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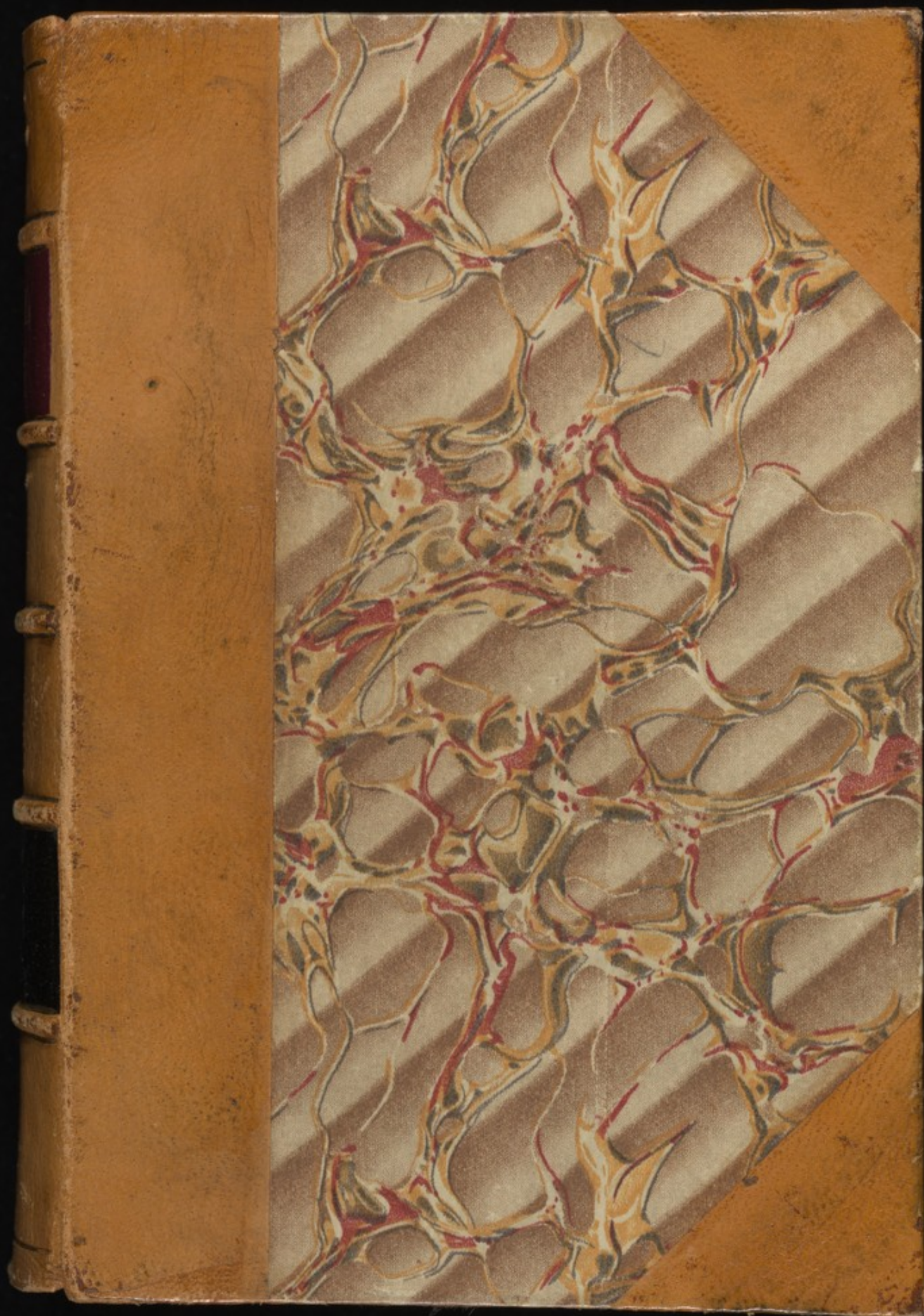
