

CASTLEBAR UNION WORKHOUSE.

RETURN to an ORDER of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 14 June 1850;—for,

A COPY “of a REPORT addressed to the Poor Law Commissioners for Ireland on the 17th day of May, by Captain *Farren*, Temporary Inspector, with reference to the Condition of Castlebar Union Workhouse.”

Irish Office, London, }
14 June 1850. }

G. Trundle.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed, 17 June 1850.

COPY of a REPORT addressed to the Poor Law Commissioners for Ireland on the 17th May, by Captain *Farren*, Temporary Inspector, with reference to the Condition of Castlebar Union Workhouse.

(No. 28,677/50).

CASTLEBAR UNION.

Gentlemen,

Castlebar, 17 May 1850.

No. 24,071/50.

WITH reference to your letter of the 3d instant, numbered as per margin, enclosing a copy of a letter received from the Honourable Mr. Cavendish upon the subject of a report made by the medical officer of the Castlebar Union workhouse, relative to the state of the establishment, I have the honour to transmit a copy of the report in question, dated 20 April 1850 (marked A.), and also the statement of the master of the workhouse, taken by me on the 10th and 14th instant (marked B.), together with some other documents bearing upon the matter.

The report of the medical officer details the state in which he found the probationary wards of the workhouse at certain hours on particular days during the period commencing 6th April, and ending 19th April last, and the principal points adverted to are the crowded state of the workhouse; the number of persons in the probationary wards; the fact of the paupers in those wards wearing their own clothing, and not union garments; the absence of bedding in the probationary wards; the use of straw therein, and on one occasion the scanty supply of that article, and on others the want of it altogether; the want of water on one occasion; the state of the privies connected with the probationary wards; the fact of children being placed in the upper probationary wards; and the small size of the yards attached to these probationary wards, viz. the upper ones.

With regard to the number of inmates in the workhouse and auxiliary buildings, the annexed statement (marked C.), which I have extracted from the morning slates furnished by the master to the Board of Guardians, shows the number of inmates in the workhouse and each of the auxiliary buildings on the undermentioned dates, also the total workhouse accommodation, and excess in number of inmates, if any.

The master generally furnishes a morning slate to the guardians twice a week; the statement (C.) contains extracts from all the slates that were forthcoming when called for by me.

COPY OF REPORT BY CAPTAIN FARREN ON THE

By this statement it appears that on the

Morning of the 6th April	the excess in numbers amounted to	264
" 11th "	" " " "	147
" 13th "	" " " "	331
" 20th "	" " " "	326
" 23d "	" " " "	262
" 27th "	" " " "	361
" 2d May	there were vacancies for	- - 7
" 4th "	the excess in numbers amounted to	101
" 8th "	there were vacancies for	- - 9
" 9th "	" " " "	- - 50
" 10th "	the excess in numbers amounted to	81

And it appears that on the mornings of

April 6th,	there were 132 persons in the probationary wards.
" 11th,	" none.
" 13th,	" 121 " " "
" 20th,	" 143 " " "
" 23d,	" 98 " " "
" 27th,	" 162 " " "
May 2d,	" none.
" 4th,	" none.
" 8th,	" none.
" 9th,	" none.
" 10th,	" 86 " " "

With regard to the detailed statements in the medical officer's report, I have questioned the master of the workhouse upon the subject, and his explanation as to the state of the probationary wards on each of the dates specified in the report is herewith transmitted (marked B.).

The medical officer states, "On Saturday, week ending 6th April, there were 1,227 inmates in the workhouse, exclusive of all the auxiliary workhouses, and of this number, 132 persons of those admitted on the previous Thursday and Friday remained in the probationary wards, and 57 of them continued in this ward, Male Bath-room, up to Wednesday night 10th of April without any change of linen or of clothes, and without any other bed than straw, and without any bed-clothes whatever, but wearing day and night the tattered rags they had on their persons before admission." "On Thursday, 11th April, 234 paupers were admitted, of whom 136 remained in the probationary wards;" and the medical officer goes on to say, that "as their state after being admitted seems calculated to increase very considerably the risk to be apprehended from overcrowdedness, he begs to submit to the Board the condition in which he found them at the different periods stated in his report.

The master of the workhouse in explanation states,—

"At this period, viz. between the 6th April and 19th April, the supply of clothing was very scanty, and the officers of the house were obliged to wait until paupers discharged themselves, when the clothing which these paupers who might discharge themselves would be washed to be given to others."

Note.—I give below a statement of the number of paupers who left the workhouse during each week, commencing 3d February and ending 11th instant, in order to illustrate this observation.

Week ended : 1850.	Number of Paupers who left the Workhouse.	Week ended : 1850.	Number of Paupers who left the Workhouse.
February 9th -	- - 31	March 30th -	- - 299
" 16th -	- - 39	April 6th -	- - 174
" 23d -	- - 67	" 13th -	- - 157
March 2d -	- - 78	" 20th -	- - 96
" 9th -	- - 72	" 27th -	- - 88
" 16th -	- - 188	May 4th -	- - 108
" 23d -	- - 207	" 11th -	- - 154

The master continues: "At this time the water pipes of the workhouse were out of order, so that there was not a sufficient supply of water to wash the clothes, and the accumulation of sheets, rugs, and blankets requiring to be washed was very great; the supply of clothing was not so great, but even it could not be washed, for the same reason; and added to the want of water, the contractor for the supply of turf furnished the same very irregularly and in scanty quantities, so that there was not sufficient even for cooking; and owing to this conduct of the contractor, the master was obliged to go to town to purchase turf. Efforts were made to draw water from a spring outside the workhouse gate in tubs. The person who had contracted to put the pipes in order left his contract incomplete, although repeatedly called upon by the guardians to fulfil his engagements, and the guardians kept back the amount to be paid, in consequence of this default. He subsequently came to arrange the pipes, and there was an improvement for some time."

