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Pencillings in June

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PENCILLINGS IN JUNE.

BY THE

REV. THOMAS W. AVELING, D.D.

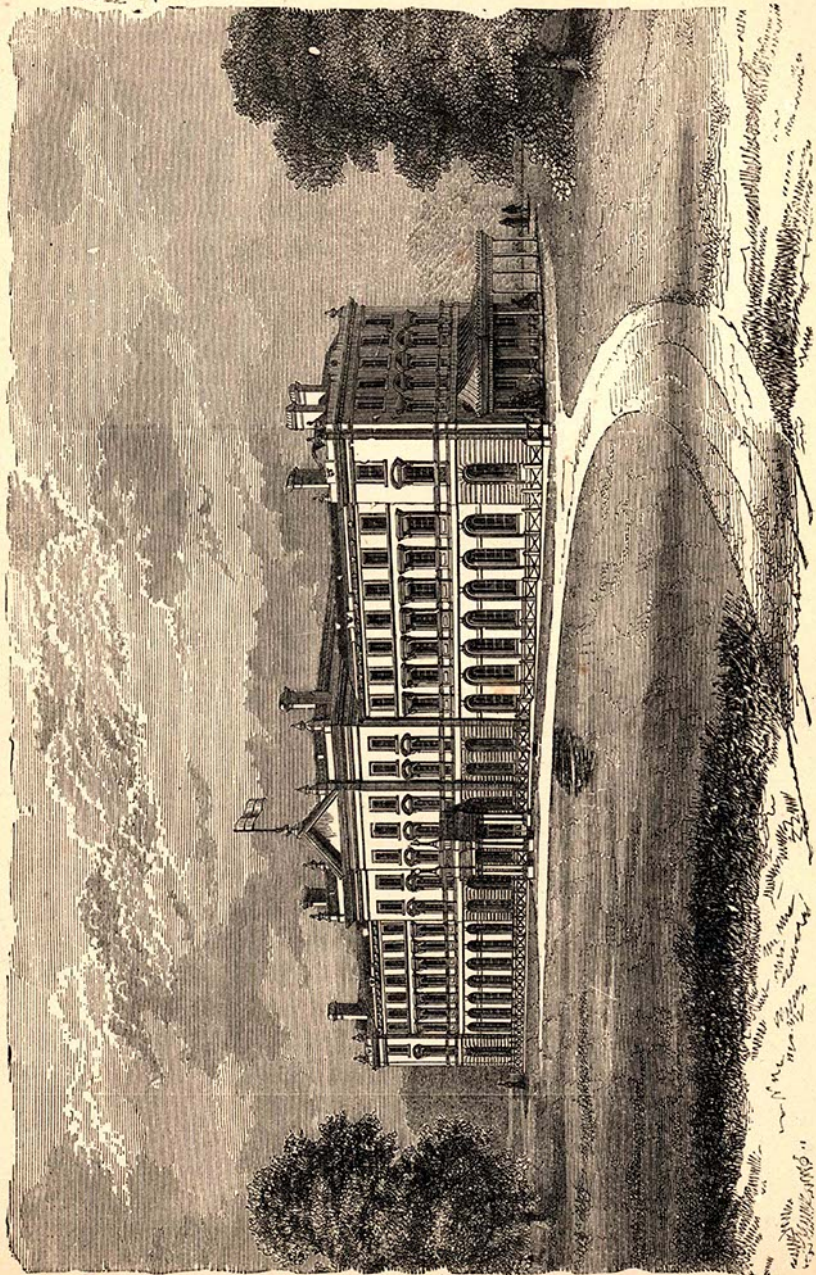
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"For through all Springs, with rainbow-tinted showers,  
And through all Summers, with their wealth of flowers,  
And every Autumn, with its harvest home,  
And all white Winters of the time to come,  
Crooked and sick for ever they must be."  
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London:

PUBLISHED FOR GRATUITOUS CIRCULATION.

1877.

RHN/FU/2/3/2



THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES.



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PREFACE.

THE following delineation has been kindly placed at the disposal of the Board of THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES. It has been already twice issued as a Christmas publication, with the following direct pecuniary result, viz., £1,079 9s. in donations, and £215 9s. in annual subscriptions.