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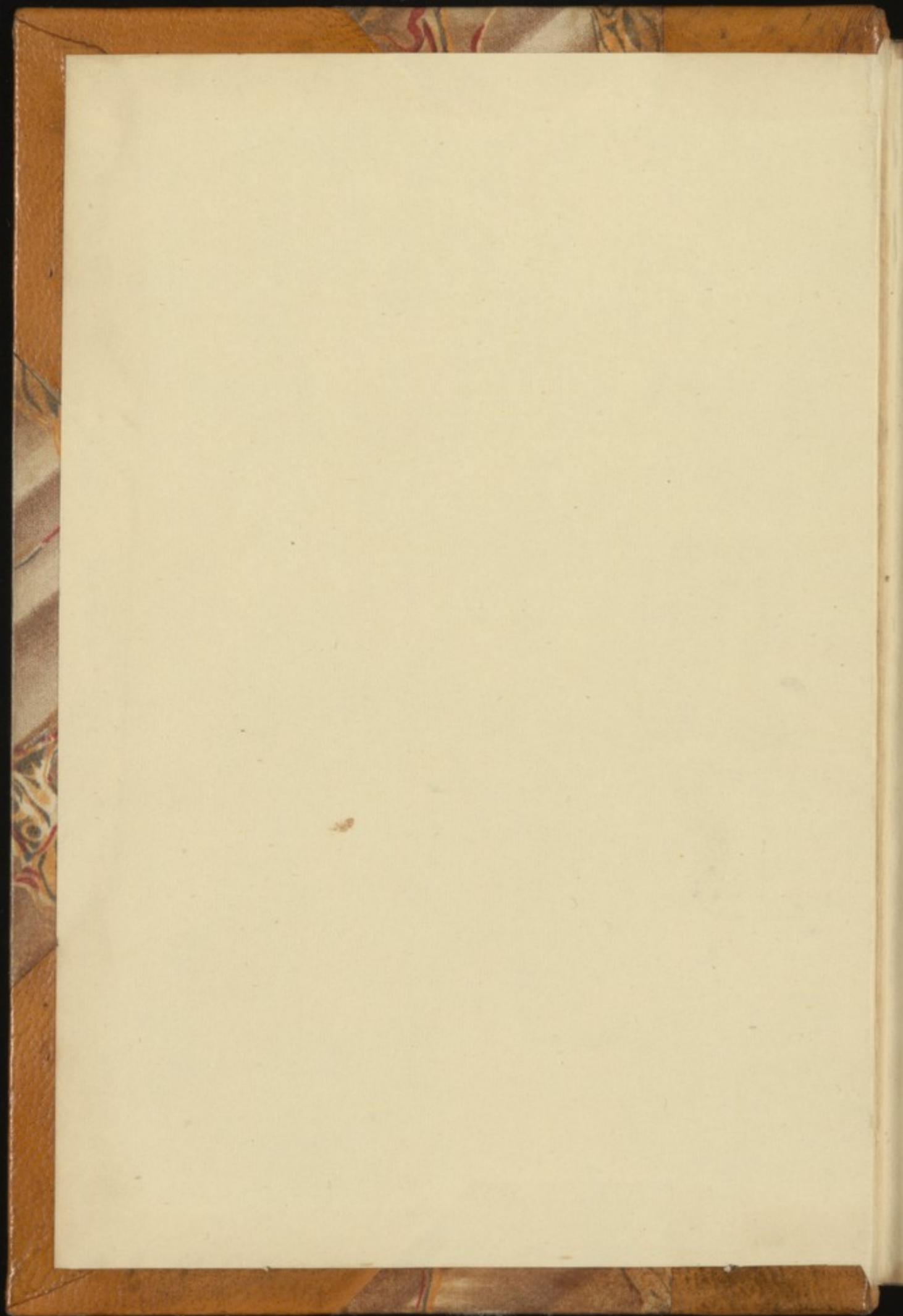
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