The master also states, "There was some new bedding supplied for the auxiliary workhouse then fitting, but the master was unwilling to place this in the probationary wards for the use of persons recently admitted, until these persons could be properly clothed, and the bedding would not have been in a fit state to send to the auxiliary workhouse when that building would be ready."

The master adds that these observations apply to the whole period specified in the report of the medical officer, viz., from 10th April to 19th April.

We now come to the specific days and dates named by the medical officer, and to the detailed observations in his report.

Dr. Ronayne states: "April the 11th, Thursday night, nine o'clock. Probationary Ward, No. 2, (bath-room). Both doors and hinged portion of window closed; ward measures 22 feet by 14 feet, but a bath and boiler, permanent fixtures on floor, occupy 35 feet of its surface; boiler without a lid, diffusing its steam through the room, together with the respiration of its overcrowded inmates, 136 persons, and the exhalations from their compressed and ragged bodies, rendered the air of the apartment offensive, sickening, and oppressive; children screaming for drink; women stated they had given them some of the warm water out of the boiler to allay their thirst; six of them were infants on the breast; no beds, nor straw, nor bed-clothes, nor water for drinking in the ward; no water in pipes."

The master in explanation states, "With regard to Thursday, the 11th April, that he frequently visited the probationary wards, and that he does so constantly, whether they are occupied or not, and that he frequently visits them, when occupied, at very late hours at night and early in the morning; that on these occasions he finds that the inmates have closed the windows, and he causes them to be opened; that he takes care that water is placed in a tub for the use of the persons in the probationary wards, and that he is sure that on the night of Thursday, the 11th April, water was so placed, although it might have been used at the time the medical officer visited the wards; that the custom is to place water in the probationary wards two or three times a day, and again about 10 or 11 o'clock at night." The master states, "that he has frequently gone into the probationary wards at night when the inmates are asleep, and found that there was water in the buckets; he knows that water was put in the probationary wards on Thursday night, the 11th, both before and after the visit of the medical officer;" and adds, "that it is the case that paupers will make unnecessary calls for water, as he, the master, has often seen water in the wards when such calls have been made." Also, "that as Thursday, the 11th, was the day for admission of paupers, and consequently the pressure of duty upon the whole establishment was very severe and heavy, and a new porter appointed at the same time, it was impossible to have the straw placed in the probationary wards at the hour of the medical officer's visit, viz., nine o'clock; but it was afterwards placed there on that night."

That, "with regard to the boiler being without a lid, it must have been broken that day; that is, the hinge of the boiler lid was broken; that it was repaired the next day; that hot water was in the boiler for the purpose of washing the upper probationary wards next morning, and in consequence of the state the

pipes were in there was no other means of having hot water in the morning in sufficient time, the boilers in the kitchen being required for food."

Note.—Twelve boilers were ordered from Glasgow by the guardians, some time since; the manufacturer has been repeatedly urged to forward them; and in the last communication received from Glasgow it was stated that the boilers were ready, and were awaiting the departure of a ship for Westport, and that it was expected that a vessel would be laid in the berth for that port in eight days from that date, 7th May, so that I trust they are now on their way.

The master further states, "That at the time the medical officer visited the bath-room on the night of the 11th April, at nine o'clock, none of the persons had been removed to the upper probationary wards, which was done at a late hour; so that these 136 persons occupied three wards, viz., the two lower probationary wards (in which they were when visited by the medical officer), and one upper ward at night. That they were not placed in the other, that is, the fourth, because the privies were being cleaned out at this time, and the persons who were employed at this work cleaned out one at a time; that the order of the Board of Guardians for cleansing out the privies was made by the Board on the 6th April, upon a report on the master's journal stating that it was requisite."

The report of the medical officer continues: "12 April, Friday night, eight o'clock. Number of inmates divided between male and female bath-rooms; a scanty supply of straw for some of them; no bed covering."

"April the 13th, Saturday night, half-past eight o'clock. Number of inmates in male and female bath-rooms, 122 persons; no beds, not even straw for the night; no bed-clothes; all wearing their own tattered rags day and night. Some of them stretched on the earthen floor of the ward, and many of them in a sitting posture, holding their children in their arms and laps, and begging for as much straw as they might rest their children on. There were 40 of them in the female bath-room, and 82 of them in the male bath-room, without a seat on which to sit or rest during the day, or a bed, or even straw, on which to lie at night. Within six feet of the window of this ward is the privy, without a drop lid; night soil flowing over level of drop, and the floor of the privy covered with the same. To the noxious and offensive exhalation issuing from this surcharged cesspool of human ordure, 52 broken panes in the window offered so many unobstructed passes, and which, diffusing itself through the ward, renders the air, already vitiated by its overcrowded, filthy, and ragged inmates, foul, fetid, and pestilential."

"April the 14th, Sunday night, half-past nine o'clock. Number of inmates in both bath-rooms, 116 persons; night very wet and cold; no beds nor bed covering; no straw for the night; stench from ward and privy intolerably offensive."

The master in explanation states, "With regard to the scanty supply of straw on 12th April, a great deal of straw was used at this time, as it could only be used for one night in the probationary wards, and the weather being wet it was difficult for the contractor to supply it; and although at the hour of the medical officer's visit, at eight o'clock on that evening, the inmates (122) were divided between male and female bath-rooms, a portion of them were transferred at a later period of the evening to one of the upper probationary wards to sleep." That, "with regard to the state of the privy on the 13th, the person employed was cleansing out one of the others at this time."

The master also states, "That on Saturday the 13th he sent a man to the town for the purpose of purchasing straw, and gave the assistant master money to pay for it, but it could not be procured."

This money, the master states, was placed at his disposal by order of the Board of Guardians, on a previous occasion, to purchase milk, in consequence of the contractor for that article not having supplied it of a proper description, and the balance remained in the master's hands to be applied to similar cases of emergency.

The master states, "That the contractor for straw was also written to several times upon the subject, and that he, the master, reported the circumstance in his journal on Saturday; that as it was impossible for the master to procure straw

on the Saturday none could be placed in the probationary wards on Sunday, the 14th; that on Monday, the 15th April, the contractor sent in a supply of straw."

