and qualification for office of Superintendents of the Poor should be applicable to the new Commissioners; that the said Commissioners should each receive an annual salary of \$4,000, which should be a county charge; that the said Commissioners should be a corporation by the above name, under which they might sue and be sued, and possess the usual powers of a corporation for public purposes; that they together should constitute a Board for the relief and support of the Poor of the County of Kings, and for the government, management, maintenance and direction of the premises commonly known as the County Farm, its several institutions and buildings, property and appurtenances, etc., etc., and for the employment, relief, support and government of the persons placed thereon, etc., in various official capacities, who should hold their positions during the pleasure of said Board, etc.; and that they should, from time to time, make such rules and by-laws as necessary, etc.; and that they should have power to purchase all such articles as shall be necessary to be used in and for the relief and support of the poor of the County of Kings, and should generally possess every power and authority now possessed by the Superintendents of the Poor of the County of Kings, etc. The act further directed the time and manner of advertising for proposals for all such articles as shall be necessary for the support of the poor; gives the Commissioners power to enlarge, add to, alter, or repair the buildings or property belonging to or connected with such institutions, or any of them, etc.; provides that the Commissioners shall present to the Board of Supervisors of Kings County an account of all moneys received and expended by them during the year, and an estimate of the amount which will be necessary for their use under this act for the ensuing year; and further, that no greater amount than \$550,000 should be levied or collected during any one year for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act; it also provides that none of the Commissioners or their subordinates should ever be, directly or indirectly, interested in any contract or in any purchase or sale of supplies or articles of any description, nor in any arrangement by which any pecuniary benefit shall result to himself; directs that every pauper inmate in the institution under charge of said Commissioners, whose age and health will permit, shall be employed in getting out and breaking stone, or in cultivating the grounds, or in repairing the property in charge of the

said Commissioners, or in manufacturing, or mechanical or other labor as they can perform; also, that all buildings, land and property now under the control of the Superintendents of the Poor shall be used by said Commissioners for such purposes connected with their duties as they shall consider necessary or proper. On the 23d day of May, 1871, the sum of \$2,000 was appropriated to the use of the Commissioners for the purpose of fitting up the Gymnasium building in Brooklyn for offices and rooms for their use.

Immediately after its passage the Board began its duties, the Superintendents of the Poor already in office being members of the Board of Charities. At the annual election held November, 1871, Henry Wills and Cornelius Ferguson were elected Commissioners of Charities for the Third and Fifth Districts, being the first Commissioners of Charities elected in the county.

The first annual report of the Commissioners of Charities, together with the reports of the heads of the several departments under their control, was presented to the Supervisors at their annual meeting August 1st, 1871.

The report begins with an interesting table, showing the net expenses for the several classes cared for during the six years preceding the report, together with the average cost and probable per capita tax on the population of the county:

Year.	Estimated Population.	Net Cost for all Purposes.	Total Relieved and Supported.	Average Cost for Each Person.	Per Capita Tax on Population.
1866	312,000	\$336,827.25	36,257	\$92.80	\$1.06
1867	338,000	367,372.90	32,185	114.40	1.08
1868	362,000	463,800.61	44,734	103.40	1.02
1869	381,000	454,149.42	40,381	112.40	1.01
1870	406,000	537,024.81	46,712	114.90	1.03
1871	440,000	490,596.70	44,892	107.57	1.10

So far as the detail of cost is considered, this exhibit does not show an alarming increase for the support of the poor in the county from 1866 to 1871. In a period of six years the county had only advanced on the per capita tax four cents, while in 1867 it nearly reached the figures of 1871, and the cost of temporary relief during the same period was gradually reduced.

The report says: "We propose, this coming winter, to so manage as to bring all applicants for relief personally before us; to this end the city will be divided into eight districts by wards, a proper person will be selected for each, and no relief will be given unless reported worthy by the visitor assigned, who will be compelled every ninety days to re-examine his report."

The report contains the following table:

	Alms-house.	Hospital.	Nursery.	Asylum.	Total.
Remaining at date of last report.	747	375	428	601	2,151
Admitted and born during the year	2,121	3,962	577	355	7,015
Died and discharged during the year.....	2,204	3,991	572	315	7,082
Remaining July 31, 1871	664	346	433	641	2,084

Temporary relief: District No. 1, 14,249; No. 2, 12,133; No. 3, 8,220; No. 4, 580; No. 5, 476; number relieved, 35,658; foundlings, etc., boarded out, 68; institutions, 9,166; total number relieved, either wholly or in part, during the year ending July 31st, 1871, 44,892; average number in the institutions during year, 2,456; the highest number in the institutions during the year was on the 14th of February, 1871, 2,783; the lowest number on the 19th of July, 1871, 2,133; total amount of paid bills, \$512,128.74; total amount of receipts, \$21,532.04.

This report is signed by Henry Corr, Thos Foran, Henry Seiler, John Scott and Cornelius Ferguson, Commissioners.

Dr. Tennis Schenck, physician of the County Hospital, reports the results of treatment, during the year ending July 31st, 1871, as follows: Remaining July 31st, 1870, males, 163; females, 212; total, 375; admitted during the year, males, 2,166; females, 1,893; total, 4,059; total number under treatment, males, 2,329; females, 2,105; total, 4,434; discharged recovered, males, 1,496; females, 1,439; total, 2,935; discharged improved, males, 341; females, 242; total, 583; discharged unimproved, males, 22; females, 19; total, 41; died, males, 305; females, 224; total, 529; total number discharged and died, males, 2,164; females, 1,924; total, 4,088; remaining July 31st, 1871, males, 165; females, 181; total, 346; total number for the year ending July 31st, 1866, 3,505; for the year ending July 31st, 1867, 2,808; for the year ending July 31st, 1868, 2,613; for the year ending July 31st, 1869, 3,009; for the year ending July 31st, 1870, 3,792; for the year ending July 31st, 1871, 4,434, an increase of 642 over the total number of last year.

Dr. Edward R. Chapin, physician of the Lunatic Asylum, acknowledges his indebtedness to Mr. Gilbert Hicks, custodian of the Graham Fund, for valuable reading matter presented to the Asylum during the year, and to the proprietor of the *Brooklyn Eagle* for two copies of that paper furnished daily to the Asylum. He reports, for the year ending July 31st, 1870, patients in Asylum August 1st, 1870, males, 238; females, 364; total, 602; patients admitted during year, males, 152; females, 203; total, 355; total under treatment, males, 390; females, 567; total, 957; discharged recovered, males, 47; females, 56; total, 103; discharged improved, males, 36; females, 49; total, 85; discharged unimproved, males, 24; females, 28; total, 52; died, males, 25; females, 50; total, 75; total discharged, males, 132; females, 183; total, 315; remaining July 31st, 1871, males, 258; females, 384; total, 642; number of employees, males, 32; females, 44; total, 76.

John Driscoll, Keeper of the Nursery Department, reported especially as to the school connected with the Nursery. The whole number of children who attended this school during the year was 463, of whom 322 were boys, 141 girls; the average daily attendance during the year was 275. Of the total number who attended for any length of time, 84 studied geography, history and punctuation; 268 studied tables and arithmetic; 187 learned to write with a pen, and 81 to form figures and letters on slates; 352 studied reading and spelling, and 187

learned the alphabet and how to spell easy words on tablets. The number of children admitted to the Nursery during the year ending July 31, 1871, was:

	CHILDREN.		ADULTS.		TOTAL.
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	
Remaining July 31st, 1870.....	257	121	11	39	428
Admitted during the year.....	308	213	8	48	577
Total remaining and admitted...	565	334	19	87	1,005
Discharged during the year.....	274	186	8	53	521
Died.....	29	22	..	..	51
Total discharged and died.....	303	208	8	53	572
Remaining July 31st, 1871.....	262	126	11	34	433

At this time the officials under the Commissioners of Charities were: Dr. Tennis Schenck, resident physician of the *Kings County Hospital*; Dr. P. L. Schenck, assistant resident physician; Dr. J. L. Zabriskie, H. L. Bartlett, M.D., R. C. Stiles, M.D., and John A. Brady, M.D., consulting physicians; James Fitzgerald, steward; Mrs. Elinor Martin, matron. Dr. Edward R. Chapin, resident physician of the *Lunatic Asylum*; Dr. C. F. McDonald, assistant; James F. Scott, steward, and Mrs. M. E. Scott, matron. John Driscoll, keeper of the *Nursery*; Mrs. C. M. Driscoll, matron; Charles McLaughlin, teacher; C. L. Phelps, assistant teacher; Aaron J. Michaels, store-keeper; John A. Murtha, assistant store-keeper. The clergy of the county, although not officially connected with its poor establishment, so benevolently tendered their services that one might have easily supposed they were conscientiously and devotedly discharging their duties as official chaplains thereof.

Hostility to the new Board of Commissioners of Charities soon began to exhibit itself; the enemies of the old Board of Superintendents insisting that there were too many elements of the old Board existing in the new; and, early in February, 1872, a bill was introduced into the Legislature providing for the formation of a *Board of Charities and Corrections*. It was suggested in the said bill to place the Kings County Penitentiary under the control and management of the proposed Board of Commissioners of Charities and Corrections, and to make other sweeping changes in the management of the Poor establishment of the county. This measure was violently opposed; and, on April 29, 1872, a remonstrance was adopted by the Supervisors and Superintendents against the intended change. The bill favoring this reform was, however, ultimately defeated in the Legislature for that time.

The annual report of the Commissioners of Charities for the year ending July 31, 1872, presented August 6th, congratulates the public that from an average of the different years from 1865 to 1872, there has been a reduction on the per capita tax of of 20½ cents, and an advance in the aggregate total in seven years of only \$8,651.97. Taking into consideration the increase in the population, it was, indeed, a source of gratification that the expenses of the department had been kept within the amount appropriated to the said Commissioners. They represented that the sum of \$400,000 might answer all the requirements for the then ensuing year, and earnestly urged the enlargement of the hospital, by the erection of an additional wing. The following is the annual tabulated report of the persons in the Poor establishment for the year ending July 31, 1872:

Remaining at date of last report, almshouse, 664; hospital, 346; nursery, 433; asylum, 642; total, 2,085; admitted and born during the year, almshouse, 1,768; hospital, 4,198; nursery, 581; asylum, 367; total, 6,914; died and discharged during year, almshouse, 1,869; hospital, 4,131; nursery, 602; asylum, 3,25 total, 6,927; remaining July 31, 1872, almshouse, 563; hospital, 418; nursery, 412; asylum, 684; total, 2,072; temporary relief, 22,807; foundlings, etc., boarded out, 56; institutions, 8,999; total number relieved, wholly or in part, during the year ending July 31, 1872, 31,862; average number in the institutions during the year, 2,413; highest number during year was on April 3d, 2,821; lowest number during year was on July 3d, 2,026; total amount of paid bills, \$400,951.22; total amount of receipts, \$17,325.19.

The Board of Commissioners of Charities this year consisted of Henry Corr, Thos. Foran, Henry Wills, John J. Scott, Cornelius Ferguson.

Dr. P. L. Schenck, physician to the County Hospital for the fiscal year ending July 31, 1872, reports:

Remaining July 31, 1871, males, 165; females, 181; total, 3,346; admitted during the year, males, 2,357; females, 1,841; total, 4,198; total under treatment, males, 2,522; females, 2,022; total, 4,544; discharged recovered, males, 1,620; females, 1,270; total, 2,890; discharged improved, males, 280; females, 180; total, 460; discharged unimproved, males, 54, females, 64; total, 118; died, males, 384; females, 279; total, 663; total discharged and died, males, 2,338; females, 1,793; total, 4,131; remaining July 31, 1872, males, 184; females, 229; total, 413; total under treatment for the year ending July 31, 1872, 4,544; total under treatment for the year ending July 31, 1871, 4,434.