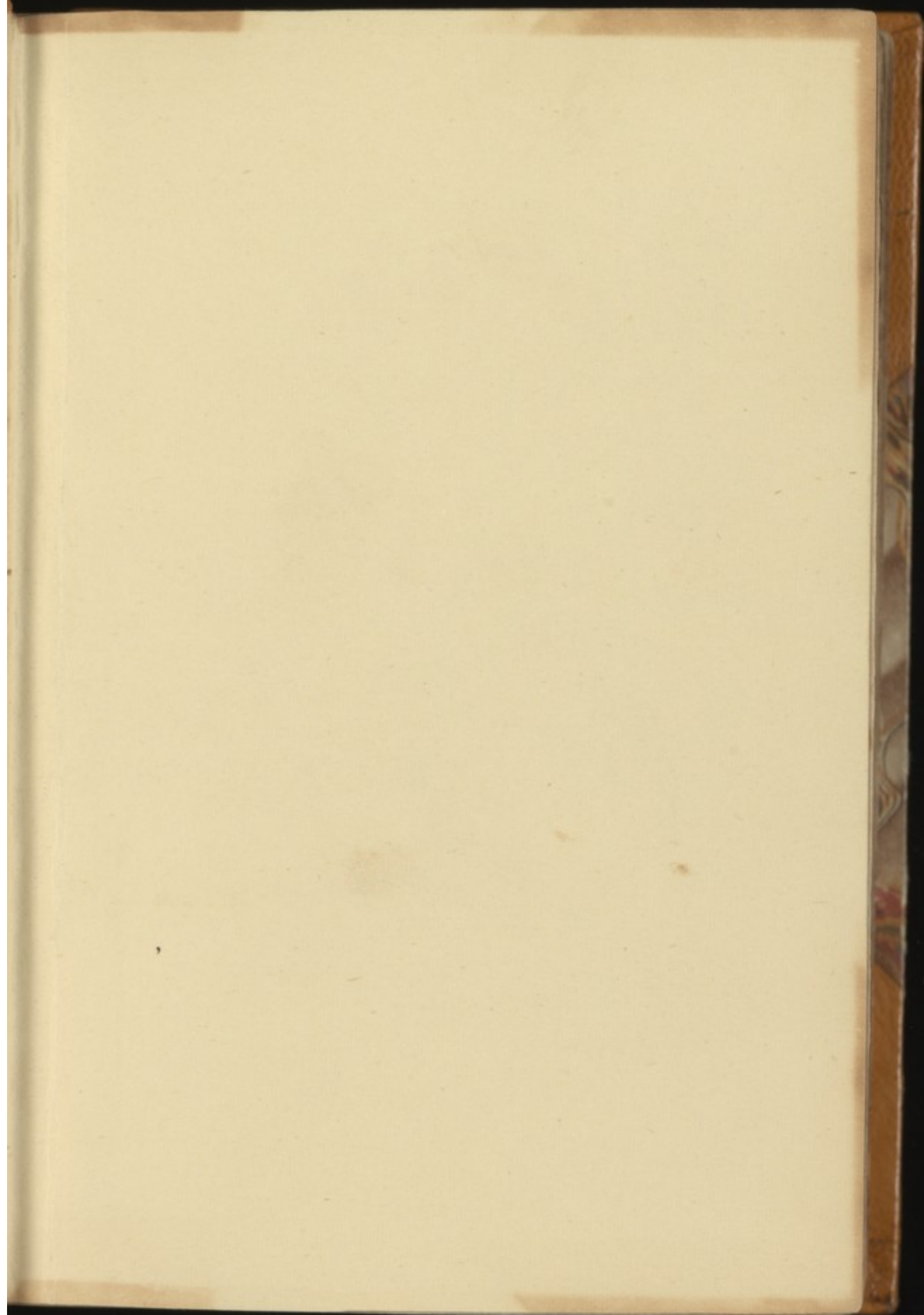