It does not appear that any substitute for the straw was provided by the master for the inmates of the probationary wards on the nights of Saturday the 13th, and Sunday, the 14th April.

The report of the medical officer continues, "April the 19th, No. 1, Male Probationary Ward occupied by 74 children and four women; only one form, nine feet long, in the room; all the children seated on the floor. Yard small, narrow, and confined, only 32 feet by 22 feet in its longest and widest part; yard generally not supplied with water. Privy within 20 feet of entrance door."

"No. 2, Male Probationary (bath-room), 22 feet by 14, occupied by 69 persons, without a change of linen or clothes, but wearing their own tattered and filthy rags night and day, since their admission on 11th April; no seat or form in the ward on which they might sit and rest."

"No. 1, Female Probationary, occupied by 34 girls, and one wardswoman. Yard narrow and confined. Privy without a drop-lid, within 20 feet of door."

"No. 2, Female Probationary (bath-room), 22 feet by 14 feet, after allowing 35 feet for bath and boiler; about $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet of surface for day and dormitory accommodation, a space which would seem incompatible with the healthful existence of human life."

The master in explanation states, "With regard to the 74 children, and four women, who were in Probationary Ward, No. 1 (this is an upper ward, and has a boarded floor), at the time of the medical officer's visit on the 19th April, these children do not sleep in that ward at night, and did not do so on the night in question; and the yard alluded to is not used by them for recreation, but they are sent out in charge of the four women to walk in the workhouse grounds; they are sent out for half an hour before breakfast, and again after breakfast, and are kept out as much as possible during the day, when the weather is fine; so that they have been kept in the probationary ward in question as little as possible during the day. With regard to the situation of the privy, it remains as originally constructed when the workhouse was built." It should be added, that this ward (an upper one) is entered by a flight of stairs from the entrance door in question.

With regard to the numbers in No 2, Male Probationary (bath-room), and No. 2, Female Probationary (bath-room), (both rooms on the groundfloor), the master states, "that the persons found therein by the medical officer did not all sleep in these two rooms, but that a portion of them were drafted to one of the upper probationary wards at night."

And with respect to No. 1, Female Probationary (an upper room, which has a boarded floor), occupied by 34 girls and one wardswoman, the master states that "these children do not sleep therein at night, and did not do so on the night of the 19th, and that these children use the grounds of the workhouse, and not the yard, for recreation."

With regard to the privy without a drop-lid, the master states that the guardians have advertised for proposals from persons willing to execute necessary works required in the workhouse, &c., and that this is amongst the details of work to be done.

The master further states that on Thursday the 25th April a building called Walshe's Brewery, which had been fitting for an auxiliary workhouse, was given over by the contractor, and on Wednesday the 24th April the master sent in a supply of bedding, with a view to its occupation by paupers on Thursday the 25th, but that on the latter day the whole of these articles of bedding were seized upon a decree given by the Quarter Sessions Court to a creditor of the union, for a sum of 17*l.* 6*s.* 10*d.*, and they were carried away by the bailiffs; that the guardians gave a cheque for the amount on Saturday the 27th, and on Monday evening, the 29th April, the things were returned; that on the Tuesday following 100 female paupers occupied this building, that on the next day 80 were added, and subsequently 20 more, and that 50 others were also transferred to this auxiliary building, making 250 in all. The master also states that by great exertion on the part of himself and the matron all the females in the workhouse were clothed in union garments on the 30th April, on which date it would appear there were no inmates whatever in the probationary wards.

The master further states that on the 10th May (the date on which he made his statement), there were 86 persons in the probationary ward (recent admissions) in their own clothes, but that they were provided with bedding the property of the union; and he adds, that the remaining portion of the premises called Walshe's Brewery has been given over to the guardians, and that he, the master, has received instructions to prepare the specification of the necessary alterations, and that this portion of the premises will accommodate 200 additional paupers; also that a portion of the building constructing on ground adjoining the workhouse site is on the point of completion.

I have now gone through the details specified in the report of the medical officer, together with the explanations of the master on each point.

These explanations are material in many respects. It is shown that, although at the time of the medical visits the persons recently admitted to the workhouse were divided between the two lower probationary wards, they did not all sleep in these wards, but that a portion of them were in every instance drafted to one of the upper wards to sleep at a period of the evening later than the visits of the medical officer; that although at the hour the medical officer visited the ward on the 11th April there was no water then in one of the probationary wards, water had been placed there before the visit of the medical officer, and that it was placed there after his visit; that on one night, the 11th, although the medical officer saw no straw in the ward when he made his visit, it was placed there at a later hour on the same evening, and the cause of the delay is stated by the master; the scanty supply of straw on the 12th, and the want of it on the 13th and 14th April, are also explained, and the measures taken by the master to obtain it, but without success, stated. It is also shown that an order was given by the Board of Guardians on the 6th April for cleansing out the privies, and that at this period the work was in course of operation; it is also shown why the persons in the probationary wards were not clothed in union garments; and a combination of circumstances of an exceptional nature are adverted to in explanation, amongst others, the state of the water-pipes, the conduct of the contractor relative thereto, and also the conduct of the turf contractor. The master also states why the probationary wards were not supplied with bedding; viz. that he had a supply for the auxiliary workhouse then fitting, and that if this bedding had been given to the persons in the probationary wards in the then condition of the inmates, the bedding would not have been in a fit state to place in the auxiliary building, and hence a greater delay in the occupation of that building would have occurred, and the inmates of the probationary wards would in the end have been kept for a longer period in these wards; and it is shown that the auxiliary workhouse in question was, in fact, ready for the reception of these persons on the 24th April, that is, four days after the date of the medical officer's report, but that owing to the bedding sent there on the 24th April having been seized and carried away by the bailiffs of a creditor of the union, the occupation of this building was delayed until the 30th April, on which date measures had been so arranged by the master that such of the females in the establishment (including those who had been in the probationary wards) as had worn their own clothes received union garments, and the probationary wards were ultimately cleared of the persons alluded to.

