

THE ROYAL MENTAL HOSPITAL, GLASGOW.

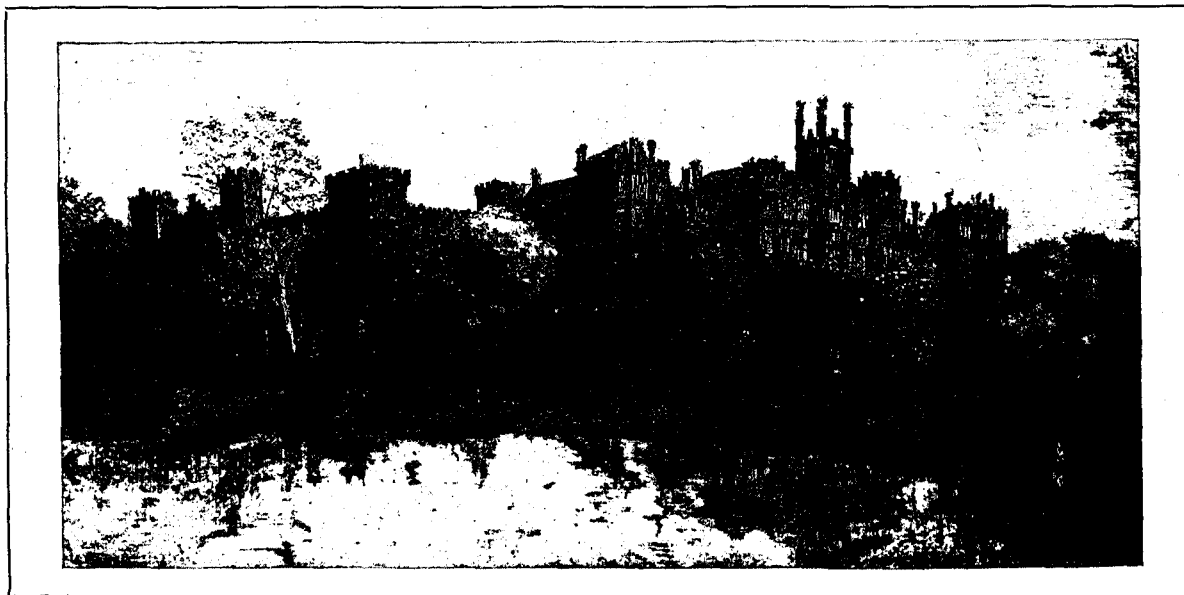
The Royal Mental Hospital of Glasgow is situated in one of the most beautiful parts of the City, and, when you step off the car at the great entrance gates, and enter by a smaller one, adjoining the Lodge, you can scarcely imagine that you are within the boundaries of a hospital for patients suffering from mental disease or, indeed, an institution of any description. Long broad avenues, bordered by tall trees, sweep up to the Hospital through stretches of green lawns and here and there you see the kaleidoscope of a flower garden. At the end of your walk you reach one or other of the fine entrances to the building itself, but, probably, before that Miss Brodie, Matron of the Hospital, will come to greet you and bring you a welcome. From the moment you enter the Hospital you experience a feeling of hospitality and a general courtesy that seems to dispel the sadness, always associated in one's mind with any place connected with the insane.

In the hall, and in many parts of the Hospital, you come across pieces of beautiful old furniture, tapestries, china,

Town's Hospital. Later, ground extending to sixty-six acres, on the Great Western Road, was acquired, and the present imposing edifice stands there now. The new Institution had splendid traditions to build upon, for a copy of the *Edinburgh Review* of 1817, in an article on "Asylums," states "the best establishment beyond comparison in Britain and perhaps in Europe, is that of Glasgow"; that these traditions have been maintained is shown by the following quotation from a fairly recent report of His Majesty's Commissioner: "The occasions on which patients made voluntary recognition of being kindly treated and comfortably provided for were exceptionally frequent."

Since the opening of the District Mental Hospital, the Royal Mental Hospital has been restricted to private patients, but, for a large number of these, a very nominal charge is made.

However much the exterior of the Hospital may please one, the inside gives an even more favourable impression; indeed, it suggests a fine hydropathic rather than a hospital. Padded rooms and strait-jackets are regarded as relics of the dark ages, and a story is told of how a theatrical party once asked for the loan of two strait-jackets, and would



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and other articles of vertu, collected chiefly, we were informed, by a former Medical Superintendent of the Hospital. These beautiful things are not reserved for the benefit of visitors and staff only, for there are very fine pieces in several of the wards, lovely old inlaid satinwood furniture, cabinets of old oriental workmanship, splendid old clocks and fascinating cabinets, suggestive of secret drawers and the mystery of association with many homes before they found a refuge in a mental hospital.

The Hospital was founded in 1814, and was then known as Gartnavel Asylum. It must have been an imposing building then also, to judge from certain old prints; it owes its foundation to a Mr. Robert McNair, a prominent Glasgow citizen of the Nineteenth Century, who, as a Director of the old Town's Hospital, came into touch with the insane of the City. At that time they were kept in the cellars of the Town's Hospital, and so miserable was their condition that, when the river was high, the floors of the cells were often under water. Mr. McNair raised the sum of £7,000 to build the "Glasgow Asylum for Lunatics," and four years later the patients were taken to this building, in Parliamentary Road, from their moist cellars in the

scarcely believe that it was beyond the power of the Medical Superintendent to oblige them. No one is ever locked up or shut away, and a little observation of the groups of patients and nurses one met in the grounds, in the public rooms, and in the parts set aside for the more acute cases, gives plenty of evidence of the trust, and even affection, which the nurses have been able to inspire in their unfortunate patients.

The little bedrooms that open off the long "drawing-room-like" wards are delightfully bright and well supplied with cubic space; evidently there is no restriction to prevent the patients surrounding themselves with little treasures which they had in their own rooms in other places and in happier days. In that section of the Hospital, where the patients pay the higher fees, the furniture is particularly handsome, and, as we have said, often of great value. Flowers and plants abound everywhere, and there is every provision for amusements, including of course wireless sets. There is plenty of music in the wards, and dances and concerts take place at intervals in the great hall with its large platform. Outdoor games are encouraged—tennis, bowling, golf, cricket, curling, etc.—and fixtures are made for competitions

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