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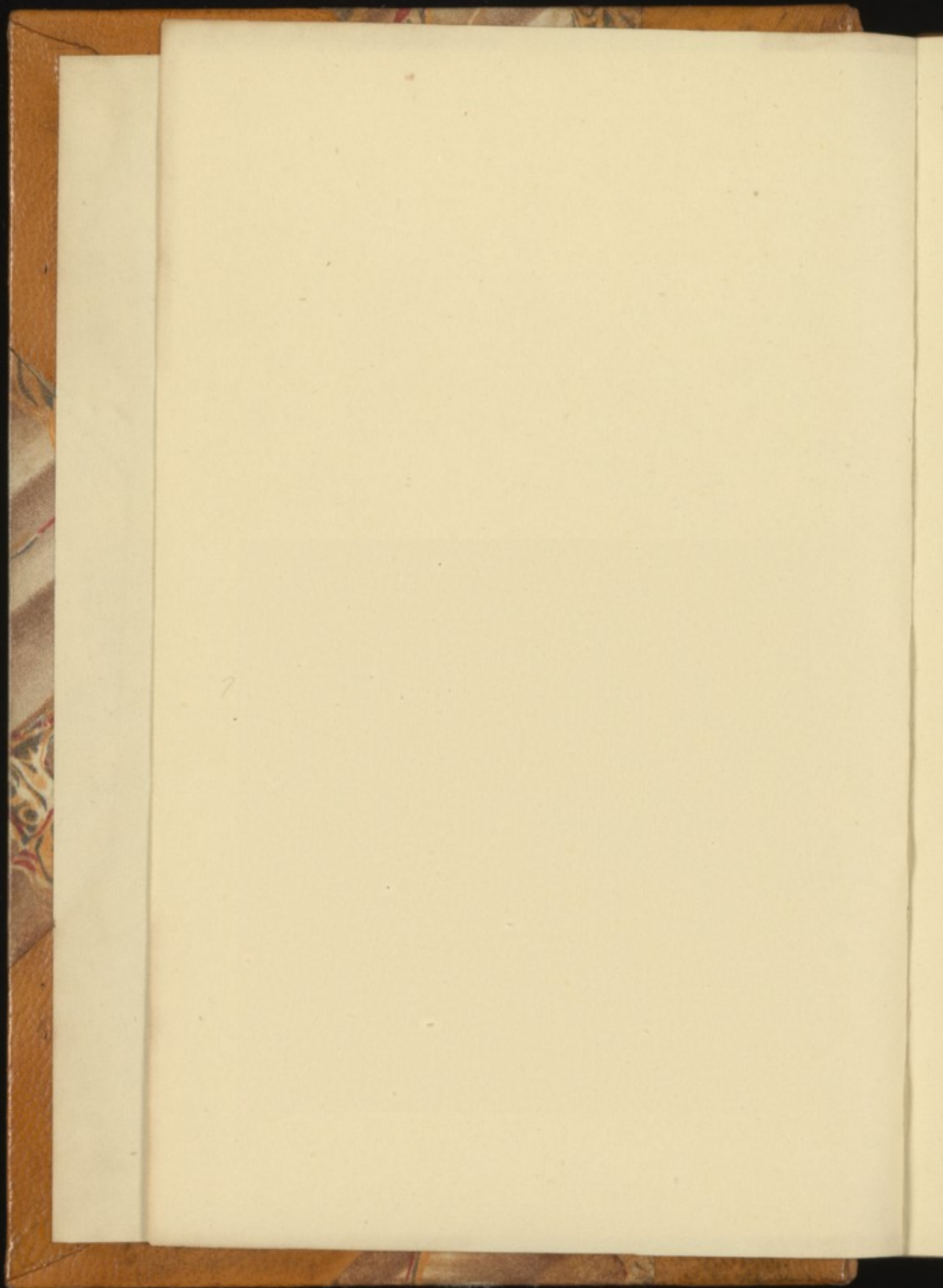