It has been considered advisable to venture upon the present, or third edition, in the belief that it will awaken new interest in the Institution, and, chiefly, that it will secure for it the attention and sympathy of the young.

The following pages are, in reality, a pencil sketch of the Home at Putney: they are a picture rather than an argument. But, as the mere sight of suffering more surely prompts to relief than a multitude of precepts, it is hoped that the tracing of Dr. Aveling may prove a powerful appeal to

those who have not the opportunity of seeing for themselves.

Lest objection be taken to an attempt to elicit sympathy by vivid representation, the Board respectfully submit that the Hospital has claims upon the well-to-do of a solid, public nature. It is a charity of the present day, an expression of the philanthropy of the generation. It has not inherited an endowment from the past, nor has it a debt to hand over to the future. Its operations are far too large to be compassed by the former, and too valuable to be put in peril by the latter. Thanks to Divine Providence, it is a solvent, floating, prosperous undertaking.

In the Institution at Putney 200 Inmates have been maintained during the past year at a cost of £9,356 9s. 8d., and 400 Pensioners have received £7,658 11s. 3d. The cost of administration is almost met by the interest on savings. It is obvious, therefore, that £17,000 at least requires to be raised annually.

The history of THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES has been in a high degree honourable to public benevolence. Founded in 1854, by the genius of the late ANDREW REED, it was fearlessly entrusted to the public care. It was speedily recognised as a member of the already large family of voluntary

charities, and has been so fostered as even to outgrow some of its companions. It has done more—it has drawn public attention to the case of the Incurable, and can appeal, in proof of the fitness of its objects, to other Institutions that have been since established—born, as it may be said, full-grown, without passing through the ordeal of a novel cause and an infant endeavour.

The infancy of the Charity gave promise of the future. Within four months from its birthday (31st July, 1854) a public election was held, and two Inmates and four Pensioners were chosen on the faith of funds to come. From six, the half-yearly rate increased, by degrees, to forty, marking the period of most rapid growth; and up to the present, the means have always been found equal to the twofold task of maintaining the Hospital and the Pension List.

But the circle of the beneficent is limited, and THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES has reached nearly to the circumference. The waste by death yearly thins the ranks of its supporters, and the Board have to appeal earnestly for new ones in their place.

They desire that the case of those for whom they plead should rest upon its merits; but if appeal be wanting they would refer to that made

at the outset by Dr. REED, when presenting, for the first time, to the public the necessity for a new Hospital:—

“Hopeless and Incurable!”

“This, then, is the sad, bald, unhappy, and cheerless condition of THOUSANDS of our fellow-citizens and countrymen. They cannot beg, for they have been accustomed to work: they refuse to be paupers, for they have wooed independence as their better life. They have been struck down from their honourable standing by ruthless disease and accident; and what is to save them from the dreadful extremities of poverty, want, despair, and death?

“What is to save them, if not the hand of CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD? Are we not—the richest and the best of us—heirs to the same frailties; liable to the same fell accidents and diseases; and needing, in one form or other, the self-same sympathies? And is it possible for us, under the force of such considerations, to withhold our compassion? Is not the sufferer our brother? Is he not one with ourselves? Might we not have been called to suffer what he suffers? and should we not cheerfully yield him our utmost help, alike from the convictions of duty and with the tenderness of pity?

“Surely there are none, however exalted, however happy, who can think that such an object is beyond the range of their sympathies! Who that is in health is not exposed to sickness? Who must not be conscious that he owes his honour and his usefulness, his bliss and his power to bless others, to his preservation from *disease* and *accident*? Who might not be, in an instant, struck down by withering and hopeless affliction to the state of the lowest, the most desolate? Our condition is essentially one; let our sympathies be one. Have we health? let us relieve the sick. Have we wealth? let us help the poor. Are we strong? let us uphold the weak. Are we happy? let us feel for the miserable. Let us bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ, the law of kindness and of love!”

FREDERIC ANDREW,

Secretary.

OFFICES, 106, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET,
Christmas, 1877.

ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES,

WEST HILL, PUTNEY HEATH, S.W.

FOUNDED 1854.

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*** The Hospital at West Hill, Putney Heath, is open every week-day, and the public are respectfully invited to pay it a visit.*



PENCILLINGS IN JUNE;

OR A

Visit to the Royal Hospital for Incurables.