It will be seen by the above that there was an increase of 110 over the number treated last year. Of those discharged, 2,890, or 64 per cent. recovered; that 460, or 10 per cent., improved; that 118, or 3 per cent., did not improve; 663, or 14 per cent., died. The Doctor's report states that the small-pox prevailed to a fatal extent in the hospital during most of the year; that the total number admitted to the Small-pox Hospital during the year was 1,691, of whom 110 were mothers, acting as nurses for their children sick with the disease; 292 died of the disease; that of the 4,544 admitted to the hospital during the year, 3,535 were foreigners. The number of births in the hospital during the year was 142. The number of births in the hospital since August 1, 1852, is 2,499, 39 cases of twin births. Of these 1,533 of the mothers were from Ireland, 201 from Germany, 26 from Scotland, 553 from United States, 86 from England, etc. Of these mothers, 1,227 were married; 1,003 unmarried; 13 were widows. The total number of patients admitted to the hospital since August 1st, 1851, to July 31st, 1872, was 58,958.

Dr. Edward R. Chapin, physician of the Lunatic Asylum for the year ending July 31st, 1872, reported:

Patients in Asylum August 1, 1871, males, 258; females, 384; total, 652; patients admitted during the year, males, 168; females, 199; total, 367; whole number under treatment, males, 426, females, 583; total, 1,009; discharged recovered, males, 61; females, 64; total, 125; discharged improved, males, 33; females, 37; total, 70; discharged unimproved, males, 25; females, 31; total, 56; died, males, 40; females, 34; total, 74; whole number discharged, males, 159; females, 166; total, 325; remaining July 31st, 1872, males, 267; females, 417; total, 684; number of employees, males, 33; females, 46; total, 79.

The Doctor strongly recommended that the basement under the new wing, occupied by females, which was left unfinished when the building was enlarged three years before, should be immediately finished, as the room was very much needed.

The report of Mr. John Driscoll, keeper of the Nursery, for the year ending July 31, 1872, reported:

	CHILDREN.		ADULTS.		TOTAL.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	
Remaining July 31, 1871.....	262	126	11	34	433
Admitted during year.....	318	196	15	52	581
Total remaining and admitted.....	580	322	26	86	1,014
Discharged during year.....	304	174	17	53	548
Died during the year.....	23	31	....	....	54
Total discharged and died.....	327	205	17	53	602
Remaining on July 31, 1872.....	253	117	9	33	412

Of this total number in the Nursery during the year, 323 boys and 116 girls were attending the school in the institution; 79 studied reading, writing and spelling, punctuation, history, geography and arithmetic; 164 studied reading, writing, spelling and tables; 196 learned the alphabet and how to spell easy words. During the year there were 185 promotions. The ladies of the "Helping Hand Society," of Brooklyn, viz., Mrs. Wilder, Mrs. Pierce, Mrs. Pitts, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Rand, and the Misses Decker, Wilder, Barbor and Chadwick, were warmly commended in the report for their kind and generous attention to the pupils; as were also Mrs. Johnson and her nieces, the Misses Johnson, for pleasing, tasteful and appropriate Christmas gifts, story books, confectionery and other articles highly gratifying to the little ones.

At the annual election held in November, 1872, John Cunningham and Stephen H. Powell were elected Commissioners of Charities for the County of Kings, and on December 23 their bonds were duly approved.

The history of the transactions of the Board of Commissioners of Charities for the year ending July 31,

1873, outside of the annual report of the Board and of the resident physicians of the hospitals, and the keeper of the Nursery, is not sufficiently important to be given here.

The report speaks in the highest terms of the convenience and advantage derived from the completion of the new Almshouse; proposes other changes for the benefit of that institution; and complains of the want of power to detain a person in the Almshouse if he refuses to work.

They also animadvert strongly against the neglect of the authorities of Queens and Suffolk Counties to provide for the claims of their lunatics. "We have," says the report, "admitted a number of pay patients from these counties, not as a matter of right, but to meet, as far as possible, the claims of common humanity, but we shall soon be compelled to refuse admission to all persons not residents of our county under the full meaning of the law."

The following table shows the number of persons in the Poor establishment, the number relieved, &c., &c., during the last fiscal year:

Remaining at date of last report: Almshouse, 565; Hospital, 413; Nursey, 412; Asylum, 684; total, 2,074. Admitted and born during year: Almshouse, 1,463; Hospital, 3,108; Nursery, 520; Asylum, 322; total, 5,413. Died and discharged: Almshouse, 1,589; Hospital, 3,148; Nursery, 588; Asylum, 288, total, 5,613. Remaining July 31, 1873: Almshouse, 439; Hospital, 373; Nursery, 344; Asylum, 718; total, 1,874; Temporary relief, 25,033. Foundlings, etc., boarded out 64. Institutions, 7,487. Whole number relieved either wholly or in part during the year ending July 31, 1873, 32,584. Average number in Institutions during the year, 2,226.

The highest number in the institutions during the year was on February 11, 2,533; the lowest, June 1st, 1,892; total amount of paid bills, \$405,143.70; total amount of receipts, \$19,850.31. This report was signed by Cornelius Ferguson, John Cunningham, Henry Wills, G. H. Powell, and John J. Scott, as Commissioners of Charities.

Dr. P. L. Schenck physician of the County Hospital for the year ending July 31st, 1873, congratulates the Commissioners and the public upon the improved condition of the hospital. He says a very large number of the patients in the hospital during the year were persons who had worked in the white-lead manufactories of Brooklyn. The great increase in the number of these patients ought to be a proper subject of the health authorities. He also speaks of the great number of surgical operations in the hospital, and announces in touching language the death of Dr. R. CRESSON STILES, a member of the hospital staff, who died of pneumonia, after an illness of ten days, at the residence of his mother, at West Chester, Pa., April 17, 1873, in his 43d year. He held successively the position of assistant physician in 1854-5, resident physician in 1864-5, and upon his resignation as resident physician, received the appointment of consulting physician. As a scientific physician and microscopist, few equaled him; as a scholar and polished gentleman he was not excelled.

He reports as remaining July 31, 1872, males, 184; females, 229; total, 413; admitted during the year, males, 1,660; females, 1,448; total, 3,108; total number under treatment, males, 1,844; females, 1,677; total, 3,521; discharged recovered, males, 1,160; females, 1,091; total, 2,251; discharged improved, males, 208; females, 171; total, 379; discharged unimproved, males, 68; females, 81; total, 149; died, males, 220; females, 149; total, 369;

total discharged and died, males, 1,656; females, 1,492; total, 3,148; remaining July 31st, 1873, males, 188; females, 185; total, 373; total number under treatment for the year ending July 31st, 1872, 4,544; total number for year ending July 31st, 1873, 3,521; decrease, 1,023.

Dr. Edward B. Chapin, physician of the Lunatic Asylum for the year ending July 31st, 1873, gives a very brief but very interesting and instructive showing a very prosperous and successful state of things in that institution.

Patients in Asylum August 1st, 1872, males, 267; females, 417; total, 684; patients admitted during the year, males, 157; females, 165; total, 322; whole number under treatment, males, 424; females, 582; total, 1,006; discharged recovered, males, 56; females, 56; total, 112; discharged improved, males, 25; females, 46; total, 71; discharged unimproved, males, 23; females, 16; total, 39; died, males, 33; females, 33; total, 66; whole number discharged, males, 137; females, 151; total, 288; remaining July 31, 1873, males, 287; females, 431; total, 718; number of employees, males, 32; females, 49; total, 81.

The annual report of the County Nursery by Mr. Driscoll, the manager, gives a very encouraging account of that institution. Among other things it gives an account of the condition of the large garden attached to the Nursery, the cultivation of which, for the past year, was committed entirely to the care of the boys in the Nursery, with the exception of one man to superintend.

The report also shows the following:

	CHILDREN.		ADULTS.		TOTAL.
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	
Remaining July 31, 1872.....	253	117	9	33	412
Admitted during year.....	286	175	10	49	520
Total.....	539	292	19	82	932
Discharged during year.....	320	163	10	52	545
Died during year.....	21	21	1	..	43
Total.....	341	184	11	52	588
Remaining July 31, 1873.....	198	128	8	8	344
Decrease during year.....	..	..	..	..	68

By the Act of April 27, 1871, creating the office of Auditor in the County of Kings, it was made the duty of said Auditor to examine all bills presented against the County of Kings for payment, including all bills incurred by the Commissioners of Charities, and to certify to the Board of Supervisors the result of his examination, stating whether there was sufficient money in the treasury of said county placed to the credit of the account to which such bills were chargeable. Also, whether such bills had been incurred under due authority of law, &c. MAURICE FITZGERALD was, on May 1st, 1871, duly appointed Auditor of Kings County: thenceforth the accounts of the Commissioners of Charities were no longer examined and audited by the Supervisors, but by the Auditor of the County. The Supervisors, however, had the right of proving or disproving the acts of the Auditor. There had existed in the Board of Supervisors, until the passage of this act,

a committee termed a *Committee on Accounts of Commissioners of Charities*, to which the latter reported their accounts. Under an amendment of the act, creating the office of County Auditor, the Commissioners of Charities were required to make and present to him a monthly pay-roll for each and every month in the year. We have already referred to the feeling of hostility to the old Board of Superintendents of the Poor, which increased until that Board was abolished; but, as the functions of the Commissioners of Charities were in many respects similar to those of the old Board, the prejudice against that continued to exist against the new, until, June 22, 1874, it culminated in the presentation to the Governor and the Board of Supervisors of written charges of serious irregularities in the transaction of official business by the Commissioners of Charities, and the offering of a resolution to the Board of Supervisors directing the Committee on Accounts of Commissioners of Charities to closely investigate the management of said Commissioners, covering such period of time as the committee might deem proper, with power to send for persons and papers, and to report results to the Board as soon as possible.

Previously to this a resolution had been offered to the Board of Supervisors directing the Treasurer of the County to decline payment of all drafts upon him from the Commissioners of Charities for the present. Another resolution was adopted by the Board about this time, quite annoying to the Commissioners of Charities, pointing to a collision between the two Boards. The resolution was as follows:

“Resolved, That the Commissioners of Charities be and they are hereby instructed to purchase no intoxicating liquors, ale or wines, hereafter, for any of the public institutions, or at the public expense, without an order of this Board therefor being first had and obtained.”

By an Act of the Legislature, passed April 2d, 1874, the act creating the Board of Commissioners of Charities of Kings County was largely amended, increasing the powers of the Supervisors over them, and restricting their own powers. One of these amendments, particularly obnoxious to the Commissioners, found in section 3d of the Act of 1874, is as follows:

“All articles found necessary to be used in and for the relief and support of the poor in the County of Kings, shall be purchased, contracted for or supplied by the Board of Supervisors of Kings County.

“The section there proceeds to limit the powers of the Commissioners, compelling them to make frequent reports to the Supervisors.”

In April, 1874, bills for water furnished the County Buildings by the Department of Brooklyn City Water Works amounted to the sum of \$11,375.80, which the Commissioners of Charities had neglected to pay.

This led to an unpleasant discussion, the Commissioners alleging that it was the action of the Board of Supervisors that caused the delay in the payment of the said bill.

The difficulties connected with the Commissioners of Charities continued until Stephen H. Powell, Henry H. Wills and Cornelius Ferguson, Commissioners of Charities in the 2nd, 3rd and 5th Districts, were, on the 1st of June, 1874, tried, convicted and sentenced for malfeasance in office.

On July 1st, 1874, John A. Dix, then Governor of the State of New York, in pursuance of a statute in such case made and provided, gave the Board of Supervisors of Kings County official notice of the vacancies in the Board of Commissioners of Charities, created by the conviction, and sentence, of the said Powell, Ferguson and Wills of the crime of malfeasance in office and conspiracy. The trial of these men created great excitement in the County; it took place before the extraordinary Court of Oyer and Terminer, held in the City of Brooklyn, on the 9th day of June, 1874; Hon. Charles Daniels, one of the Justices of the Supreme Court, presiding; Hon. Barnett Johnson and Hon. Stephen J. Voorhees, associates. After a somewhat exciting trial, the jury found the said persons guilty of the crime charged in the indictment. A motion was made for a rest of judgment by the defendants' counsel, and a stay of sentence granted until June 12th, 1874, and the defendants were admitted to bail in the sum of five thousand dollars each, to appear in court on the 12th day of June, 1874. On that day the motion for a rest of judgment was argued and denied, and the court passed sentence that the defendants Ferguson, Powell and Wills each pay a fine of \$200, and that they stand committed until such fine be paid.