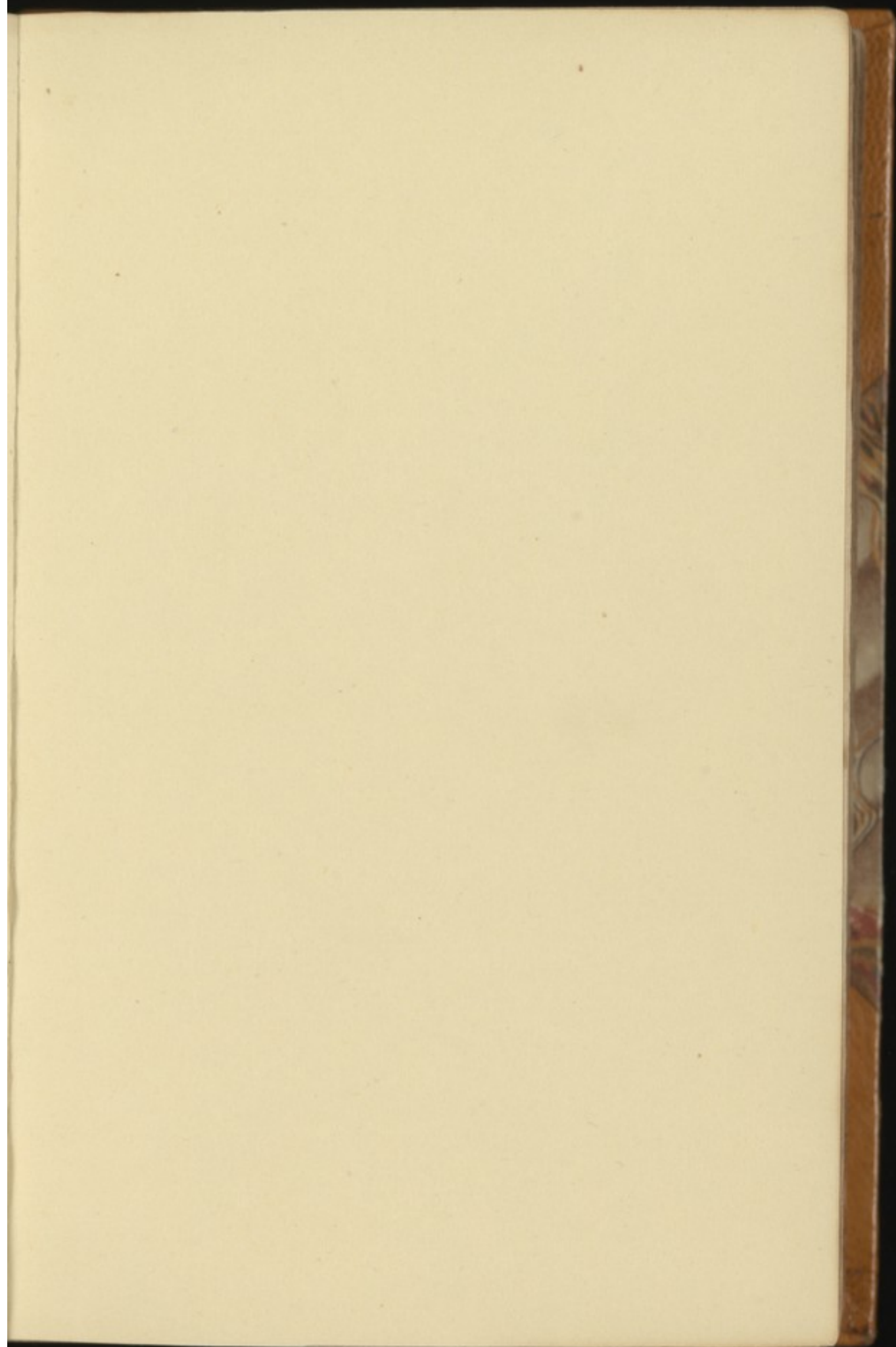
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