LAST Wednesday I paid a visit to the Royal Hospital for Incurables, at Putney, preparatory to preaching a second time for the Institution, on "Hospital Sunday."

Since my first visit, in 1868, many of those who were Inmates then have gone to their long home; but not a few of the old patients remain; and of these almost all remembered me, and the Lecture, on "Jerusalem," which I delivered to them the following year. The very first person elected to the advantages of the Hospital is still in the house, and she received me with a smile of recognition and welcome.

Everything, both within the dwelling and without, was as bright and buoyant, and soothing to the feelings, as it could be: with a lovely and healthy neighbourhood; an extended and pleasant prospect, stretching from the undulations of the country around Putney, up to the Crystal Palace, whose tall towers were distinctly visible. The rooms of the house were all well-lighted, airy, and cheerful; care being taken, even in the colour of the paper on the walls, to present to the languid eyes of the sufferers that which was lively and inspiriting. These walls, themselves, were adorned with beautiful engravings, or pictures; most of them the gift of Mr. Huth, the munificent treasurer, and the principal friend of the Institution. Everything was spotless in its cleanliness, perfect in order and arrangement, and admirably adapted to the wants and woes and physical disabilities of the patients. The Matron is rightly deserving of the name, so motherly and tender is she, even with the querulous, and those whose pains make them impatient; while the servants, male and female, moved about with subdued voice and quiet step, as if desirous to respect the sensitive nerves and unquestionable weakness of the objects of their attention.

Nothing that ingenuity could devise, and a loving forethought provide for these incurables—oh, the deep, sad meaning of that word!—was forgotten.

One simple contrivance showed this. At the foot of the beds of several of the Inmates, who were confined to their couch, was placed a swing glass, on a high frame, which could be so fixed by the attendants before the window, that the patient, though quite recumbent, could see the grounds outside the building. A perpetually changing aspect was given to the scene by the passing and repassing of some of the Inmates, or of visitors; and thus a portion of that outer world, into which the sufferer could not go, and from an active participation in whose engagements she was for ever excluded, was brought, by reflection, into her chamber, and the dulness and dimness of otherwise monotonous life was thus pleasingly invaded. By means of this contrivance some of the patients, whose rooms were on that side of the house which looks towards the Crystal Palace, could, the other evening, see distinctly reflected in the glass many of the splendid fireworks that rose in the air, though the place of display must have been some four or five miles distant.

A lift is in frequent use, to enable the patients—who, though not confined to bed, are incapable of walking, and who are wheeled about in noiseless and easy carriage chairs along the corridors of each story—to descend to the parlours, where many sit for company; some working, if they are able; and some reading or listening to the reading of patients or visitors, or to the music played by some kind friend who, like a General's daughter I met there that day, will come two or three times a week to sing to the inmates, and so while away the hours of the afternoon or evening, that must otherwise hang heavily on the patients' hands.

Most of the female Inmates are unmarried, and many of them have outlived their friends. One, who had been afflicted upwards of thirty years, spoke with deep gratitude of the goodness of God to her, in giving her a home in this Institution, and of the benevolent friends, by whom it was sustained. So that now, when all who once gathered around her in the days when she was a glad and sprightly girl—little dreaming of the long and dreary course of life before her—had one by one passed away, her only helpers, and those from whom the sympathising word and look came for

which the heart hungers, no matter how lowly the dwelling, were the officers and committee, and visitors of this home; from whom she received so much attention and kindness, that her cup of blessing seemed to overflow.

Another patient, an interesting and intelligent girl, who had once filled a respectable position in a family at Stamford Hill, was in one of the rooms where the bed-ridden are found. She was quiet "as a child that is weaned of his mother," though all her woman's yearnings and hopes had been blighted by an accident that had reduced her to her present pitiable and hopeless condition. A fall down stairs had fearfully injured her spine. By degrees the side, feet, and hands became paralysed, through the terrible wrenching of the vertebræ. Now she has no power to move the limbs, except one toe of the left foot, and one finger of the right hand; yet with that last-named solitary member she was able to feed herself, by means of an ingenious contrivance for the purpose.