By a recent enactment of the Legislature, the Board of Supervisors were empowered to elect Commissioners of Charities in the place of the said Powell, Ferguson and Wills. The election was held July 5th, 1874, and after a long and sharp contest, resulted in the election of Hassan H. Wheeler, Commissioner of Charities of Kings County from the 2nd District; John Raber, as such Commissioner from the 3rd District, and of Wincent E. Bennett from the 5th District.

August 18th, further complaint was made as to the manner in which the Commissioners of Charities discharged the duties of their office in relation to the County Lunatic Asylum, Almshouse and other institutions under their charge, and the Board of Supervisors appointed a committee of six to investigate the truth of these charges.

November 12th, on the coming in of the report of said committee, a resolution was adopted by the Board of Supervisors authorizing the employment of counsel, with instructions to commence suit promptly against the Commissioners of Charities, and their sureties for the recovery to the county treasury of certain deficiencies in their accounts.

At the annual election held in November, 1874, Dr. Thomas P. Norris was elected Commissioner of Charities for the 2d District. The annual report of the

Commissioners for the year ending July 31, 1874, gives the following table:

	Alms-house	Hospital.	Nursery.	Asylum.	Total.
Remaining at date of last report.	439	373	344	718	1,874
Admitted during the year.....	1,704	2,853	574	338	5,469
Total.....	2,143	3,226	918	1,056	7,343
Died and discharged.....	1,522	2,906	545	305	5,278
Remaining July 31, 1874..	621	320	373	751	2,065

Temporary relief..... 36,411
 Foundlings, &c., boarded out..... 37
 Institutions..... 7,343

Total for year ending July 31, 1874..... 43,791

Average number in the institutions during the year was 2,175; total amount of bills paid, \$445,463.56; total amount of receipts, \$19,577.61.

The Commissioners at the date of said report were John Cunningham, John J. Scott Hassen, H. Wheeler, John Raber, Winant E. Bennett. The three latter were appointed in place of Cornelius Ferguson, Henry Wills and S. H. Powell, removed.

Dr. P. L. Schenck, physician of the County Hospital, for the year ending July 31, 1874, reports: Among other things, that alcoholism (which includes delirium tremens) numbered during the year ending July 31, 1874, 172 cases, showing an increase over the number of the previous year of 36. Lead poisoning, which was spoken of in the last report, shows a still greater increase, the number of cases being 64.

The Doctor's report contains the following: Remaining July 31, 1873, males, 188; females, 185; total, 373; admitted during the year, males, 1,579; females, 1,274; total, 2,853; discharged recovered, males, 1,210; females, 1,008; total, 2,218; discharged improved, males, 184; females, 144; total, 328; discharged unimproved, males, 54; females, 33; total, 87; died, males, 157; females, 116; total, 273; remaining July 31, 1874, males, 162; females, 158; total, 320; decrease, 296.

In November, 1873, Dr. Edward R. Chapin, Medical Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum, resigned his office, after a long and faithful service of more than sixteen years, during which he had won for himself the esteem of his officers and subordinates, the respect and love of his patients; and for the Asylum a character, a name and fame of which the County of Kings may justly feel proud. Dr. C. F. MACDONALD was appointed Medical Superintendent in place of Dr. Chapin, and Dr. Archibald Campbell was promoted to the position of first assistant physician; these gentlemen stood high in their profession, and the subsequent condition of the Asylum under their care bears in dubitable testimony to their skill and efficiency.

The Doctor complains of the overcrowded state of the Asylum, and suggests improvements for its relief. His annual report contains the following: Patients in Asylum August 1, 1873, males, 287; females, 431; total, 718; patients admitted during year, males, 177; females, 161; total, 338; discharged recovered,

males, 62; females, 52; total, 114; discharged improved, males, 37; females, 41; total, 78; discharged unimproved, males, 23; females, 16; total, 39; died, males, 40; females, 34; total, 74; whole number discharged, males, 162; females, 143; total, 305; remaining July 31, 1874, males, 302; females, 409; total, 751; number of employees, males, 37; females, 51; total, 88.

The report of Mr. John Driscoll, Superintendent of the Kings County Nursery, for the year 1874, shows the continued prosperity of this interesting department of the poor establishment, in all its branches. The report recommends the erection of a *Gymnasium* for the boys, the enlargement of the garden for the occupation of the boys able to work therein.

It shows that calisthenics was introduced during the year with marked success. It speaks in high terms of the two Sunday schools in the Nursery, the Catholic and the Protestant. The report of the Commissioners concludes with the following resume:

	CHILDREN.		ADULTS.		TOTAL.
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	
Remaining July 31, 1873.....	198	108	8	30	344
Admitted during year.....	320	184	6	64	574
Total.....	518	292	14	94	918
Discharged during year.....	267	170	5	59	501
Died during year.....	21	23	.....	.....	44
Total.....	288	193	5	59	545
Remaining July 31, 1874.....	230	99	9	35	373

Increase of 29 during the year.

At the annual election, November, 1875, Bernard Bogan was elected a Commissioner of Charities for the 1st District of Kings County.

From the annual report of the Commissioners of Charities for the year ending July 31, 1875, we take the following:

	Alms-house.	Hospital.	Nursery.	Asylum.	Total.
Remaining at date of last report.....	603	320	373	751	2,047
Admitted and born during the year.....	1,820	3,010	728	318	5,876
Total.....	2,423	3,330	1,101	1,069	7,923
Died and discharged during the year.....	1,796	2,961	640	303	5,700
Whole number relieved.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	35,850
Foundlings boarded out.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Institutions.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	7,923

Total number relieved, either wholly or in part, during the year ending July 31, 1875, 43,773; average number in the institutions during the year, 2,182; the highest number in the institutions during the year was on the 2d February, 1875, 2,305; the lowest number was on the 22d September, 1874, 2,062; total amount of paid bills, \$523,588.68; total amount of receipts, \$20,700.61.

The Commissioners of Charities for the year ending July 31, 1875, were John Cunningham, John Raber, Thos. P. Norris, Bernard Midas, Harmon V. Storms.

The annual report of Dr. P. L. Schenck, Medical Superintendent of the Kings County Hospital, shows the statistics of that institution for the year ending July 31, 1875, as follows :

Remaining July 31st, 1874, males, 162; females, 158; total, 320; admitted during year, males, 1,608; females, 1,402; total, 3,010; total, males, 1,770; females, 1,560; total, 3,330; discharged recovered, males, 1,206; females, 1,054; total, 2,260; discharged improved, males, 140; females, 149; total, 289; discharged unimproved, males, 53; females, 41; total, 94; died, males, 198; females, 120; total, 318; total, males, 1,597; females, 1,364; total, 2,961; remaining July, 1875, males, 173; females, 196; total, 369; total number under treatment for the year ending July 31st, 1873, 3,521; total number under treatment for the year ending July 31st, 1874, 3,225; total number under treatment for the year ending July 31st, 1875, 3,338.

The total number of patients admitted shows an increase of 157 over the number of last year. Two thousand three hundred and thirty-five of the said patients were foreigners, 1,319 of whom were from Ireland, 901 from Germany, 201 from Sweden, 53 from England, 41 from Scotland, &c. During the year referred to there was held, in the Hospital, on Friday afternoon of each week, a *surgical clinic*, attended by many members of the outside profession, not only of great advantage to the patients, but a source of instruction to the Hospital staff. During the year an investigating Board of the Supervisors visited the Hospital several times, unanimously expressing themselves more than satisfied with the manner in which this institution was conducted in all its parts.

Dr. James H. Blanchard, Medical Superintendent of the County Lunatic Asylum during the last year, reports as follows :

Patients in Asylum August 1st, 1874, males, 302; females, 449; total, 751; patients admitted during the year, males, 149; females, 169; total, 318; whole number under treatment, males, 451; females, 618, total, 1,069; discharged recovered, males, 49; females, 60; total, 109; discharged improved, males, 36; females, 43; total 79; discharged unimproved, males, 16; females, 18; total, 34; died, males, 45; females, 36; total, 81; whole number discharged, males, 146; females, 157; total, 303; remaining July 31, 1875, males, 305; females, 461; total, 766; number of employees, males, 33, females, 48; total, 81.

During the year one homicide occurred, but no suicides. The asylum was at the time very much overcrowded.

The annual report of the Superintendent of the Nursery, Mr. Bernard Bogan, for the fiscal year ending July 31, 1875, presents a most encouraging condition of that interesting department of the poor establishment of the county.

An industrial school was organized during the year, in which tailoring, shoemaking and printing were taught, with manifest success. The garden continues not only to be a source of pleasure to the boys who conduct it, but a source of profit to the institution. The school of the establishment has come to be of very great importance, an institution of learning for children, of which the county may well be proud. The school-room is cheerful and comfortable; the children are divided into eight classes, and many of them in the higher classes show a proficiency in their studies creditable to their teachers and any institution of learning. Besides the usual branches taught in schools, singing by note has been successfully introduced. Calisthenics and spelling matches formed useful and entertaining exercises. A Roll of Honor was instituted, which greatly stimulated the children in their studies. During the year there were 503 admitted to the school, 253 promoted during the same time, the average attendance being 267.

The following shows the number admitted during the year :

	CHILDREN.		ADULTS.		TOTAL.
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	
Remaining July 31, 1874.....	230	99	9	35	373
Admitted during year.....	364	265	24	75	728
Total.....	594	364	33	110	1,101
Discharged.....	297	215	19	64	595
Died.....	32	13	..	..	45
Total.....	329	228	19	64	640
Remaining July 31, 1875.....	265	136	14	46	461

By an act of Legislature, May 15th, 1876, the Board of Supervisors were permitted to raise a sum, not exceeding \$16,000, to meet the deficiency in the salary account of the Commissioners of Charities. Previous to the passage of this act, and on April 19th, 1876, the following preamble and resolution was introduced and adopted by the Board of Supervisors:

"Whereas, The appropriation for supplies for this year was \$160,000, and the amount expended for only eight months was \$133,000; and unless a reduction of expenses be made immediately, the whole appropriation will be exhausted long before the expiration of the fiscal year; therefore be it

Resolved, That it is the duty of the Commissioners of Charities to discontinue all supplies of dry-goods, milk, eggs, butter, sugar and any other articles not of absolute necessity, except in the cases of infants and invalids; and that in all such cases the supplies of such articles be furnished only on requisition of the physician-in-chief, naming the persons for whom the same are required, and the quality of the article mentioned, and that all such requisitions be numbered in regular order, dated, and entered in a book to be provided for that purpose."

It having come to the knowledge of the Board of Supervisors that there was a deficiency of \$18,577.15 in the accounts of the Commissioners of Charities, making their pay-roll for the year ending July 31st, 1876, \$103,577.15, and there being raised and appropriated for that purpose by the Supervisors only \$85,000, on June 7th, 1876, a committee, appointed by the Supervisors to examine into this matter, made a report, which was duly accepted:

"That there is no authority in the law for the Commissioners exceeding the amount of said appropriation, and that an examination of their pay-rolls shows that, had they desired to, they could easily have kept within that amount; that it is impossible to quietly permit such action on the part of the Commissioners of Charities; that it would be no more than just retribution to hold the said Commissioners responsible personally for this deficiency."

The practice of receiving pauper lunatics indiscriminately into the County Asylum had overcrowded that institution to such an extent that Section 6, Article 1st, Chapter 446 of the Laws of 1874, which provided

"that no persons should be admitted to the Asylum unless committed thereto by the County Judge or Surrogate," was now rigidly enforced; therefore the Commissioners of Charities took immediate steps to discharge from the County Asylum, as fast as due regard for humanity and the proprieties of the case would admit, all persons, not paupers, not lawfully entitled to remain in said Asylum; and that after the 2d day of August, 1876, no person, not a pauper, could be received into said Asylum unless by competent judicial authority. This, of course, excluded all non-resident lunatics from the Asylum.