These premises so occupied on the 30th April were hired by the Board of Guardians on the 16th March; a portion estimated to accommodate 250 persons was at once handed over by the proprietor, and the remaining portion of the premises then in the occupation of a tenant, it was understood would be vacated on the 1st May; the latter portion it was estimated would accommodate 200 paupers; and it was pending the fitting of the first-named portion of these premises that the persons alluded to in the report of the medical officer remained in the probationary wards.

The circumstances connected with these wards can therefore only be considered as exceptional in their nature; and with the knowledge that the auxiliary building in question would be available, the contractor being continually urged to use dispatch in executing the necessary fittings and alterations, it was not deemed expedient to create a momentary relief in the strain upon the workhouse by removing any of the inmates of the house to out-door allowances, as experience has repeatedly shown that such a transfer of persons from the workhouse to out-door relief invariably aggravates instead of lessening the pressure upon that establishment, the applications for relief under such circumstances being at once multiplied, the number of admissions to the workhouse increased,
and

and the number of voluntary discharges therefrom materially diminished ; moreover, the auxiliary building alluded to was not the only source to which the guardians looked for additional workhouse accommodation. There is now in course of construction on ground adjoining the workhouse site, a range of buildings calculated for the accommodation of about six hundred (600) paupers. The contract for this building was made on the 29th December last, but owing to the want of funds on the part of the guardians the contractor did not then proceed with the work. Efforts were made to obtain a loan from the treasurer and from other parties by advertisement, but without success ; however, the Poor-law Commissioners, under the circumstances, made application to the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury for an advance out of the Rate-in-aid Fund for the purpose, which was granted, and on the 1st March the contractor commenced the work, binding himself to have the two first divisions (about one-half the range of building) ready by the 15th April or 1st May.

The first portion is now completed.

Having attended every ordinary meeting of the Board of Guardians of the Castlebar Union since the guardians came into office on the 1st November last, I feel bound to bear testimony to the anxiety of the Board to extend the workhouse accommodation of the union to meet the pressure of applications for relief ; and the facts I have stated, to which should be added, that another building, accommodating from 120 to 130 inmates, was hired at an early period of the year, are proofs of this desire on the part of the guardians.

Attached to the report is a statement (marked D.), showing the extent of the pressure upon the guardians by applicants seeking relief during the last three months ; and this statement is another illustration of the value of the workhouse test. During the period between the 1st February and 9th May there were 2,988 persons ordered relief in the workhouse by the guardians on Board-days, and of these only 1,710 accepted the relief so offered ; some of these, again, only remained a short time in the workhouse ; these numbers do not include persons ordered to the workhouse at the revisions of out-door relief lists. The number of applicants rejected during the period in question amounted to 7,488, and the number placed on out-relief lists 1,869.

It is well known that the majority of applicants seek relief out of the workhouse, and that only ; and great efforts have been accordingly made by the Board to reduce the numbers receiving out-door allowances. On the 2d March last the total number receiving out-relief amounted to 5,014, and the number on the out-relief lists on the 4th May was 3,665, being a reduction of 1,349. Indeed, considering the altered circumstances of the district compared with the two last years, the more abundant supply of potatoes, the extent of employment under the Drainage and Land Improvement Acts, and from other sources, there is every reason to believe that as soon as the whole of the workhouse accommodation now in course of construction, is made available, the necessity for out-relief will be very materially lessened, and probably altogether removed.

As in the course of this report the subject of clothing and bedding has been adverted to, it is right here to mention that large supplies of blankets, sheeting, ticking for beds and flannel have been received into the workhouse within the last three months, the flannel within the last three weeks.

On the 23d March the following contracts were entered into with a view to meet the extended system of workhouse accommodation contemplated when the buildings referred to shall have been completed :

- 1,500 yards of flannel.
- 2,000 yards of canvas ticking for beds.
- 600 pairs of blankets.
- 3,000 yards of sheeting.
- 5,000 yards of calico for shirts, &c. &c.
- 450 suits of men's clothing.
- 450 suits of boys' clothing.

On the 20th April the contractor for the four latter articles having declined to perfect his bond, alleging as a reason that he had not been paid for former supplies, the next lowest tender for the suits of men's and boys' clothing was accepted, and fresh advertisements were issued for 5,000 yards of calico, 1,000 rugs for beds ; and on the 4th May contracts were entered into for the supply of these articles.

The funds of the union not being sufficient to meet the contractors' bills for portions

portions of the first-mentioned articles supplied from time to time, and the manufacturer of chambray, an article required for the women and children's outer garments, having declined to supply that article unless paid for before delivery, the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, on the application of the Poor-law Commissioners, authorized a further advance of 600 £. to be made to the union out of the Rate-in-aid Fund to enable the guardians to obtain the supplies contracted for; accordingly weekly payments are now being made to the Castlebar Industrial Society who undertook to furnish the flannel, blankets, and ticking; a supply of 3,000 yards of chambray is now on the way to Castlebar, and the suits of men's and boys' clothing are being made up in this town.

I cannot conclude this report without stating my conviction that there is no cause for alarm in the condition of the Castlebar Union workhouse and its auxiliary establishments. On Saturday I made a minute inspection, and the general state of the establishment was satisfactory. In the Female Probationary Ward (lower) I found 44 inmates; they were not crowded, and the room was well ventilated; the privy adjoining had been cleaned out, and the yard was clean and in good order. In the Male Probationary Ward (lower) I found 26 inmates; there was ample space, and the room was clean and airy.

The inmates of these wards had not, it is true, been provided with union clothing, but as soon as the supply of material now on its way arrives, it will at once be made up for the purpose.

Beds and bedding were provided for those persons.