Not one word of complaint trembled on her lip—not one shade of disappointment or dissatisfaction with the Divine dealings interfered with the calm, peaceful aspect of her countenance; and

though my heart was full of sad sympathy, I blessed Him who had provided that "quiet resting-place" for this wounded and weary sufferer, who, in the midst of buoyant youth and brightness, had seen her prospects suddenly overclouded, and her sun of womanly anticipations go down while it was yet day; who had watched others, her contemporaries and companions, passing her in the journey of life, and go to sweet homes, and wifely honours, and matronly joys, while she remained a helpless cripple; the subject of a lifelong suffering, with no hope of cure; her only prospect—but that, blessed be God, is bright—the one across the river—"over there." She reminded me of a bird, with broken pinion, that some kind and gentle hand had taken up where it had fallen, and given a home in a friendly cage. It does not chafe or flutter in impatience, or beat itself angrily against the bars; but sits silently and movelessly, as the hours pass by; looking out wistfully, now and then, on the green fields, slumbering in the sunshine—over which it will wing its flight no more; and on the woods, waving in the summer breeze, within the shadow of whose leaves its voice will never be heard again.

But *this* caged bird, with broken wing, was

looking out hopefully to the land afar off, where "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick;" where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." Towards that country she seemed at times to turn, with a look as of one who was gazing on that which was very far off, as if arrested by a bright passing vision, and as though on her ear soft sounds were falling, soothing and subduing as a mother's cradle song. As I turned from her bedside her farewell look seemed to whisper to me, "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good;" and I thought of the words of the prophet, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee."

Another case was that of a female, sixty-eight years of age. For forty-seven years she had been an invalid; and for thirty-six of these she had been confined to her bed. Think of that! more than one-half of "the days of our years," which "are threescore years and ten," she had been prisoner in a sick room, and most of that time in the dingy neighbourhood of Bethnal Green—the very name of which, to us who know it, sounds a

mockery. Her powerless limbs were chained to the couch of pain, and over her there seemed to hover the voices which, in Longfellow's poem, make such awful utterance—"For ever, never," "Never, for ever," and the grim spectre of despair began to settle on her threshold. But when, by the interposition of the friends of this Hospital and hers, she exchanged her poor dark dwelling in the East of London for the pleasant and cheerful room in which I saw her at West Hill, it was as though she had been transplanted from a desert to the garden of the Lord. It seemed almost to make her young again.

Mrs. V. has not walked for twenty-one years. She is now seventy; with as sweet a face as ever beamed beneath a bonnet. She had solaced her hours with making a picture of wool, for picture it was—though an imaginary composition—with singular skill of colouring, considering the material of which it was formed. The grouping was admirable, and the work must have whiled away many an hour.

Another patient was quite blind. She was not born so; it was in consequence of a fit. She said

that, one evening when the sun set, she could see as she had done all her life long, but during the night the stroke came, of which there was no premonition. When morning returned it still seemed dark around; but ah! the darkness was within, and not without. Yet with a divine serenity, she lay there, listening to the words of kindness that were uttered, with a silent submission to the overwhelming calamity which had befallen her. There was an eager expression of face, that became perfectly touching and pathetic as she turned in the direction of the speaker, and which seemed almost to compensate for the intelligent glance of the eyes. It was a comfort to her, she said, that when any one spoke of colours she had sufficient remembrance of what they were; and though,

"Light, the prime work of God, to her was extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annulled, which might in part her grief have eased,"

yet as the orbs of memory were still open, she could look out with the spiritual eye, from the depths of that physical darkness which had engirded her, and see light.

Another, sixty-four years old, and who never leaves her bed, has been forty-five years incurable.

She was taken ill suddenly in a workroom, in the midst of her companions, to whom she never afterwards returned: and all those long dreary days the power to use her limbs has been denied her. This, which is one of the saddest cases in the Hospital, is, in another sense, one of the very brightest. When I said, "Then you have no hope of restoration?" she replied, with a sweet smile, "Yes, one bright with immortality." "God," added she, "gave me grace, sir, before He laid me on a bed of suffering. He prepared me beforehand. Every bitter cup has secretly put into it something to sweeten it." Aye, "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," I thought.