In their annual report for the year ending July 31, 1876, the Commissioners say that the new Hospital for Incurables is now nearly completed, and will accommodate a large number of that class of patients. That there were remaining in the poor establishment at the date of their last report: Almshouse, 640; hospital, 369; asylum, 766; total, 1,775; admitted and born during year, almshouse, 2,165; hospital, 3,901; asylum, 314; total, 6,380; died and discharged, almshouse, 2,044; hospital, 3,959; asylum, 270; total, 6,273; remaining July 31, 1876, almshouse, 761; hospital, 311; asylum, 810; total, 1,882; number relieved, 44,208; foundlings, etc., boarded out, 50; cared for in the institutions, 8,155; total number relieved wholly or in part, 52,413; average number in the institutions, 2,135; the highest number in during year was on August 3, 1875, 2,317; the lowest number was July 11, 1876, 1,944.

Total amount of department bills, \$388,692.90; total amount of receipts, \$21,221.98.

The Commissioners of Charities for this year were Thomas P. Norris, Bernard Bogan, John Raber, Bernhart Midas, Harmon V. Strong. At the annual election in November, 1876, Bernhart Midas was elected Commissioner of Charities for the 1st District for the ensuing year.

Dr. James A. Blanchard, Medical Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum for the year ending July 31, 1876, reports that such was the increase of patients in the Asylum (there being at one time 816) it seemed almost impossible to find accommodations for them; that frequently newly arrived patients were obliged to wait two or three days, or until a vacancy occurred, before they could be admitted. That in a population of 500,000 people, there is an average number of 800 persons classed as insane. In other words, 16 in every 10,000 of the population of the county were under treatment for lunacy; that there was no doubt that within the next decade not less than 1,200 of these unfortunates would be consigned to the care of the county authorities. The necessity of constructing another asylum was earnestly set forth. The report further shows that a very large increase of the general library has been made, for which the Asylum was largely under obligations to Gilbert Hicks, Esq., of Flatbush, the custodian of the "Graham Fund." The report also pleasantly refers to the visit of a committee from the State Board of Public Charities and to their donations. It also speaks highly of the weekly surgical clinic in the Asylum for the past year. The Doctor recommended that action be taken to restrict, in a measure, and regulate the visiting of the Asylum, which had become a positive detriment to the patients. "Large numbers of people," he says, "come here out of morbid curiosity, as to a menagerie, and the result cannot but be, and is, injurious to the inmates. The day after visiting day the excited condition of the patients is apparent to the most casual observer." This report gives the following statistical account of the Asylum for the year ending July 31, 1876:

Patients in Asylum August 1, 1875, males, 305; females, 461; total, 766; patients admitted during the year, males, 154; females, 160; total, 314; whole number under treatment, males, 459; females, 621; total, 1,080; discharged recovered, males, 66;

females, 49; total, 115; discharged improved, males, 28; females, 34; total, 62; discharged unimproved, males, 15; females, 16; total, 31; died, males, 27; females, 35; total, 62; whole number discharged, males, 136; females, 134; total, 270; remaining July 31, 1876, males, 323; females, 487; total, 810; whole number of employes, male, 32; female, 48; total, 80.

Dr. P. L. Schenck, Medical Superintendent of the Kings County Hospital, for the year ending July 31, 1876, gives the following as to the number of persons, etc., in the Hospital during the year:

Remaining July 31, 1875, males, 173; females, 196; total, 369; admitted during the year, males, 2,203; females, 1,698; total, 3,901; total number under treatment, males, 2,376; females, 1,894; total, 4,270; discharged recovered, males, 1,667; females, 1,331; total, 2,998; discharged improved, males, 204; females, 194; total, 400; discharged unimproved, males, 26; females, 21; total, 47; died, males, 320; females, 194; total, 514; total discharged, males, 2,218; females, 1,741; total, 3,959; remaining July 31, 1876, males, 158; females, 153; total, 311; total number under treatment for the year ending July 31, 1874, 3,225; total number under treatment for the year ending July 31, 1875, 3,338; total number under treatment for the year ending July 31, 1876, 4,270.

This report shows an increase of 2.6 per cent. in the death rate of the institution. There were 92 deaths from small-pox; 76 patients were removed to the Lunatic Asylum. The total number of patients admitted during the year shows an increase of 891 over the last year. That of the 4,270 patients treated, all were foreigners excepting 909. There were 141 children born; of the mothers, 71 were married and 67 single; of the 71 married mothers all were Americans.

There is no report this year of the Nursery, changes having taken place which virtually abolished that institution. One of the principal causes for these results was the completion of the *Brooklyn Industrial School Association and Home for Destitute Children*, in Butler Street, near Flatbush Avenue. On September 2, 1875, Dr. Norris, President of the Commission of Charities, received notice from Mrs. Jessie C. Smith, first Directress of the above association, that this Home was ready to receive as many children from the Kings County Nursery as the Commissioners of Charities might think proper to send them at \$4 each per month, subject to the rules for the government of the Home. In accordance with this, most of the children were removed; and, under the importunate demands of the medical superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum for increased accommodation for that institution, the Nursery building was altered into a *Hospital for Incurables*, as well as for defective children, &c., who could not be cured.

Notwithstanding the rules adopted against the admission of non-residents of Kings County into the Poor establishment, the practice existed to a large extent; whereupon, in November, 1876, the following resolution was adopted by the Supervisors:

"Resolved, That the Commissioners of Charities be and they are hereby directed to furnish promptly to this Board the number and names of inmates of the Almshouse, Lunatic Asylum, Hospital and Nursery, at Flatbush, who have no legal residence in Kings County, and the date of their admission into the several institutions."

This very important resolution was unanimously

adopted. The reader will soon learn to what extent it was obeyed.

We have already referred to the regulation requiring the physicians in charge of the Lunatic Asylum to discharge therefrom all non-residents, which was one of the results of this resolution.

Early in January, 1877, the following resolution was adopted :

“Resolved, That the Commissioner of Charities for the 1st district be, and he hereby is, respectfully requested to commence the distribution of coal to the poor of said district at the earliest possible moment.”

This resolution, authorized by law, was passed at a time which will be remembered by many as a period of great suffering among the poor of that district. The resolution was some days afterwards so amended as to embrace the other districts.

April 4th, 1877, a very important matter was brought before the Supervisors and the Commissioners of Charities, the result of the action of certain shrewd politicians—employees of the Board of Charities—in bringing inmates of the almshouse to take part in certain political meetings in Gravesend, with a view to influence and control their action, showing how difficult it is to divorce politics from such institutions. The prompt action of the Supervisors touching the matter, denouncing the practice “as entirely unwarranted by law, or by a proper regard for decency,” was warmly commended by the citizens of the county.

June 28th, 1877. The Commissioners of Charities having failed to send in, according to law, any estimate of the amount required for salaries, or for improvements, or for alterations to the buildings and grounds of the Poor establishments, though it was well known such improvements were contemplated, the Supervisors passed a resolution reprimanding the neglect of the Commissioners in the discharge of their duties. The frequent collision between the Supervisors and the Board of Charities was fast leading to that radical change in the Poor establishment of the county which led to the present system, under which it is conducted at this writing.

The annual report of the Commissioners for the year ending July 31st, 1877, is a paper of considerable length and ability: “It behooves,” says this report, “those in authority, as well as all other citizens, to assist in solving the question: ‘How shall this department of public charities be managed so as to do the greatest good to the unfortunate and indigent among us, and at the same time avoid imposing onerous burdens on the taxpayers?’” We cannot refrain from inserting here the ingenious, apparently mild, but palpable hit which the Commissioners give the Board of Supervisors and others in interfering with their management of the poor establishment of the county. After pleasantly stating that those who were charged with the management of charity affairs are better able

to judge of the manner in which they should discharge their duties than any other persons, and that they should, therefore, be invested with full power to deal with the matter, and all questions which arise in doing so, they say: “Public officials who have charge of charity affairs always find it difficult to do justice to themselves or their public trusts while acting with shackled hands.” This is the only allusion in the report to some unpleasant matters which had occurred thus far during the year. The report continues as follows :

Remaining at the date of last report, Alms-house, 811; Hospital, 271; Asylum, 810; total, 1,892; admitted and born during the year, Alms-house, 2,301; Hospital, 3,244; Asylum, 318; Home for Incurables, 313; total, 6,176; died and discharged during the year, Alms-house, 2,294; Hospital, 3,184; Asylum, 496; Home for Incurables, 24; total, 5,998; remaining July 31, 1817, Alms-house, 818; Hospital, 331; Asylum, 632; Home for Incurables, 289; total, 2,070; employees, Alms-house, 8; Hospital, 46; Asylum, 85; Home for Incurables, 21; total, 160; number temporarily relieved, 46,330; cared for in the institutions, 8,068; total number relieved wholly or in part during year ending July 31, 1877, 54,398; average number in institutions, 2,226; highest number during year was on January 16, 1877, 2,406; lowest number August 15, 1876, 1,988; total amount of bills paid and due, \$440,025.52; receipts, \$17,679.97.

The Commissioners of Charities this year were Thomas P. Norris, Bernard Bogan, John Raber, Bernard Midas, H. V. Storm.

The annual report of Dr. P. L. Schenck, Medical Superintendent of Kings County Hospital, is, as usual, able and succinct. There were :

Remaining in Hospital, July 31, 1876, males, 158; females, 153; total, 311; admitted during the year, males, 1,855; females, 1,389; total, 3,244; total number under treatment, males, 2,013; females, 1,542; total, 3,555; discharged recovered, males, 1,419; females, 1,065; total, 2,484; discharged improved, males, 180; females, 166; total, 346; discharged unimproved, males, 23; females, 20; total, 43; died, males, 190; females, 121; total, 311; total discharged and died, males, 1,812; females, 1,372; total, 3,184.

It will be seen from the above report that there was a decrease of 603 in the total number of patients admitted during the year. There were 145 children born in the institutions during the year. Of all the number of patients, 3,555, admitted into the Hospital during the year, all excepting 810 were foreigners; of these 1,392 were from Ireland, 722 from Germany, 240 from Sweden, 66 from France, 62 from England, 59 from Switzerland, 47 from Scotland, 50 from Norway, 39 from Denmark, 25 from Italy, 18 from Poland, 2 from Russia, 8 from Belgium, 1 from Portugal, 1 from Cuba, 1 from China, and 2 from Spain.

Dr. James Blanchard, Medical Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum, reports, among other things, that in the preceding January the *Hospital for Incurables* was completed, officered and furnished, and in the February following some of the patients—260 in all—were transferred to that institution. These consisted of epileptics, idiots, imbeciles, and demented patients, all quiet and orderly. At one period there were 827 patients under treatment in the Asylum, which had a capacity for containing only 600, leading to a very unsatisfactory condition of things. Notwithstanding this, Dr. Blanchard alleges that during the past year the management of this institution was the subject of much unfair and unjust criticism, when whatever fault there was in the conduct of the establishment could not be justly charged against the managing officers of the Institution. The report concludes with the following table :

Patients in Asylum, August 1, 1876, males, 323; females, 487; total, 810; admitted during year, males, 150; females, 168; total, 318;

recovered, males, 48; females, 58; total, 106; improved, males, 20; females, 22; total, 42; unimproved, males, 11; females, 9; total, 20; removed to Hospital for Incurables, males, 128; females, 139; total, 267; died, males, 27; females, 34; total, 61; whole number discharged, males, 334; females, 262; total, 496; remaining July 31, 1877, males, 239; females, 393; total, 632; employees, males, 34; females, 51; total, 85.

Since the change in the Nursery department, and other changes in the Poor establishment, a brief allusion to the report of the Superintendent of the Almshouse is necessary and instructive. From the report it is seen among other things that during the year the capacity of this department was tested to its utmost. During the entire winter season it became necessary to place beds upon the floors of all the different dormitories in the department; that even the reading-room was converted into a dormitory.

The report recommends the erection of a "workhouse," so that the inmates of the Almshouse be classified, making a discrimination between unfortunate persons driven to seek shelter there for a time, and the degraded "rounder" and "revolver," who looks forward with pleasure to a life at the public expense.

The small department assigned under the new regulation to the children, for a nursery, is reported to be in an overcrowded condition. These reports were given at the close of the fiscal year, the 31st of July, 1877.