I particularly examined the condition of the class of children alluded to in the medical officer's report as occupying the upper probationary wards; there were 105; they were all clean in their persons, dressed in union clothes, and had a healthy appearance; those who had been for any length of time in the workhouse could be easily distinguished from those more recently admitted, indicating clearly the effects of proper diet, clothing, &c.; great care is bestowed upon these children, many of whom enter the house in a very emaciated state; white bread is allowed them at their meals, attention is paid to their clothing, and the cleanliness of their persons; once in every week each child has a warm bath, and they use the workhouse grounds for recreation. These grounds are kept in a state of much order and neatness, and walks have been specially made for the use of the children.

The Commissioners are well aware from the weekly returns that the rate of mortality in the Castlebar workhouse has been for a very long period comparatively low, and I now enclose a statement (marked E.) extracted from the record of deaths, and other workhouse books, containing the names of all persons who have died in the workhouse during the six weeks ended 11th May, showing the age, date of death, disease, and date of admission to the workhouse, and the following is a classification of the diseases, and the number of deaths under each head, during each of the weeks in question:—

Week ended	Chronic Dysentery.	Chronic Dysentery and Anas.	Chronic Dysentery and Anasarca.	Chronic Dysentery and Infirmity.	Chronic Dysentery and Bronchitis.	Chronic Bronchitis and Anasarca.	Dysentery and Infirmity.	Dysentery.	Dysentery Super-vening on Fever.	Phthisis.	Consumption.	Fever (Typhus).	Fever.	TOTAL.
1850:														
6 April -	9	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
13 - -	7	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	11
20 - -	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	8
27 - -	4	-	-	-	1	-	1	4	-	-	1	-	2	13
4 May -	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	1	11
11 - -	3	-	-	1	-	-	diarrhœa & infirmity, 1	5	1	1	-	-	1	13
	Chronic diseases and infirmity, 39.							Dysentery, 16.	Dysentery supervening on Fever, 2.			Other Diseases, 8.		

By

By which it will be seen that a very great proportion of the deaths were from chronic disorders, and that the diseases peculiarly allied to destitution, such as chronic dysentery and dysentery had the greatest number of victims; thus —

In week ended 6th April, out of 11 total deaths, 9 were from chronic dysentery, and 2 others from a combination of chronic dysentery with other disorders:

In week ended 13 April, out of 11 deaths, 7 were from chronic dysentery, 1 from a combination of chronic dysentery with other disorders, and 2 from dysentery:

In week ended 20 April, out of 8 deaths, 2 were from chronic dysentery, 2 from a combination of chronic dysentery with other disorders, and 3 from dysentery:

In week ended 27 April, out of 13 deaths, 4 were from chronic dysentery, 1 from a combination of chronic dysentery with other disorders, and 5 from dysentery:

In week ended 4 May, out of 11 deaths, 5 were from chronic dysentery, and 4 from dysentery:

In week ended 11 May, out of 13 deaths, 3 were from chronic dysentery, 1 from a combination of chronic dysentery with other disorders, and 5 from dysentery:

For the prevention of which diseases it is scarcely possible that any workhouse arrangements could be entirely successful, as in the majority of such cases the disease is contracted out of the workhouse, and before admission thereto.

Of the condition of the infirmary and fever hospital I cannot speak too highly. Indeed I have frequently, in my reports, had occasion to allude to the unremitting care and attention of the medical officer, Doctor Ronayne, in the performance of his duties; and it is with extreme regret that I inform the Commissioners that his efficient services will henceforth be lost to the union, as he has discontinued to act as medical officer of the workhouse, alleging as a reason the reduction made in his salary by the Board of Guardians, although additional labour has been thrown on his department by the extension of workhouse accommodation.

I cannot concur in the expediency of the course pursued by the guardians in diminishing the salary of the medical officer under such circumstances, but at the same time, as I have been given to understand that this measure has been erroneously connected with the fact of Doctor Ronayne having made his report of the 20th April as to the state in which he found the probationary wards of the workhouse, it is only fair to the Board of Guardians to say that the reduction in the expenses of the medical staff of the union was determined upon several months since, and the resolution reducing the physician's salary to 70 *l.*, and that of the apothecary to 30 *l.*, was in accordance with the determination as expressed in a former minute, limiting the expenses of the medical establishment to 100 *l.* per annum; neither of the resolutions have, however, yet received the sanction of the Poor-law Commissioners.

I have, &c.

(signed) *R. T. Farren*, Captain 47th Regt.

Temporary Poor-law Inspector.

I wish to add that I was not present in the board-room on the 20th April, when the report of Doctor Ronayne was presented and read to the meeting, or when the discussion as to whether it should be placed on the minutes or not took place. I entered the room at a later period of the meeting, and it was by accident that my attention was directed to the report on that occasion. I have already said that four days after the date of the report, a building calculated for the accommodation of 250 persons was declared by the contractor ready for occupation, and was handed over on the fifth day; the contractor was sent for on the 20th, and then promised to have the building ready on the ensuing Thursday.

R. T. F.

(B.)

STATEMENT of the Master of the Castlebar Union Workhouse.

WALTER A. DENNEHY, the master of the Castlebar Workhouse, states: At this period, viz., between the 6th April and 19th April, the supply of clothing was very scanty, and the officers of the house were obliged to wait until paupers discharged themselves, when the clothing which these paupers who might discharge themselves would be washed to be given to others. At this time the water-pipes of the workhouse were out of order, so that there was not a sufficient supply of water to wash the clothes, and the accumulation of sheets, rugs, and blankets requiring to be washed was very great. The supply of clothing was

not so great, but even it could not be washed for the same reason. And added to the want of water, the contractor for the supply of turf furnished the same very irregularly, and in scanty quantities, so that there was not sufficient even for cooking; and owing to this conduct of the contractor, the master was obliged to go to town to purchase turf. Efforts were made to draw water from a spring outside the workhouse gate in tubs. The person who had contracted to put the pipes in order left his contract incomplete, although repeatedly called upon by the guardians to fulfil his engagements, and the guardians kept back the amount to be paid in consequence of this default. He subsequently came to arrange the pipes, and there was an improvement for some time. There was some new bedding supplied for the auxiliary workhouse then fitting, but the master was unwilling to place this in the probationary wards for the use of persons recently admitted, until those persons could be properly clothed; and this bedding would not have been in a fit state to send to the auxiliary workhouse when that building would be ready. These observations apply to the whole period specified in the medical officer's report, viz., from 10th April to 19th April.