When I asked her if she could sit up to read any book, "No," she replied, "this is my library," pointing to two large papers, one on each side of her bed's head, with texts of Scripture; the only literature with which she could solace herself; and this she could read as she reclined, now on one side, and now on the other. "I stored up a good deal in my youth," she said, "which in these latter times I find to be of great use. It comes fresh and beautiful now."

But the room where my chiefest sympathies

were called forth, and to which I went back again before I finally left the hospital, was one in which were three sisters, all suffering from spinal affections.

An indefatigable friend of the Institution, Mr. Dix, heard of these sufferers at Islington, and visited them. He ascertained, by diligent inquiries, the worthiness of the family, and then vigorously and successfully exerted himself to secure the admission of the afflicted ones into the house at Putney.

At seventeen years of age, the first girl became a victim to the disease under which she and her sisters labour—the latter two succumbing earlier to the attack than the eldest. They all three lie in one room—hopelessly incurable; yet around them a calm, moral atmosphere seemed to float, that was redolent of heaven; and the influence of which, on my heart, I think I shall never lose. The quiet submissive spirit; the lady-like gentleness of these women—for now the eldest is thirty years old—and their consistent, simple, and intelligent religious conversation, struck me marvellously, and I thought that what a liberal education is known to do for those who are of humble birth, affliction had done for these sisters; it had spiri-

tualised and refined them to an extraordinary degree. One had as intelligent a forehead as I ever saw. She was able to raise herself a little in her bed; her hands, too, were capable of action; and skilfully and artistically had she used them; for a most splendid bed-pocket, fit for the couch of a princess, was shewn me, which she had worked for the member of the Committee to whom she owed so much. The bright, piercing, intelligent eyes of all three sisters; the sweet *spirituelle* face of one, over whom the genius of poetry had slightly waved her silver wing, and the gentleness of expression in another, apparently the most afflicted, stirred the deepest sensibilities of the soul. My heart ached and rejoiced, at one and the same time; and but from fear of the consequences, and that it would have been misunderstood, and might almost have suggested to these submissive spirits the feeling of discontent with the Divine dealings, I could have wept in deep, deep sadness at the blight which had come over these afflicted girls. I hold in my hand some lines written by one of them, which exemplify my remark about the meekness of spirit with which she received the stroke of her Father's rod:

"I HAVE CHOSEN THEE IN THE FURNACE OF
AFFLICTION."

My home—it is not here,
For my Father dwells above;
And not a moment longer
Than He sees fit, in love,
Will He leave me here below,
Heart-sore, and with eyes oft dim;
But I learn to trust His wisdom,
And will leave it all with Him.

Yet fain would I have flown,
Had "I had wings like a dove,"
Beyond all sin and suffering,
To that bright home above.
For I know, by tender chastening,
My Father doth prepare;
And oft I've cried in wonder,
"Then why am I not there?"

When lo, I heard Him answer,
In tones so soft and sweet,—
"The work I have begun in thee,
Is not, my child, complete,
Only a little while longer:
If slow this trial by fire,
Thou wilt come out all the brighter,
And soon have thy desire.

“For a home of bliss awaits thee,
 And a crown that's for thy brow:
 It's my will that thou shouldst wear it,
 Although, my child, not now.”
 Then let me wait with patience,
 Until I hear Him call,
 A whole life-time of suffering's
 But a moment after all.

And as I wait He whispers,
 “Thou'lt own when the hour is come,
 This suffering was the chariot
 I sent to fetch thee home.”

I was glad to find that the singular case, which I and every previous visitor had noticed, of the patient who for years was able only to move her head, all the rest of the body being paralysed—had so far benefited by the treatment adopted, that she was now able to use her hand, and the writing, which before she had contrived to produce by means of a pencil placed between the lips, she was now able to form by the more natural process of using her fingers.

While I was in the Hospital, the Members of the Hackney and Dalston Choral Union, which

had come to give a concert to the Inmates in the evening, went round from ward to ward in the different corridors where the bedridden patients reposed, and sang some of Moody and Sankey's hymns. Pleasantly their voices stole along the passages, and came floating softly into the chambers, and died in subdued tones around the couches of the sick ones, soothing them in their pains, and wafting their souls, on the wings of melody, over the dark sea of earthly suffering and sorrows towards the radiant celestial shore. “How sweet!” whispered the listeners; whispering, as if they feared to lose a sound—when from the lips of those kind and sympathising visitors rose the refrain, “Safe in the arms of Jesus,” and “Over there, Over there.”