We now come to the brief consideration of a subject which created intense feeling throughout the county; this is the report of the Investigating Committee appointed to examine the whole condition of the Poor establishment under the official management of the Board of Commissioners of Charities. This report was submitted to the Board of Supervisors at the close of the year 1877, and was most searching, exhibiting a condition of things somewhat startling in their nature. We have already referred to a resolution requiring the Commissioners to report, etc. How well they reported will be seen in the report of the Investigating Committee, of which we can only give a brief history. The report alleges that the Charity Department of the county had been for years in bad repute with the people; its management had given rise to great complaint; some of its members had been found guilty of corrupt practices, punished and removed from office; that the aid of legislative enactment had been invoked, but in vain, and the cure did not come; the evil was political, and it was politics that attempted the cure; instead of improvement, matters grew and are still growing worse; extravagance and waste prevailed; the employees were inefficient; duties were neglected; lunatics were robbed and beaten; that even death had been hastened by cruelty and abuse; the poor were ill-treated, and contractors favored; large sums of money were appropriated every year, and yet heavy deficiencies continued to be the rule; that the Commissioners wrongfully increased their pay-rolls; men were receiving wages who did little or no work, while everything about the establishment was neglected.

To such an alarming extent had these things come that a public meeting, irrespective of party, was held at the Academy of Music in Brooklyn, composed of the best citizens of the city and county. At this meeting

a resolution was unanimously adopted condemning the management of the Commissioners, and measures proposed for relieving the Poor establishment of these great evils. The measure of relief proposed was the abolishment of the present Board of Charities and the establishment of a new Board, to be called a "*Board of Commissioners of Charities and Corrections.*"

"But," says the report, "the will of the people was thwarted at Albany, and the cure came not. Politics again showed its venomous fangs, and the mongrel bill denominated a cure was justly throttled by the Governor, and thus the old system was continued in all its evils. It was then thought best that a full and fair investigation of the whole matter should be made. We supposed that the Commissioners would second our efforts, but after making some progress we were met with open hostility to our labors by the Commissioners." Notwithstanding this, the committee searchingly continued their investigations, and the result revealed a most terrible and revolting state of affairs.

Among other things, the buildings were infested by rats, the wood-work gnawed in almost every room, creating great destruction. In one instance an old closet was opened, and was found to contain the bodies of nearly two barrels of dead rats in a state of decomposition. In one of the upper stories a dining-room used for women was in part used for water-closets, being partitioned off by low board partitions, from which there came most offensive odors. The place where the provisions were kept and served was dark, dirty, filled with fleas and other filth. The grounds were out of order; holes had been cut in the board fences, through which intoxicating liquors had been passed in to the inmates.

Even clothing, shoes and other articles had been given by the inmates in exchange for liquor. Some of the employees had kept, and still kept, a place near by for the sale of liquor. The inmates of the establishment often got drunk and fight. There was due and owing the county for board of patients \$15,000 or \$20,000. People from other counties, and even from other States, were boarders at the expense of this county. Notwithstanding this large arrearages for their board, they had every delicacy, all indulgencies equally, if not better, than patients more worthy. This condition of affairs had existed for years. Finally, after enumerating many other gross evils, the report concludes as follows: "Enough has already been shown to justify the preparation of charges against the Commissioners for neglect of duty, for malfeasance in office, and to demand their removal."

This report, with several resolutions as to the mode of procedure against the Commissioners, was unanimously adopted by the Board of Supervisors December 26, 1877.

We have given large quotations from this report, because it was strongly influential in revolutionizing the administration of the whole Poor establishment of the county. The action of the Supervisors was very prompt and decisive; but, instead of resulting in a prosecution of the Commissioners for gross violation of duty and malfeasance in office, it took, as we shall see a little further on, another turn, quite unsatisfactory to the Board of Supervisors.

The pay-roll of the Commissioners of Charities for the month ending March 7, 1878, is very important, in that it shows what salaries the employees were receiving at that time. We give only a few of its items:

The Medical Superintendent of the Hospital received \$2,000 per annum; clerk, \$1,500; steward, \$1,000; Superintendent of Almshouse, \$1,500; steward, \$1,200; matron, \$400; cutter of clothing, \$500; baker, \$660; Medical Attendant of the Asylum, \$3,500; assistant physician, \$1,200; do. do., \$600; steward, \$1,000; matron, \$500; clerk and bookkeeper of the board, \$2,500; secretary to the board, \$1,500; treasurer, clerk and collector, \$1,500; general inspector, \$2,000; counsel, \$1,500; Medical Superintendent of Hospital for Incurables, \$2,000; steward, \$1,000; matron, \$400. The salaries of the other employees of the Poor establishment ranged from \$12 to \$20 per month.

The report to which we have alluded, made in December, 1877, was not acted upon officially in the direction of the impeachment or removal of the Commissioners; but was continually used in an effort to abolish the office of Commissioners of Charities—with what effect we shall see hereafter. But, on May 23d, 1878, a long preamble setting forth the general bad management of the charitable department, which had called forth the condemnation of the entire press of the county, was followed by the following resolution:

“Resolved, That the Board of Supervisors most respectfully request his Excellency the Governor to remove from office the Commissioners of Charities, and appoint, to serve out the time between their removal and the next general election, four disinterested citizens of this county.”

As this resolution was not accompanied with charges and specifications, the chair ruled the resolution to be “not in order,” which ruling was, on appeal, sustained.

At the annual election in November, 1878, Andrew Zizer, Charles J. Henry, and Wm. M. Shipman were elected Commissioners of Charities, Mr. Shipman in the place of Dr. Norris, and Mr. Zizer in place of Mr. Bogan. The annual report of the Commissioners of Charities for the year ending July 31, 1878, was much briefer than usual.

“We have,” said the Commissioners, “endeavored to the best of our ability to discharge the duties imposed upon us, with an honest desire so to conduct the affairs of the department that no injuries may be done to the public bounty, and at the same time no encouragement given to those committed to our care to remain a charge upon the county longer than was really necessary.”

It is proper to add that a very respectable portion of the community believed that the charges made against the Commissioners of Charities, and the public clamor raised against them, was the result of political warfare, kept alive and intensified by swarms of hungry applicants for the very remunerative places which the Commissioners had to bestow. In other words, it was the common growl of the “outs” against the “ins”—the usual contest of politicians.

This report shows that the average cost for each person supported for the year 1878 was \$106.09, or \$2.04 per week; the average cost for each person supported for the year 1877 was \$121.83, or \$2.34 per week; the average difference in cost in favor of the year 1878, for each person, was \$15.74, or 30 cents per week for each person. The net expenses for the department for 1877 were \$422,345.55; for the year 1878, \$312,524.93; difference in favor of 1878, with an increased averaged number of inmates of 157 persons, was \$110,280.62. This large decrease, with other reductions in regard to the poor departments, were regarded as indubitable evidence of the wisdom and success of the Board of Charities, and a triumphant vindication against the aspersions made against them. The report continues as follows: There were remaining in the institutions at the date of last report: Almshouse, 826; Hospital, 377; Asylum, 717; Hospital for Incurables, 310; total, 2,230; admitted into all these departments during the year, 5,976; the whole total was 8,206; died and discharged during the year, 5,722; remaining July 31, 1878, 2,448. The number temporarily relieved was 46,093; cared for in the institutions, 8,206; total number relieved, either wholly or in part, during the year, 54,299.

The annual report of the Superintendent of the Almshouse for the year 1878 shows the unusually crowded condition of that department, but a very satisfactory state of things in regard to the general management.

The report of Dr. P. L. Schenck, Medical Superintendent of the County Hospital, shows that there were remaining in that department July 31, 1879: Males, 201; females, 170; total, 371; admitted during year, males, 1,661; females, 1,196; total, 2,857; total number under treatment, males, 1,862; females, 1,366; total, 3,328; recovered, males, 1,250; females, 926; total, 2,176; improved, males, 188; females, 100; total, 288; unimproved, males, 42; females, 46; total, 88; died, males, 166; females, 90; total, 256; of these 3,328 patients, 1,259 were Irish, 750 were Germans, 710 native, 190 Swedes, 60 French, 52 Swiss, 59 Scotch, 32 Norway, 43 English, 30 Danes, 20 Italians, 12 Poles, 2 Russians, 6 Belgians, 2 Cubans, 1 Chinese. There were during the year 166 children born in the Hospital; the nativity of the mothers was as follows: United States, 83; Ireland, 53; Germany, 14; England, 8; Sweden, 2; Scotland, 1; Switzerland, 1; Nova Scotia, 1; 95 were married and 68 unmarried.

In the Hospital for Incurables there were on August 1, 1877, 288 patients; there were admitted during the year 89; the whole number treated was 377; the number discharged during the year ending July 31, 1878, was 29; number of deaths, 34; remaining in the institution July 31, 1878, 307.

The report of the Medical Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum, Dr. R. L. Parsons, for the year ending July 31, 1878, shows that a large room, 60x90 feet in area, was much needed for the general assemblage of the patients for lectures, readings, concerts, dramatic entertainments, dancing, etc.; the room would also be adapted to the use of the female patients as a gymnasium or exercise room. The report also strongly advocates the erection of a new cookhouse, and that an omnibus and team of stout draft horses should be at the service of the patients for driving about the country, in conformity to a similar luxury at the New York City Asylum, where, it was alleged, the most excitable and violent patients were, with good effect, taken out on excursions.

The report also shows that there were remaining in the Hospital, August 1, 1877, males, 239; females, 393; total, 632; admitted during the year 1877, males, 173; females, 187; total, 360; recovered, males, 47; females, 61; total, 108; improved, males, 19; females, 24; total, 43; unimproved, males, 43; females, 26; total, 69; died, males, 25; females, 33; total, 58; total died and discharged, males, 134; females, 144; total, 278; on pass, males, 12; females, 10; total, 22; total number of patients remaining, August 1, 1878, males, 266; females, 426; total, 692. The Doctor gives a table stating the habits of the patients

during the year, as follows: temperate, males, 54; females, 128; intemperate, males, 68; females, 36; unknown, males, 51; females, 23; total, males, 173; females, 187.

The opposition to the Commissioners of Charities continued until, on October 30, 1879, a resolution was introduced to the Board of Supervisors directing the president *pro tem.* to appoint a special committee of five to consult with the Commissioners of Charities in regard to drafting an act whereby further and larger powers of correction and control, in regard to the Department of Charities, should be conferred upon the Commissioners, and whereby the dual government then existing might, with proper restrictions reserved to the Supervisors, be done away with.

There appears to have been no further action taken during the year under this resolution. The records of the Commissioners of Charities for the year 1879 exhibit little else than their annual report, and the annual reports of the Lunatic Asylum and the Hospital, and a brief report from the Keeper of the Almshouse.

The Commissioners of Charities for this year were Charles J. Henry, William M. Shipman, Andrew Zeiser, Bernhard Midas, and Harmon V. Storm. Their annual report for the year ending July 31, 1879, differed largely in form from those given heretofore, excepting the following table: The number of patients remaining at date of last report—Almshouse, 887; Hospital, 363; Asylum, 790; Hospital for Incurables, 329; admitted during year, Almshouse, 2,090; Hospital, 2,069; Asylum, 340; Hospital for Incurables, 42; discharged and died, Almshouse, 3,106; Hospital, 2,747; Asylum, 333; Hospital for Incurables, 51; total, 6,237; remaining July 31, 1879, Almshouse, 771; Hospital, 306; Asylum, 797; Hospital for Incurables, 320; total, 2,194; cared for in the institutions, 8,431; average number in institutions during year, 2,398; highest number in institutions, February 18, 1879, 2,611; lowest number in institutions, June 24, 1879, 2,181; average cost for each person supported for the year, \$104.88; average cost for each person per week, \$2.01; total amount of bills paid and due, \$266,935.78; total amount cash receipts, \$15,420.28; balance, \$251,515.50.