With regard to the night of Thursday, the 11th April, the master states that he frequently visited the probationary wards, and that he does so constantly, whether they are occupied or not, and that he frequently visits them when occupied at very late hours at night and early in the morning. That on these occasions he finds that the inmates have closed the windows, and he causes them to be opened; that he takes care that water is placed in a tub for the use of the persons in the probationary wards, and that he is sure, on the night of Thursday, the 11th April, water was so placed, although it might have been used at the time the medical officer visited the wards. The custom is to place water in the probationary wards two or three times a day, and again about 10 or 11 o'clock at night. The master states that he has frequently gone into the probationary wards at night when the inmates were asleep, and found that there was water in the buckets. The master knows that water was put in the probationary wards on Thursday night, the 11th, both before and after the visit of the medical officer.

It is the case that the paupers will make unnecessary calls for water, as he (the master) has often seen water in the wards when such calls have been made.

As Thursday, the 9th, was the day for admission of paupers, and consequently the pressure of duty upon the whole establishment very severe and heavy, and a new porter appointed at the same time, it was impossible to have the straw placed in the probationary wards at the hour of the medical officer's visit, viz. nine o'clock, but it was afterwards placed there on that night.

With regard to the boiler being without a lid, it must have been broken that day, that is, the hinge of the boiler lid was broken; it was repaired the next day. Hot water was in the boiler for the purpose of washing the upper probationary wards next morning, and in consequence of the state the pipes were in, there was no other means of having hot water in the morning in sufficient time, the boilers in the kitchen being required for food.

At the time the medical officer visited the bath-rooms, on the night of the 11th April, at nine o'clock, none of the persons had been removed to the upper probationary wards, which was done at a later hour, so that these 136 persons occupied 3 wards, viz. the two lower probationary wards, and one upper ward at night; they were not placed in the other, that is, the fourth, because the privies were being cleared out at this time, and the persons who were employed at the work cleared out one at a time. The order by the Board of Guardians for cleansing out the privies was made by the Board on the 6th April, upon a report of the master's journal, stating that it was requisite.

With regard to the scanty supply of straw on April 12th, a great deal of straw was used at this time, as it could only be used for one night in the probationary wards, and the weather being wet it was difficult for the contractor to supply it; and although at the time of the medical officer's visit, at eight o'clock on that evening, the inmates, 122, were divided between male and female bath-rooms; a portion of them were transferred at a later period of the evening to one of the upper probationary wards to sleep.

With regard to the state of the privy on the 13th, the person employed was cleaning out one of the others at the time. The master states that on Saturday, the 13th, he sent a man to the town for the purpose of purchasing straw, and gave the assistant-master money to pay for it, but it could not be procured. The contractor was also written to several times upon the subject. The master

reported

reported this on his journal on Saturday; as it was impossible for the master to procure straw on the Saturday, none could be placed in the probationary ward on Sunday the 14th; on Monday the 15th of April the contractor sent in a supply of straw.

With regard to the 74 children and four women who were in Probationary Ward, No. 1, at the time of the medical officer's visit on the 19th of April, these children do not sleep in that ward at night, and did not do so on the night in question, and the yard alluded to is not used by them for recreation, but they are sent out in charge of the four women to walk in the workhouse grounds; they are sent out for half an hour before breakfast, and again after breakfast, and kept out as much as possible during the day when the weather is fine, so that they have been kept in the probationary ward in question as little as possible during the day. With regard to the situation of the privy, it remains as originally constructed when the workhouse was built.

With regard to the numbers in No. 2, Male Probationary (bath-room), and No. 2, Female Probationary (bath-room), the persons found therein by the medical officer did not all sleep in these two rooms, but a portion of them were drafted to one of the upper probationary wards at night; and with respect to No. 1, Female Probationary, occupied by 34 girls and one wards-woman, these children do not sleep therein at night, and did not do so on the night of the 19th; and these children used the grounds of the workhouse, and not the yard, for recreation.

With regard to the privy without a drop-lid, the guardians have advertized for proposals from persons willing to execute necessary works required in the workhouse, &c., and this is amongst the details of work to be done.

On Thursday the 25th April, a building called Walsh's Brewery, which had been fitting for an auxiliary workhouse, was given over by the contractor, and the master states, that on the 24th April, Wednesday, he sent in a supply of bedding with a view to its occupation by paupers on Thursday the 25th, and that on the latter day the whole of these articles were seized upon a decree given in the quarter sessions court to a creditor of the union, for a sum of 17 *l.* 6 *s.* 10 *d.*, and they were carried away by the bailiff; the guardians gave a cheque for the amount on Saturday the 27th, and on Monday evening, the 29th April, the things were returned. On Tuesday 100 female paupers occupied this building, and on the next day 80 were added, and subsequently 20 more; 50 others have also been transferred to this auxiliary building, making 250 in all; by great exertion the master and matron were enabled to clothe in union garments all the females in the workhouse on the 30th April.

There are on this date, 10th May, 86 in the probationary wards unclothed, that is, in their own clothes; they are, however, provided with bedding, the property of the union.

The remaining portion of the premises, called Walsh's Brewery, has been given over to the guardians, and the master has received instructions to prepare the specification of the necessary alterations; this portion of the premises will accommodate 200 paupers.

A portion of the buildings constructing on ground adjoining the workhouse site will, it is stated by the contractor, be ready for occupation to-morrow, and should it be given over, it will accommodate the persons now in the probationary wards.

10 May 1850.

(signed) *Walter A. Dennehy*, Master.