Not unnaturally their pleasure is great at such visits; and a few were evidently gratified when, on seeing a piano in one of the sitting-rooms, and inquiring whether any of the inmates there were able to use it, I offered, if one of them would play, to be the preceptor for the occasion. It appeared that there was but one who had sufficient knowledge of music and the piano to venture on the acceptance of my offer. But,

as all seemed to point to her, at my reiterated request, she was wheeled to the front of the instrument. To my amazement, I found that both the hands of the performer were shrivelled and deformed with rheumatism; only one finger and the thumb of the left hand, and two fingers of the right, having any power in them; yet, with these, she played through, without hesitation, or difficulty, or mistakes, one of the pieces just named, and showed that she had evidently, in other days, known how to do it well. As I fulfilled my promise, the spirit of song soon spread; and my solo gave place to a regular chorus, in which all my neighbours in the room took a part.

Among the men, there were several cases equally hopeless with those in the female wards—one in which the patient is blind, deaf, dumb, and partially paralysed—communication with whom is only effected by making forms of letters and words on his hand.

Yet this pitiable and helpless object is cared for as kindly and tenderly as any one; perhaps more so. Most of them, if able to leave their rooms, seem to delight much in society, and are

seen, more frequently than their suffering sisters, inhaling the breezes out of doors, under the spreading foliage of the trees, or in the grounds of the Institution. I must confess, without any design of instituting invidious comparisons, that the female *patients* appear to me to have more right to that specific designation than the male. One gentleman sufferer said, with a kind of irritability which I could quite understand, however much I regretted it, "I've been ill, sir, for four years—hopelessly, hopelessly."

And I had just been talking with some on the other side of the building, who had been ill *forty* years, and they, too, were suffering "hopelessly, hopelessly"—yet not one complained. I suppose we men are not so used to suffering as our sisters are—hence our impatience. The good Lord will pardon us, for "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust."

One thing struck me much; on making inquiries as to the age of the inmates—all, especially among the females, looked much younger than they really were. I suppose this was the result of possessing and exercising a spirit of contentment.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

An Annual Subscriber has One Vote for Half-a-Guinea, and an additional Vote for every additional Half-a-Guinea. A Life Subscriber has One Vote for Life for Five Guineas, and an additional Vote for Life for every additional Five Guineas.

Subscriptions received at the Office, 106, Queen Victoria Street, E.C., by the Secretary, Mr. FREDERIC ANDREW, to whom all orders should be made payable; by the Treasurer, HENRY HUTH, Esq., Tokenhouse Yard, E.C.; by Messrs GLYN, MILLS, & Co., 67, Lombard Street; and Messrs. COURTTS & Co., 59, Strand.

Money Orders are payable at Knight-riding Street, E.C.

FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath unto the Treasurer for the time being of THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES, instituted 31st July, 1854, the sum of _____, to be raised and paid by and out of my ready money, plate, goods, and personal effects, which by law I may or can charge with the payment of the same, and not of any part of my lands, tenements, or hereditaments, to be applied towards accomplishing the charitable designs of the said Institution.

THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES was established to relieve and to cherish, *during the remainder of life*, persons above the pauper class, suffering from incurable maladies, and thereby disqualified for the duties of life.

The Institution differs in this respect from the general hospitals, its action commencing where theirs necessarily ceases.