The Superintendent of the Almshouse, in his report, states that during the winter months every foot of space in that large building, with the exception of two sitting-rooms—even the halls and landings of the stairs—were turned into dormitories. The report also shows that the "rounders" or "repeaters," who formerly made this place their temporary home, no longer appear there. That under the new law touching what was called "State paupers," the Kings County Almshouse was the only one this side of Albany where a large increase of such paupers could be expected during the coming year; that under this act hundreds of people are forwarded to their homes and friends, and to the States where they belong, who would otherwise settle down a permanent burden upon this and other counties within the State of New York. The report strongly commends this act, as likely to relieve the crowded state of the Almshouse. It further shows that the number of inmates remaining July 31, 1878, was 887. There were received during the year, 1,714; there were 8 vagrant commitments; 387 State pauper commitments, and 881 from other institutions, making 2,990; total, 3,877; discharged, 2,423; transferred to other institutions, 547; absconded, 7; died, 129; number remaining July 31, 1879, 771.

Dr. P. H. Schenck, Medical Superintendent of the County Hospital, reports patients in that department for the year ending July 31, 1879, to be as follows:

Remaining July 31, 1878, males, 218; females, 145; total, 363; admitted during the year, males, 1,588; females, 1,102;

total, 2,690; discharged recovered, males, 1,170; females, 799; total, 1,969; discharged improved, males, 247; females, 170; total, 417; discharged unimproved, males, 22; females, 14; total, 36; died, males, 204; females, 121; total, 325; total discharged and died, males, 1,643; females, 1,104; total, 2,747; remaining July 31, 1879, males, 163; females, 143; total, 306.

The total number of patients admitted shows a decrease of 167. There were 167 children born during the year in the Hospital. 89 of the mothers were married, 75 single.

The nativity of those treated in the Hospital was as follows: Ireland, 1,411; United States, 1,013; Germany, 367; England, 138; Sweden, 29; France, 19; Scotland, 18; Canada, 13; Denmark, 9; Italy, 7; Norway, 6; Wales, 5; W. Indies, 3; Poland, 3; Austria, 2; Switzerland, 2; Russia, 1; Portugal, 1; China, 1; Australia, 1; Hungary, 1; Chili, 1; Nova Scotia, 1.

The report of the Superintendent of the Hospital for Incurables, for the year ending July 31, 1879, shows there were remaining August 1, 1878, males, 144; females, 162; total, 306; number admitted, males, 25; females, 17; total, 42; whole number treated, males, 169; females, 179; total, 348; number discharged, males, 20; females, 7; total, 27; died, males, 13; females, 11; total, 24; whole total, males, 33; females, 18; total, 51; remaining July 31, 1879, males, 136; females, 161; total, 297.

The annual report of Dr. John C. Shaw, Medical Superintendent of the County Lunatic Asylum, for the year ending July 31, 1879:

In Asylum, August 1, 1878, males, 266; females, 426; total, 692; out on pass on August 1, 17; admissions during year, males, 180; females, 160; total, 340; recovered, males, 73; females, 47; total, 120; improved, males, 58; females, 48; total, 106; unimproved, males, 27; females, 11; total, 38; not insane, males, 1; females, 1, total, 2; died, males, 26; females, 41; total, 67; remaining in Asylum, August 1, 1879, males, 270; females, 446; total, 716.

The insanity of 50 of these patients was caused by the use of intoxicating liquors; 20 from religious excitement; 163 were married, 150 single; 12 widows 9 widowers.

So successful was the movement for abolishing the Board of Commissioners of Charities in the county, and for the establishment of a new Board, to be called the "*Board of Commissioners of Charities and Corrections*," that early in March, 1880, a bill was introduced into the Legislature of the State providing for the organization of the last-named Board. This bill created much excitement in the county, and the opposition to it took a form that is still fresh in the memory of many citizens. The Board of Supervisors were singularly hostile to the new act, notwithstanding the long-continued difficulties of their predecessors with the Commissioners of Charities, which was often demonstrated by acts of positive hostility, as we have seen.

Notwithstanding the resolutions of remonstrance and the efforts of committees appointed by the Supervisors, fierce opposition to the proposed measure, and the use of every conceivable means for its defeat, it was successful, and on the 13th day of May, 1880, the act to provide for the creation of "A Board of Charities and Corrections in the County of Kings," and for the appointment of the Commissioners thereof, and their subordinates, passed both branches of the Legislature of the State and became a law.

The importance of this act, and the sweeping changes

which it produced in the management of the Poor establishment of the county, may be seen from the following synopsis of its several sections :

This act (sec. 1) designates the new Commissioners as "The Commissioners of Charities and Corrections of the County of Kings," provides that they be appointed by the Supervisor-at-Large, or by the President *pro tem.* of the county; also (sec. 2) provides that no successors shall either be elected or appointed for the two Commissioners whose term of office shall expire first after the passage of this act; but that as the terms of the said Commissioners shall respectively expire, the number composing the Board constituted by this act shall be correspondingly reduced, so that the Board shall ultimately be composed of three Commissioners; the successors of the two Commissioners elected in 1878 to be appointed by the President *pro tempore* on or before October 1, 1881; the successor of the Commissioner elected in 1879 to be appointed during the month of September, 1882, by the Supervisor-at-Large, and these three Commissioners and their three successors to hold office for four years, and until their successors shall have been appointed; vacancies in the office during the years 1880 or 1881 shall be filled by the President *pro tempore* of the Supervisors, and after that vacancies shall be filled by the Supervisor-at-Large; and the successors of the Commissioners appointed under secs. 2 and 3 of this act shall be appointed on or before the 15th day of October preceding the expiration of the term of the respective Commissioners; the salary of those hereafter appointed shall be \$3,000 per annum. The act (sec. 4) establishes the name, nature, power and functions, both of supply, purchase and government, of the new Board; including, also, under their powers of appointment, the storekeepers; and, after the expiration of the term of the present Keeper of the Penitentiary and of the Morgue of the county, giving to the Board the appointment and control of their successors, and of the persons confined in said institutions; provides (sec. 5) that the new Board shall have exclusive power to fix the salaries of all its officers and subordinates; and that (sec. 6) it shall have power to indenture and bind out within the State, as apprentices, during their minority, any minor children over fourteen years of age who may be under their care and control, &c., &c.

The Board of Superintendents of the Poor and that of the Commissioners of Charities of the county were now things of the past, and a new body, possessing far greater powers than either of their predecessors (and, so far as the Poor establishment of the county is concerned, equal to that once possessed by the Board of Supervisors), was thus created in their place.

This new Board entered at once on the duties of their office, and, July 31, 1880, their first annual report for the preceding year was published.

This report shows the number of persons supported

during the year ending July 31, 1880, to have been 1,595. It was signed by Moses Kessel, James Ryan, H. V. Storm, who (elected in the order of their terms), being in office when the new Board was constituted, became Commissioners of Charities and Corrections until the expiration of their office.

Remaining in the Almshouse, at date of the last report, 755; Hospital, 275; Asylum, 721; Hospital for Incurables, 324; total, 2,075: admitted during the year, Almshouse, 1,863; Hospital, 2,396; Asylum, 437; Hospital for Incurables, 65; total, 4,761; whole total in Almshouse, 2,618; Hospital, 2,671; Asylum, 1,158; Hospital for Incurables, 389; total, 6,836. Died and discharged during year, Almshouse, 1,931; Hospital, 2,386; Asylum, 354; Hospital for Incurables, 88; total, 4,759; remaining July 31, 1880, Almshouse, 687; Hospital, 285; Asylum, 804; Hospital for Incurables, 301; total, 2,077; cared for by the institutions, 6,836; average number in the institutions during the year, 1,873; average cost of each person during the year 1880, \$118.76; average cost of each person per week, 1880, \$2.28; total amount of bills paid and due, \$239,916.53; total cash receipts, \$17,464.30.

The Superintendent of the Almshouse, Martin V. Burroughs, reported no further improvements needed to the buildings; the renewal of an old rule (now several years in abeyance), that all men applicants for lodgings should break two bushels of stone before receiving their supper, or a place to sleep, had greatly lessened the number of tramps applying for lodging; an effectual separation of the sexes had been effected except in the chapel; that the female department was in urgent need of a change of management, and especially in improving its means of heating; that the farm had been enlarged by the addition of sixteen acres of leased ground. The officers under Mr. Burroughs were William Carrigan, clerk and steward; Miss Maria J. Trumble, matron; Mrs. B. L. Bowen, matron of Nursery.

Dr. P. L. Schenck, of the County Hospital, reported as remaining in the Hospital July 31, 1879, 163 males, 143 females; total, 306; admitted during the year, 1,544 males, 995 females; total, 2,539; total in Hospital, 1,707 males, 1,138 females; total, 2,845; discharged recovered, 1,097 males, 630 females, total, 1,727; improved, 246 males, 181 females; total, 427; unimproved, 39 males, 32 females; total, 71; died, 158 males, 142 females; total, 300; total number discharged and died, 1,540, males, 985 females; total, 2,525; remaining July 31, 1880, 167 males, 153 females; total, 320; total, 1,707 males, 1,138 females; total, 2,845; admitted during the year ending July 31, 1879, 2,690; during the year ending July 31, 1880, 2,539, showing a decrease of 151. The results of treatment were as follows: 1,727, or 68.40 per cent., recovered; 427, or 16.91 per cent., improved; 71, or 2.81 per cent., unimproved; 300, or 11.88 per cent., died. The number of births in this institution during the year was 130. The Doctor acknowledges his obligations to the ladies of the Flower and Fruit Charity for their supply of the Hospital patients with fruits and flowers, and to the clergy of Brooklyn for their devotion to the spiritual wants of the patients.

Dr. Guy Daly, of the Hospital for Incurables, reports as remaining in that institution July 31, 1879, 136 males, 161 females; admitted during the year, 42 males, 21 females; whole number treated, 178 males, 182 females; discharged during the year, 14 males, 10 females; died, 20 males, 12 females; remaining July 31, 1880, 144 males, 160 females.

The report of John C. Shaw, M.D., Medical Superintendent of Lunatic Asylum, for the year ending July 31, 1880, shows that the number of patients in the asylum July 31, 1879, was 270 males, 447 females; total, 717; admitted during year, 205 males, 213 females; total, 418; discharged or removed, 141 males, 134 females; total, 275; recovered, 47 males, 41 females; total, 88;

improved, 49 males, 57 females, total, 106; unimproved, 44 males, 34 females; total, 78; not insane, 1 male, 2 females; total, 3; died, 33 males, 31 females; total, 64; remaining in Asylum, August 1, 1880, 301 males, 495 females; total, 796. Of 418 admitted into the Asylum, all but 154 were foreigners.

The medical staff of the County Institutions, when the Board of Commissioners and Corrections went into operation, consisted of: P. L. Schenck, M.D., Superintendent of the *County Hospital*, with R. P. Collins, M.D., H. D. Nevin, M.D., H. L. Cochran, M.D., G. M. Ferris, M.D., as assistant physicians; J. L. Zabriskie, M.D., Tennis Schenck, M.D., consulting physicians; Homer L. Bartlett, M.D., Joseph C. Hutchinson, M.D., consulting surgeons. The *County Lunatic Asylum*, John C. Shaw, medical superintendent; John A. Arnold, M.D., John S. Woodside, M.D., John Frank, M.D., assistant physicians; George H. Coddington, clinical assistant. The County Morgue and County Penitentiary had also been placed under the control and management of the new Board.

The first difficulty which the new Board encountered was, whether they were required by law to submit the bills for supplies purchased by them for the Poor establishment of the county to the Board of Supervisors for their approval, in order to enable the County Treasurer to pay the same. While some took the view that the act constituting the new Board vested in them all the powers of purchase and supply, and authority, &c., &c., previously possessed by the Commissioners of Charities and the Board of Supervisors of the County, others contended that the power to *purchase* supplies only was conferred on the new Board by the act; that the power of approval possessed by the Supervisors over the purchases and bills of the Commissioners of Charities had never been taken from them and still existed; that though the absolute power conferred upon the new Board to purchase, includes the power to agree upon the price, and any price agreed upon by the Board of Commissioners of Charities and Corrections was binding upon the Board of Supervisors, yet there were other matters, or might be, touching the said bill to be determined by the Supervisors, which would serve as salutary checks for the public interest. In January, 1881, this question was fully submitted to Mr. Winchester Britton, one of the oldest members of the Kings County Bar, for his opinion and decision, which was rendered February 19, 1881, and which coincided substantially with the latter view of the question.