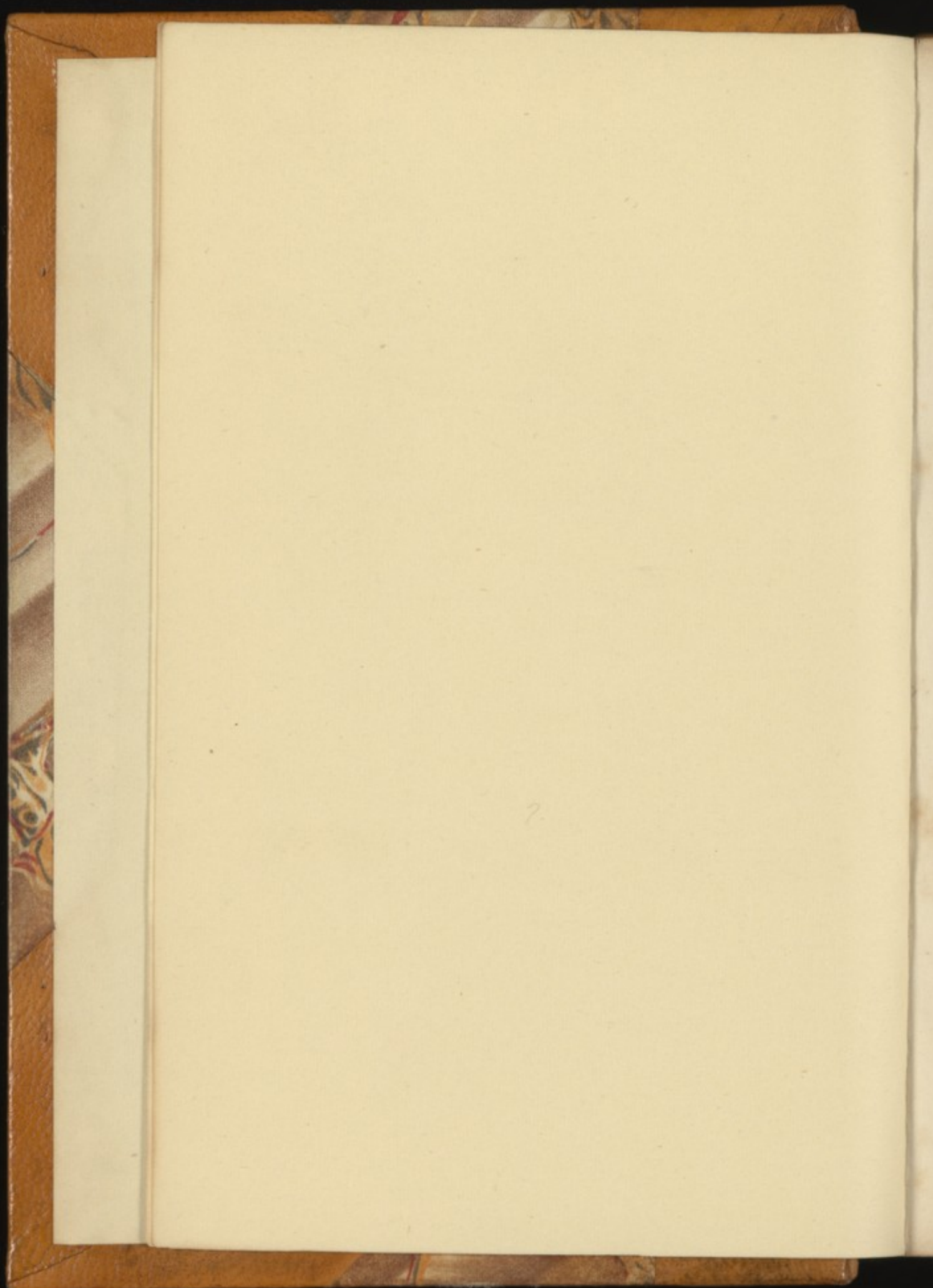


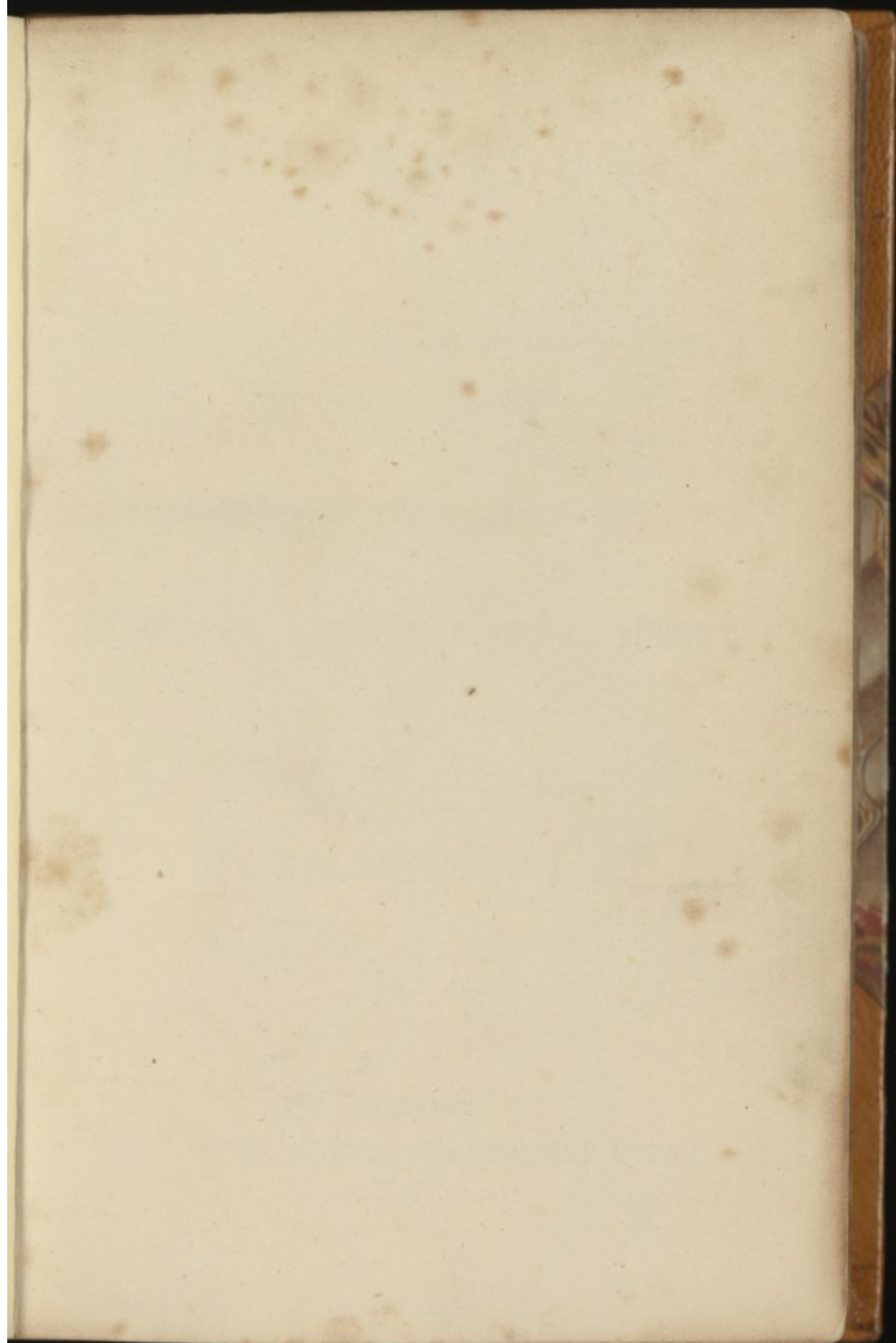