Taken down by me at Castlebar, 10 May 1850.

(signed) *R. T. Farren*, Captain 47th Regiment,
Temporary Poor-law Inspector.

The master states, with regard to the efforts made to purchase turf and straw alluded to in the above statement, the funds which the master had in his hands were placed at his disposal by order of the Board of Guardians on a previous occasion to purchase milk, in consequence of the contractor for that article not having supplied it of a proper description, and the balance remained in the master's hands to be applied in similar cases of emergency.

14 May 1850.

(signed) *Walter A. Dennehy*, Master.

Taken down by me at Castlebar, this 14th May 1850.

(signed) *R. T. Farren*, Captain 47th Regiment,
Temporary Poor-law Inspector.

(C.)

CASTLEBAR UNION.

STATEMENT extracted from the Morning Slates furnished by the Master to the Board of Guardians, showing the Number of INMATES in the Workhouse and Auxiliary Buildings, on the undermentioned Dates; also, showing the Total WORKHOUSE ACCOMMODATION and Excess in Numbers of INMATES, if any.

DAY and DATE.	WORKHOUSE.			AUXILIARY WORKHOUSES.				Total Number of Inmates.	Total Workhouse Accommodation.	Excess in Number of Inmates over Accommodation.
	Main Building.	Infirmiry and Fever Hospital, and Sheds.	Probationary Wards.	No. 1.	No. 2.	No. 3.	No. 4.			
Mornings:										
Saturday, 6 Apr. 1850	854	241	132	200	327	120	-	1,874	1,610	264
Thursday, 11 Apr. -	880	259	-	200	294	120	-	1,757	1,610	147
Saturday, 13 Apr. -	893	264	121	200	343	120	-	1,941	1,610	331
Saturday, 20 Apr. -	853	265	143	200	355	120	-	1,936	1,610	326
Thursday, 23 Apr. -	865	250	98	200	339	120	-	1,872	1,610	262
Saturday, 27 Apr. -	875	249	162	200	365	120	-	1,971	1,610	361
Thursday, 2 May -	752	250	-	200	331	120	200	1,853	1,860	-
Saturday, 4 May -	799	218	-	200	372	120	252	1,961	1,860	101
Wednesday, 8 May -	682	235	-	200	362	120	252	1,851	1,860	-
Thursday, 9 May -	656	242	-	200	340	130	252	1,820	1,870	-
Friday, 10 May -	645	246	86	200	392	130	252	1,951	1,870	81

N.B.—The estimated accommodation is as follows:—

Workhouse, including fever hospital and shed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	890
Auxiliary workhouse, No. 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200
Ditto	-	-	No. 2	-	-	-	-	400
Ditto	-	-	No. 3	-	-	-	-	130
Ditto	-	-	No. 4, the portion fitted and in use	-	-	-	-	252
TOTAL								1872

The remaining portion of Auxiliary No. 4, has been handed over, and when fitted will accommodate }
 200 additional inmates } 332
 Ditto, is nearly ready, and will accommodate - 132 - - - - - }
 The remaining buildings in course of construction are calculated for - - - - - } 480

(D.)

CASTLEBAR UNION.

STATEMENT showing the Number of APPLICANTS for RELIEF on each of the Board-days specified below, and how they were disposed of; also the Number of Persons who entered the Workhouse after being ordered Relief therein on the Board-days in question.

Date of Board-day.	Number of Applicants for Relief.	HOW DISPOSED OF.			Number who entered the Workhouse on being ordered Relief therein.
		Ordered Admission to Workhouse.	Placed on Outdoor Relief Lists.	Rejected, or did not appear.	
1850:					
February 7	1,321	53	126	1,142	31
" 14	1,107	60	235	812	63
" 21	1,590	313	297	980	160
" 28	1,229	30	203	996	28
March 7	1,127	116	394	617	30
" 14	743	222	57	464	129
" 21	452	174	50	228	172
" 28	507	193	132	182	104
April 4	746	363	41	342	199
" 11	907	440	80	387	234
" 18	486	179	64	243	132
" 25	523	114	161	248	109
May 2	615	234	21	360	118
" 9	992	497	8	487	151
12,345		2,988	1,869	7,488	1,710

CONDITION OF CASTLEBAR UNION WORKHOUSE.

75
13

(E.)

CASTLEBAR UNION.

PERSONS who have DIED in the WORKHOUSE of the above UNION from the 31st March 1850.