February 24, 1881, Mr. W. M. Shipman, President of the Board of Charities and Corrections, presented a petition to the Supervisors, representing that the Lunatic Asylum and Hospital for Incurables were entirely inadequate for the rapidly increasing need of the inmates and the community; that that portion of the Lunatic Asylum called the "Lodge" was actually unsafe; the Asylum building was so overcrowded that, in a measure, the efforts and skill of the physicians were baffled; that the Hospital for Incurables was over-

crowded to a large extent; the female ward of the Almshouse was also in great need of alterations and enlargement; that these alterations would demand the erection of a dwelling and office for the warden, and also a store-room; that a comfortable brick structure should take the place of the old frame building occupied as a ward for the colored patients. To meet these requirements an appropriation of \$90,000 would be required. The alterations and improvements on the Hospital for Incurables would require \$60,000, and those on the Almshouse \$30,000.

At the annual meeting of the Supervisors in August, 1881, the Commissioners of Charities and Corrections called the attention of the former Board to the stern necessity of erecting a hospital at Flatbush for a Small-pox Hospital, denouncing a resolution of a former Board adverse to building such a building.

On October 1st, 1881, Brewster Kissam and A. H. W. Van Sicklen were, by the Act of May 13, 1880, appointed Commissioners of Charities and Corrections in place of Charles J. Henry and Wm. Shipman, whose term of office had expired. By the expiration of official terms only one member of the old Board, James Ryan, continued in office on January 1, 1882.

The annual report of the Board for the year ending July 31st, 1881, shows as remaining in the Poor establishment of the county, July 31, 1880, 68 in the almshouse, 320 in the hospital, 304 in Hospital for Incurables, 796 in asylum, 600 in the Penitentiary, total, 2,708; admitted during the year, 2,567 to the almshouse, 3,300 to the hospital, 44 to the Hospital for Incurables, 428 in the Lunatic Asylum, 753 to the penitentiary; total, 7,092; totals, in almshouse, 3,255; hospital, 3,620; Hospital for Incurables, 340; asylum, 1,224; Penitentiary, 1,353; total, 9,800; died and discharged during the year, almshouse, 2,582; hospital, 3,239; Hospital for Incurables, 40; asylum, 356; Penitentiary, 700; total, 6,897 remaining July 31, 1881, almshouse, 673; hospital, 381; Hospital for Incurables, 308; asylum, 368; Penitentiary, 653; total, 2,883; cared for in the institutions, 800; average number in institutions during the year, 2,939; average cost of each inmate per year, \$97.77; average cost of each inmate per week, \$1.88; total amount of bills paid and due, \$294,470.23; total amount of cash receipts, \$67,545.02.

The report of Mr. Wm. Murray shows the increased necessity for the enlargement of that department, although the building occupied by the male inmates is in a good sanitary condition, with some few exceptions. It also shows that a baby ward was nearly completed, and well adapted for the purpose for which it was constructed; that 1,442 persons received into the almshouse during the year ending July 31, 1880, were committed by order of the Commissioners, 495 were committed as State paupers, 630 were from other institutions. This added to 688—the whole number of inmates July 31, 1880—presents the total of 3,255 received into the institution during the year, and from whence they came. Of these there were discharged during the year 1,957; transferred to other institutions, 460; absconded, 26; died, 139; number remaining July 31, 1881, 673; males, 247; females, 426; natives, 270; foreigners, 403; children, 53; adults, 620.

Dr. P. L. Schenck, Medical Superintendent of the Kings County Hospital, for the year ending July 31, 1881, reports as in the Hospital July 31, 1880, 320—167 males, 153 females; admitted during the year, 3,300—2,005 males, 1,295 females; total in Hospital, 3,620—2,172 males, 1,448 females. There were discharged recovered, 2,293—1,413 males, 880 females; improved, 400—254 males, 146 females; unimproved, 97—58 males, 39 fe-

males; died, 449—250 males, 199 females; total number died and discharged, 3,239—1,975 males, 1,264 females; remaining July 31, 1881, 381—197 males, 184 females; increase of patients over last year, 775. Of the 3,300 inmates, 2,117 were foreigners.

Dr. Schenk's resignation was tendered on the 11th of July, and accepted by the Board with many regrets.

Dr. John Shaw, Medical Superintendent of the Kings County Insane Asylum, speaks in high terms of the measures taken for the erection of two wooden cottages, near the Asylum, to hold from 80 to 100 patients. The erection of six more had been strongly recommended, but the Doctor insisted, to use his own language, "that it will not do to put up six wooden cottages now, and think that all is done which is required. Temporising is foolish; arrangements should be made for obtaining a large tract of land to have room for the great increase of patients, for this large number will have to be cared for, and we should be preparing for it."

There were remaining in the Asylum August 1, 1880, 790 patients—301 males, 495 females; admitted during the year, 420—218 males, 210 females; total during year, 1,224—519 males, 705 females; discharged, 269—148 males, 121 females; died, 87—42 males, 45 females; whole total, 356—190 males, 166 females; remaining in Asylum August 1, 1881, 868—329 males, 539 females; recovered, 72—34 males, 38 females; improved, 121—62 males, 59 females; unimproved, 75—52 males, 23 females; not insane, 1 female; total, 269—148 males, 121 females.

John Arnold, M.D., Superintendent of the Hospital for Incurables, for the year, reports the number of patients remaining August 1, 1880, 143 males, 161 females; admitted during the year, 29 males, 15 females; whole number treated, 172 males, 176 females; discharged during the year, 13 males, 6 females; died during the year, 15 males, 6 females; remaining July 31, 1881, 144 males, 164 females.

The first annual report of the Kings County Penitentiary, by Mr. John Green, Warden for the fiscal year of 1881, shows that his appointment dated from the 1st of January, 1881, and the report of the condition of the institution can be given only from the accounts kept by his predecessor. The state of affairs which existed at the time Mr. Green took charge of the Penitentiary was, to say the least, discreditable. There were no records of the reception or discharge of prisoners; no regular books to be found that would indicate the manner of conducting, or the amount of business yearly transacted. One thing was plainly manifested, however: the expenses for the five months preceding the 1st of January exceeded the receipts by \$5,736.93, when with proper management the balance would have been the other way, because the receipts for seven months since the 1st of January, 1881, have exceeded the expenditures by \$7,677.20, which is sufficient to pay the said deficiency, and leave \$1,940.27 to the credit of the institution for the fiscal year, the first since its completion that it has been either self-sustaining or yielding a revenue to the county; notwithstanding the receipts for the years 1875 6-7-8-9, from convict labor, board of United States prisoners, appropriations and other sources, amounted to \$92,521 annually, while less than \$70,000 per year would easily have paid the running expenses of the Penitentiary. The actual number of convicts on hand was fraudulently increased, with a view to reducing the high rate per capita resulting from charging the county for enormous quantities of supplies that were never received at the Penitentiary. Prisoners were often discharged several days in advance of the expiration of their term of sentence; the discipline, such as existed, was maintained by a frequent and merciless use of the lash, and prisoners were worked in the shoe-shops on Sunday, while there were numbers of favored prisoners in the institution who were mildly dealt with under all circumstances.

The average number of prisoners in the Penitentiary for the seven months preceding July 31, 1881, was 618; their earnings

were \$42,369.27; their expenses were \$34,692.07; the profit was \$7,677.20. Male prisoners sentenced for one year or more, 312; females, 30; total, 342; male prisoners less than one year, 232; females, 26; total, 258; grand total, 600.

Of the prisoners in the Penitentiary on the 1st of January, 1881, 8 were sentenced for life; the whole number of "long term" prisoners was 342; of those sentenced from 6 to 10 months, 98; for less than 6 months, 160.

The average earnings *per capita* of the convicts *per diem* for the seven months preceding the 1st of January, 1881, was $32\frac{3}{10}$ cents; the expenses *per capita per diem* was $26\frac{4}{10}$ cents. Salaries of the principal officers of the Penitentiary were: Warden, \$2,700; engineer, \$1,200; roundsman, \$1,000; hall-keeper, \$1,000; assistant hall-keeper, \$1,000; clerk, \$900; door-keeper, \$900; shop-keeper, \$900, and thirteen other shop-keepers receiving each \$900 per year; two matrons received each \$480 per annum; two assistant matrons, \$360 each per annum.

The County Morgue.—By the act creating the Board of Commissioners of Charities and Corrections, the control, management and custody of the County Morgue was given to that Board. Previous to July 16th, 1869, there existed for a time a place for the reception of those found dead, called the "County Dead House," a cheap, inconvenient affair, more of a nuisance than anything else. On July 2, 1869, a written complaint against this building from Drs. Jones and Whitehill, Coronors of the county, was presented to the Board of Supervisors, earnestly asking that some action might be taken in regard to the matter. On the 16th of the same month, plans were presented to the Board for the erection of a morgue for the county, which were favorably received, and soon thereafter the same was in process of erection near the County Jail in Brooklyn, and in due time was completed. It contained office, post-mortem room, exhibition room, retiring room, inquisition room, jury room, each of which were appropriately and handsomely furnished. On January 11th, 1870, Mr. John Leary was appointed Keeper of the Morgue, and March 14th, 1870, rules and regulations for the government of the Morgue were adopted, providing, among other things, that it should be open at all hours of the day and night for the reception of dead bodies; that the exhibition room should be kept open daily to the public from sunrise to sunset. Bodies were to remain in the exhibition hall if not recognized, at the discretion of the coronor. When identified, bodies were to be immediately withdrawn to a private room. A book was to be kept in which citizens could record the names of missing friends, describing their persons, clothing and address of relatives. There should be an alphabetical list of all identified persons; the clothes of unrecognized bodies should be washed and preserved for six months. The attendants at the Morgue shall under no circumstances ask from relatives or friends of deceased persons, under any pretext, fees for services rendered.

On July 15th, 1880, the Supervisors decided to remove the Morgue to the northeast corner of the jail yard. December 24th, 1880, contract for the removal and repairs was duly entered into, and the new Morgue was again ready for occupancy about the middle of May, 1881.

On the 6th of October, 1881, the Morgue was, by a resolution of the Board of Supervisors, duly transferred to the charge of the Commissioners of Charities and Corrections, and Mr. Patrick Maguire was appointed keeper. His first annual report for the seven months preceding July 31st, 1881, is meagre, but shows that during that time twenty-three bodies had been brought to the Morgue; all of them except two were recognized.

Present Officers of the Charities Department.—As we have now presented the history of the creation and organization of the Board of Commissioners of Charities and Corrections, and a history of their first seven months of their administration, it is proper to give the names of the officers at the head of the departments under the Commissioners: D. C. Toal, *chief clerk*; T. H. Glass, *assistant clerk*; Wm. Sullivan, *counsel*; Joseph Short, jr., *district office clerk*; T. J. Donovan and Francis Doyle, *district office assistant clerks*; J. S. Young, M.D., Joseph Cramer, M.D., C. E. Demund, M.D., Matthew Smith, M.D., *district office physicians*.

Hospital: P. L. Schenck, medical superintendent; H. Plymton, M.D., J. L. Roseboom, M.D., C. F. Newman, M.D., F. Little, M.D., G. H. Coddington, M.D., assistant physicians; John L. Zabriskie, M.D., and Tennis Schenck, M.D., consulting physicians; Homer L. Bartlett, M.D., and Joseph Hutchinson, M.D., consulting surgeons.

Hospital for Incurables: John A. Arnold, M.D., medical superintendent.

Insane Asylum: John C. Shaw, M.D., medical superintendent; John L. Woodside, M.D., George Convery, M.D., assistant physicians.

The officers in the department of the *Penitentiary* have been previously given.

About the 15th of January, 1882, the two cottages to be erected on the Poor House (Incurable Hospital) grounds at Flatbush were completed, and on the 18th of that month the Board of Supervisors were formally notified that the same had been accepted by the Board of Commissioners of Charities and Corrections.

On the morning of the 21st of February, 1882, a disastrous fire occurred at the Lunatic Asylum, partially destroying one wing of the building, and suddenly depriving one hundred and seventy-five patients of their accommodations at a time when the weather was intensely cold.* On February 23, 1882, Hon. A. H. W.