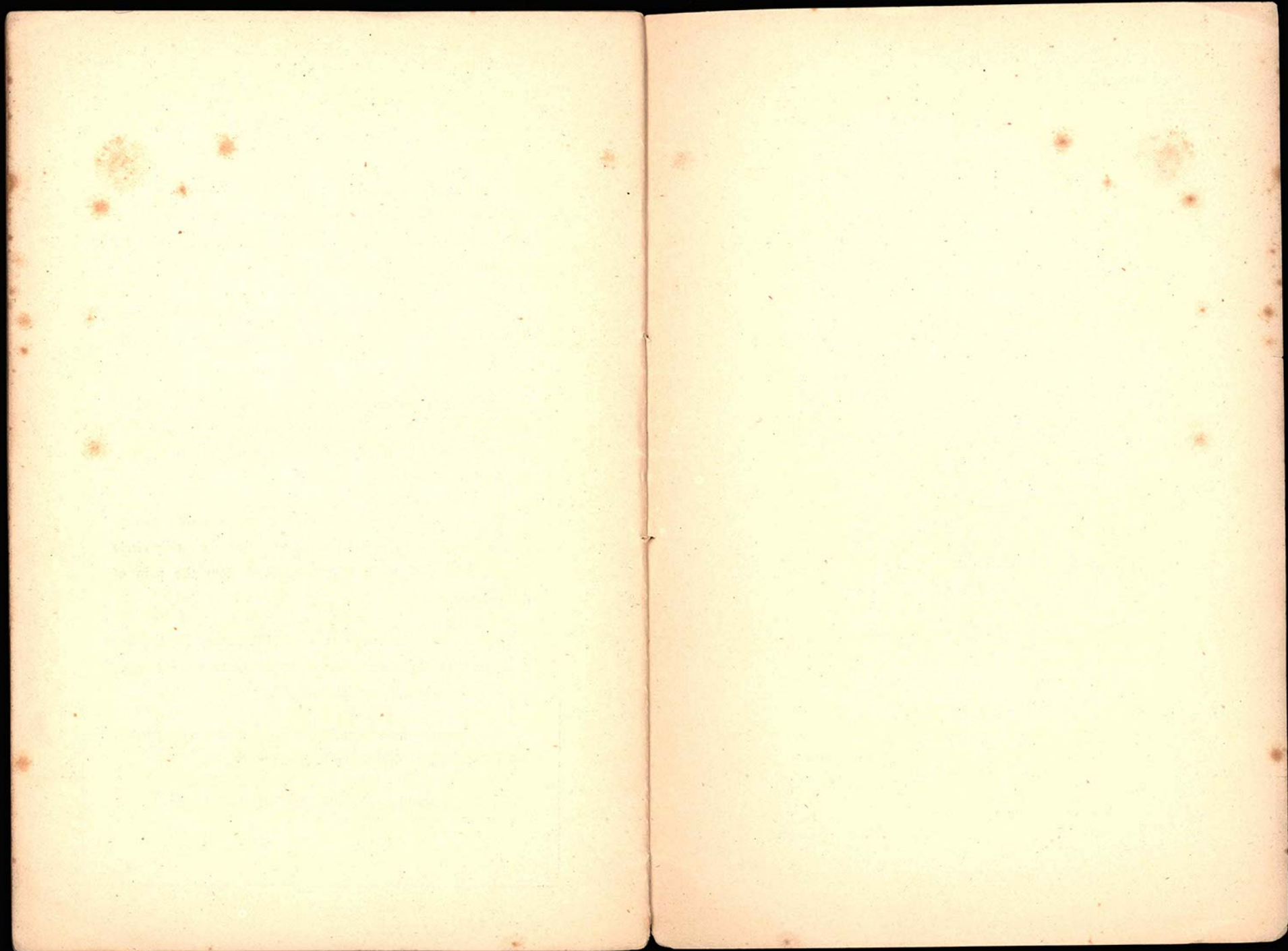
For persons *needing a home* an asylum is provided; medical attendance, nursing, and domestic comforts are supplied, and the endeavour is made to alleviate suffering, and to check the life from which health has departed.

To persons *having a home*, but without the means of support, a pension of £20 a year is given; thus the family circle is unbroken, and the invalid is relieved from the pain of dependence.

The Hospital is situated at West Hill, Putney Heath, near London. The building and grounds occupy twenty-five acres, and the site is healthy and picturesque.

The Institution is NATIONAL in its character, and persons from all parts are admitted to its benefits.

It is supported by voluntary contributions.





MAN IS A CHILD OF SORROW,
AND THIS WORLD IN WHICH WE BREATHE
HATH CARES ENOUGH TO PLAGUE US,
BUT IT HATH MEANS
WITHAL TO SOOTHE THESE CARES;
AND HE WHO
MEDITATES ON OTHERS' WOES,
SHALL
IN THAT MEDITATION,
LOSE HIS OWN.



THE HAND SHOULD BE THE AGENT OF THE HEART.