Number in Register.	N A M E.	Age.	DATE of DEATH.	DISEASE.	Date of Admission to Workhouse.
1,513	John Walsh	2	1850: 31 March	chronic dysentery	30 Aug. 1849
573	Samuel M'Encely	60	3 April	-- chronic bronchitis and anasarca.	10 Nov. —
1,983	Martin Geraghty	9	3 —	chronic dysentery	19 Mar. 1850
1,343	Margaret Fox	10	3 —	chronic dysentery	27 Sept. 1849
1,294	Margaret Cavanagh	6	4 —	chronic dysentery	16 Aug. —
333	John Brown	10	4 —	chronic dysentery	24 May 1847
1,050	Mary Fox	10	5 —	chronic dysentery	17 Nov. 1849
1,397	Honor Chambers	50	5 —	-- chronic dysentery and anasarca.	17 Nov. —
769	David Henelly	3	6 —	-- chronic dysentery; sickly before admission.	11 Dec. —
1,032	Pat. Moore	5	6 —	chronic dysentery	16 Aug. —
534	Patrick Moran	8	6 —	chronic dysentery	11 Sept. —
1,092	Mary Costello	8	8 —	-- chronic dysentery; disease before admission.	14 Feb. 1850
1,619	Mary Carroll	8	8 —	chronic dysentery	13 Sept. 1849
753	Eliza Warderge	8	9 —	chronic dysentery	4 Oct. —
8	Mary Cauly	50	10 —	dysentery	3 Jan. 1850
2,543	Thomas Corrigan	6	10 —	-- chronic dysentery, and tubercular disease before admission.	28 Mar. —
914	Mary Clarke	4	11 —	chronic dysentery	27 Sept. 1849
1,325	Biddy Thornton	2	11 —	chronic dysentery	23 Aug. —
12	Biddy Canly	10	11 —	chronic dysentery	3 Jan. 1850
476	Martin Flannery	4	11 —	dysentery	2 Aug. 1849
1,058	William Nolan	50	12 —	chronic dysentery	14 Mar. 1850
1,763	Myles Roach	20	13 —	fever (typhus)	24 Feb. —
2,540	Michael Corrigan	14	14 —	-- phthisis; disease before admission.	28 Mar. —
1,139	Thomas Nester	3	15 —	chronic dysentery	20 Sept. 1849
3,038	Edward King	49	16 —	-- chronic dysentery and infirmity, in which state he came into the workhouse, a few days ago.	11 April 1850
2,573	Honor Foy	50	17 —	-- chronic dysentery and infirmity.	28 Mar. —
2,894	Thomas Madden	6	18 —	chronic dysentery	5 April —
1,568	Mary Heneghan	16	19 —	dysentery	17 Jan. —
1,063	Catherine Nolan	9	19 —	dysentery	14 Mar. —
2,624	Sibby Browne	52	19 —	dysentery	1 April —
2,829	Biddy Connelly	58	21 —	fever	4 Apr. —
1,875	Pat. Hopkins	18	22 —	consumption	14 Mar. —
2,238	Michael Conlin	60	22 —	chronic dysentery	25 Mar. —
1,766	Biddy Jennings	6	23 —	dysentery	24 Feb. —
752	Ellen Harding	10	23 —	dysentery	4 Oct. 1849
1,399	Mary Chambers	20	24 —	fever	17 Nov. —
2,693	George M'Nally	50	25 —	-- chronic dysentery and bronchitis.	4 Apr. 1850
1,179	Anne Roache	9	25 —	dysentery	11 Dec. 1849
137	Michael Devin	7	27 —	dysentery	28 Feb. 1850
2,746	Sibby Moran	70	27 —	dysentery and infirmity	4 Apr. —

14 REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF CASTLEBAR UNION WORKHOUSE.

Number in Register.	NAME.	Age.	DATE of DEATH.	DISEASE.	Date of Admission to Workhouse.	
			1850 :			
1,328	John Connor - -	10	27 April -	chronic dysentery - -	23 Aug. 1849	
1,376	William Mally - -	1	27 --- -	chronic dysentery - -	17 Nov. ---	
2,804	Biddy Carney - -	50	24 --- -	chronic dysentery - -	4 April 1850	
881	Martin Mulchrone - -	14	28 --- -	chronic dysentery - -	14 June 1849	
465	Biddy M'Fadden - -	10	29 --- -	chronic dysentery - -	29 June ---	
3,063	John Foy - -	8	29 --- -	chronic dysentery - -	11 April 1850	
14	Michael Sheridan - -	15	30 --- -	chronic dysentery - -	17 Jan. ---	
2,539	Sibby Corrigan - -	50	1 May -	fever - - - -	28 Mar. ---	
2,146	James Kilcoyne - -	50	1 --- -	chronic dysentery - -	21 Mar. ---	
1,214	Michael Walsh - -	8	1 --- -	- - dysentery, supervening on fever.	18 Feb. ---	
3,377	Catherine Gavan - -	10	3 --- -	dysentery - - - -	2 May ---	
2,803	Patrick Horan - -	6	4 --- -	dysentery - - - -	4 April ---	
946	Bridget Brogan - -	7	4 --- -	dysentery - - - -	27 Dec. 1849	
2,583	Bridget Geraghty - -	10	4 --- -	dysentery - - - -	28 Mar. 1850	
475	Pat. Flannery - -	6	5 --- -	dysentery - - - -	2 Aug. 1849	
2,856	Anthony Kielty - -	10	6 --- -	- - dysentery, supervening on fever.	4 April 1850	-- Stated to have been admitted to hospital on 28th April, from Auxiliary No. 2.
3,140	Catherine M'Donagh - -	60	6 --- -	chronic dysentery - -	18 April ---	-- Admitted to hospital on 25th April, from Infirm Ward; whither she was sent on admission to workhouse, 18th April.
3,402	John Noon - -	58	6 --- -	diarrhoea and infirmity - -	2 May ---	
1,085	Michael Rafferty - -	10	7 --- -	dysentery - - - -	31 Jan. ---	
3,100	David Crean - -	70	7 --- -	dysentery - - - -	18 April ---	-- Stated to have been admitted to hospital on 5th May, from Infirm Ward.
2,815	Sally Butler - -	6	10 --- -	- - chronic dysentery, in nursery.	4 April ---	
3,152	Margaret Gorman - -	70	8 --- -	- - chronic dysentery and infirmity.	18 April ---	-- Stated to have been admitted to hospital on 18th April, the day she entered workhouse.
178	Bridget Quin - -	9	9 --- -	dysentery - - - -	24 Jan. ---	
1,456	Mary Mally - -	16	9 --- -	fever - - - -	17 Jan. ---	
72	Philip Davis - -	7	10 --- -	chronic dysentery - -	20 Dec. 1849	
2,554	Biddy Gallaher - -	60	9 --- -	dysentery - - - -	28 Mar. 1850	-- Stated to have been admitted to hospital on 3d May, from Infirm Ward.
3,157	Mary Hughes - -	14	11 --- -	phthisis - - - -	18 April ---	-- Stated to have been admitted to hospital on 21st April, and to have been in an emaciated state.



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CASTLEBAR UNION WORKHOUSE.

COPY of a Report addressed to the Poor Law Commissioners for Ireland on the 17th day of May, by Captain Farren, Temporary Inspector, with reference to the Condition of Castlebar Union Workhouse.

(*Sir William Somerville.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
17 June 1850.

461.

Under 3 oz.