Van Sicken, President of the Board of Commissioners of Charities and Corrections, in a very able and succinct communication addressed to the Board of Supervisors, set forth the situation of the Asylum after the fire and called their attention to the general condition of that institution. "The Lunatic Asylum," he said, "was entirely inadequate to accommodate, with any degree of comfort, the large number of inmates confined in it—a number which was being added to, almost daily. Such accommodations have been furnished for relieving this great overcrowding by the erection of two cottages on the ground of the Asylum for Incurables; but this is mere temporary relief. Even now the pressure for more room is nearly as great as it was before they were erected. The same state of affairs exists at the Hospital for Incurables. It is impossible to care for the number of inmates which a population of over half a million makes necessary in buildings constructed to meet the wants of ten, fifteen and twenty-five years ago. It is evident that our county has not kept pace in its public institutions with the rapidly increasing yearly demand made upon them."

President Van Sicken continues: "The female department of the Almshouse is in a worse condition than any other institution under this Board. At the present writing there are over 400 inmates in the building, many of them old and feeble women, some of them so advanced in years that they are unable to leave the room in which they sleep, and were they able to do so there would be no place for them to go, all available space being occupied for sleeping accommodations. In a sanitary point of view, this is certainly reprehensible, as during cold and stormy weather it is impossible to ventilate their apartments."

He then calls attention to the old, damaged, steep and narrow stairways connecting the different floors of the building, and points out the frightful consequences that would follow the breaking out of a fire in the building, and recommends some appliances for aiding the escape of the inmates from the institutions on the County Farm in case of fire. He concludes by asking the Supervisors for an appropriation of \$30,000 for improvements and repairs on the Asylum, exclusive of the amount necessary to repair the Asylum in its damage by fire. The Board of Supervisors responded promptly and favorably to all of this communication.

September 14, 1882, A. H. W. Van Sicken, President of the Board of Charities and Corrections, presented to the Board of Supervisors a very exhaustive report on the subject of an adequate provision against fire at the Poor Establishment of the County at Flatbush, which was very favorably received by the Board. In

* The fire occurred on the male side, at six o'clock A. M., destroying two wards, with other serious damages to the building, and was the immediate cause of the death of three patients, two of whom were burned to death and one died of cardiac syncope, caused by fright. The fire was caused by one

of the patients, with some soiled clothing on his back, which took fire without his knowledge from a gas jet under which he passed. The clothing with the fire smouldering in it was thrown into a closet where there was a straw bed; five minutes afterwards smoke was seen issuing from the closet. Upon opening the doors flames burst out in such volumes as to baffle all attempts at suppression. It was to the gallant efforts of the Fire Department that the county is indebted for the safety of the remainder of the building.

September Joseph Reeve was appointed Commissioner of Charities and Corrections, in place of James Ryan, whose official term was to expire December 31, 1882.

The annual report of the Commissioners of Charities and Corrections for the year ending July 31, 1882, with the reports of the heads of the different departments of the Poor Establishment, shows that there were remaining in all the departments on July 31, 1881, 673 in Almshouse; 381 in Hospital; 308 in Hospital for Incurables; 868 in Asylum; 653 in Penitentiary; total, 2,883; admitted and born during the year, 2,558 in Almshouse; 3,970 in Hospital; 110 in Hospital for Incurables; 353 in Asylum; 1,000 in Penitentiary; 7,991 total; totals, in Almshouse, 3,231; Hospital, 4,551; Hospital for Incurables, 418; Asylum, 1,221; Penitentiary, 1,653; total, 10,874; died and discharged during the year, Almshouse, 2,442; Hospital, 4,013; Hospital for Incurables, 42; Asylum, 438; Penitentiary, 1,077; total, 8,012; remaining July 31, 1882, Almshouse, 789; Hospital, 338; Hospital for Incurables, 376; Asylum, 783; Penitentiary, 576; total, 2,862; cared for in the institutions, 10,874; average number in institutions during the year, 2,979; average cost of each person supported during the year, \$89.95; per week, \$1.73; total amount of bills paid and due, \$366,612.63; total amount of cash receipts, \$98,645.33. This report was signed by A. H. W. Van Siclen, President; Brewster Kissam and James Ryan, Commissioners.

The Superintendent of the Almshouse reports 673 inmates remaining in it on July 31, 1881; received during the year upon Commissioners' orders, 1,798; received on vagrant commitments, 20; from other institutions, 740; total, 2,558; which, with the 673 in the institution July 31, 1881, makes 3,231; discharged during the year, 1,750; transferred to other institutions, 610; absconded, 7; died, 75; number remaining July 31, 1882, 789; County paupers, 76; males, 306; females, 483; children, 73; adults, 716; natives, 285; foreigners, 501.

The report of Dr. John A. Arnold, Medical Superintendent of the Kings County Hospital, for the year, shows that there were remaining there on July 31, 1881, 197 males, 184 females; total, 381; admitted during the year, 2,372 males, 1,979 females; total, 4,351; recovered, males, 1,448; females, 1,228; total, 2,676; improved, males, 409; females, 272; total, 681; unimproved, males, 62; females, 53; total, 115; died, males, 304; females, 237; total, 541; total number discharged and died, males, 2,223; females, 1,790; total, 4,013; remaining July 31, 1882, males, 149; females, 189; total, 338; totals, males, 2,372; females, 1,979; total, 4,351.

The total number of patients shows an increase of 670, and an increase of 1,431 over the year ending July 31, 1880. The total number of patients treated, known as "out-door patients," for the year ending July 31, 1882, was 1,521; these are not included in the foregoing. There were 124 children born in the Hospital during the year; of the mothers 58 were married, and 63 single.

During the year Dr. H. Plimpton resigned the position of Acting Medical Superintendent, to accept a position on the Asylum staff. Drs. Talmage, Brewster, Little and Newman also resigned, and the consulting staff was increased to its original number, by the appointment of Dr. P. L. Schenck as surgeon, and Dr. J. S. Prout as physician. The ladies of the "*Fruit and Flower Mission*," Madame Rosalie, Commissioner Ropes, of the State Board of Charities, and the ladies of the Local Visiting Committee, continued their visits and errands of mercy to the inmates.

Dr. John C. Shaw, Medical Superintendent of the Insane Asylum, for the year ending July 31, 1882, recommended venti-

lating turrets to back of the wings, for the purpose of keeping the wards free from disagreeable odor; also changes in the heating apparatus, so the sleeping rooms in certain wards could be warmed. At that time, there was not a sleeping room in the Asylum that could be warmed, which was a source of great anxiety to the medical staff and danger to the patients. He also recommended an addition of lands to the Asylum grounds, providing more accommodation, and a better diet, namely: milk, eggs, fruit, vegetables, &c., for the patients, and the erection of a special building, for the proper accommodation of the 100 patients paying board in the institution, as advantageous both to these boarders and to the county, and as increasing the income of the county; the erection of a (frame) amusement hall, at a cost of not more than from \$1,500 to \$3,000.

A strong effort was made during the year to find occupation for as many of the patients as was possible, and in this way a large quantity of valuable and much needed articles of apparel, underwear, bedding, towels, table spreads, embroidery, knitting and other fancy work was made by them.

The report shows that there were remaining in the Asylum on the 31st of July, 1881, males, 329; females, 539; total, 868; admitted during the year, males, 180; females, 173; total, 353; total treated during the year, males, 509; females, 712; total, 1,221; total number discharged, males, 153; females, 194; total, 347; died, males, 52; females, 39; total 91; total died and discharged, males, 205; females, 233; total, 438; remaining August 1, 1882, males, 304; females, 479; total, 783; on probation, males, 6; females, 8; total, 14; recovered, males, 30; females, 34; total, 64; improved, males, 37; females, 48; total, 85; unimproved, males, 84; females, 108; total, 192; improper subjects, males, 2; females, 4; total, 6; totals, males, 153; females, 194; whole total, 347. There were 44 State paupers admitted into the Asylum and discharged therefrom during the year.

The report of the Warden of the Penitentiary for the same year shows that while it was more than self-sustaining during the year, the earnings for convicts' labor were not as large as those of the previous year, notwithstanding the system of furnishing runners or shop waiters, that had been adopted by the Commissioners, added at least \$2,000 per annum to the receipts of the institution, from the fact that the daily average number of convicts on the shoe contract was considerably less than the last year. This was due to the practice of sentencing prisoners to the Jail instead of to the Penitentiary, where they would have to work, thereby relieving the county from their support.

The bill that passed the Legislature the previous winter, mainly through the efforts of the Commissioners of Charities, &c., exempting the Kings County Penitentiary from the operation of the Penal Code, which the Governor failed to sign, was a serious injury to that institution, as it causes the withdrawal of long term prisoners from the Penitentiary, that will have the effect of again making that institution a burden upon the taxpayers of the county.

The daily average number of convicts during the year was 563, a decrease of 55, as compared with the seven months comprising the last year's report. The whole number received was 1,000; the whole number discharged was 1,073. The prisoners were kept constantly employed, unless in the judgment of the physicians they were mentally or physically incapacitated for work. The increase in per capita cost over the previous year was owing to the lesser number of prisoners and a higher cost of provisions.

Dr. Homer L. Bartlett, physician in charge of the Penitentiary Hospital, reports briefly, but ably, the sanitary condition of the Penitentiary, and calls attention to the law regulating punishment of prisoners to confinement in dark cells, as the only punishment inflicted in the Kings County Penitentiary. He had visited all prisoners in such confinement three times in each week, ordering their release when he deemed it necessary.

The highest number of prisoners in the institution was on the

12th day of August, 1881, when there were 658. The lowest number during the same period was on the 3d day of May, 1882, when there were 506. The amount of stock on hand Aug. 1, 1881, was valued at \$1,362.98; there were expended for supplies during the year \$38,134.65; stock on hand July 31, 1882, was valued at \$1,601.92; supplies consumed during the year amounted to \$37,895.91.

John S. Woodside, M.D., Medical Superintendent of the Hospital for Incurables, reports the main building of that institution as much overcrowded; that the cubic space per patient in the sleeping rooms being but 350 cubic feet, when it should be in the neighborhood of 1,000 cubic feet; another defect was a want of proper accommodations for sick, violent or filthy patients; there were no single rooms; the smallest number sleeping together in one room was ten or twelve; the health of the patients during the year had been unusually good, though several cases of small-pox had occurred during the winter; that the patients, both men and women, had been generally employed. The hospital had received close attention from the Ladies of the State Charities Aid Association, with very favorable results. The "Fruit and Flower Mission," of Brooklyn, had exhibited their usual beneficence in bestowing fruits, flowers and other delicacies upon the patients. The death rate had been very low—about $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., not a single death having occurred during the last four months of the fiscal year. The number of patients remaining in the Hospital July 31, 1881, was 144 males, 164 females; total 308; admitted during the year, 36 males, 74 females; total, 110; totals, 180 males, 238 females; total, 418; discharged during the year, 18 males, 7 females; total, 25; died during the year, 12 males, 5 females; total, 17; total number remaining July 31, 1882, was 150 males, 226 females; total, 376.

The report of the Keeper of the Morgue, from the 15th of October, 1881, ending on the 31st July, 1882, shows that during the months of August and September, 1881, the building was undergoing repairs, and that no bodies were received. The total number of bodies for the ten months was 114, of which 66 were identified, and 48 not identified. Of the 66 identified, 21 were interred by the county, making the total number interred by the county 69, 45 being interred by their friends; 25 of these were drowned, 13 were foundlings. Of the whole number brought to the Morgue, 23 were women, 24 still-born infants, and 6 unknown children.

Thus closes the history of the *Superintendent of the Poor*, the subsequent *Commissioners of Charities*, and the later *Commissioners of Charities and Corrections* for the County of Kings.

It is to be regretted that the records and reports of the Commissioners for the year 1883 are not so far completed, at this writing, as to permit of our availing ourselves of them for the conclusion of this chapter.

It is proper, also, to say, in taking leave of the history of the Poor Establishment of Kings County, that the present Board of Commissioners of Charities and Corrections, although less than three years in office, has already inspired the public with confidence in its ability and in the humane manner in which it wields the important administrative duties committed to it.