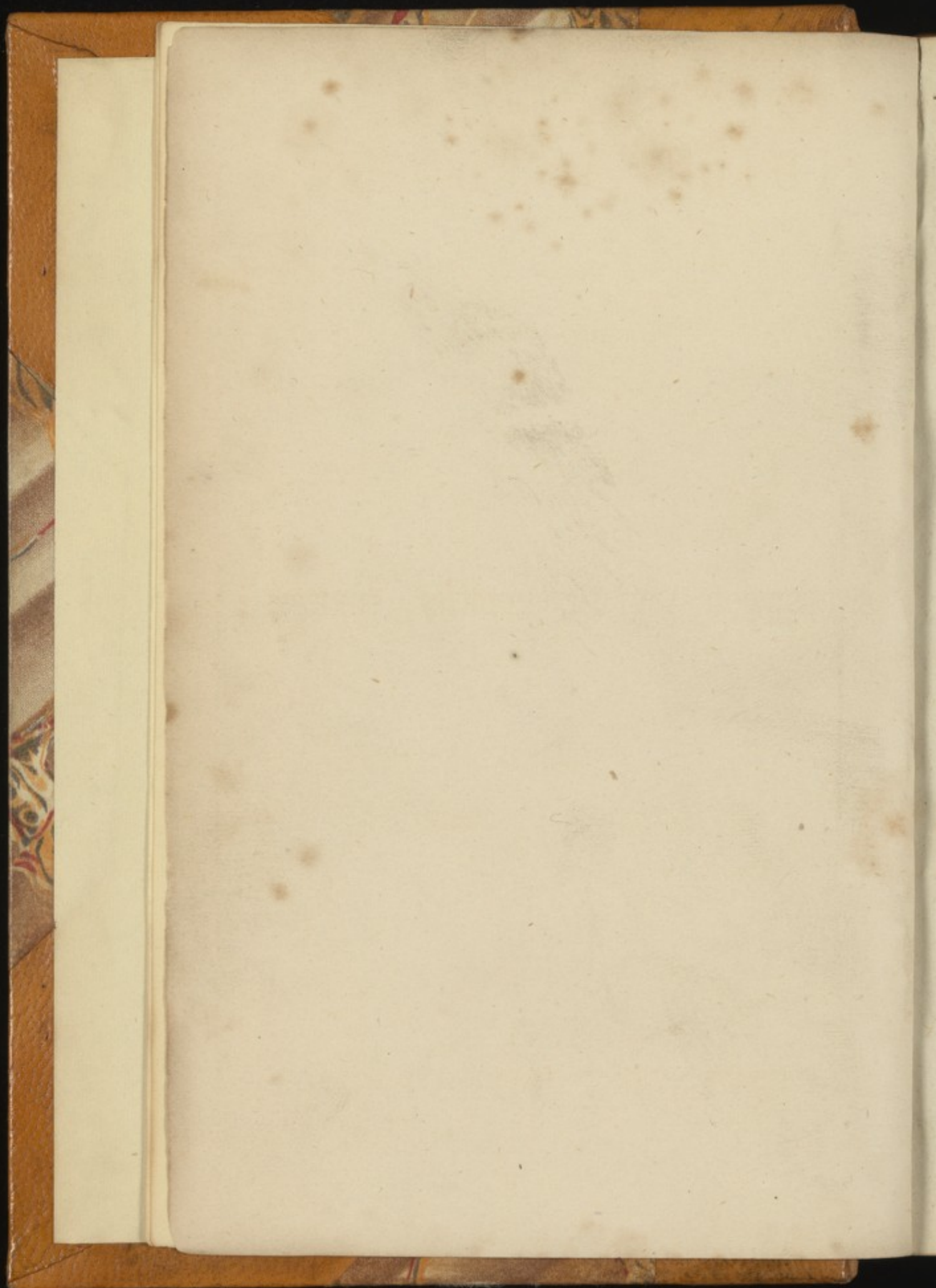












IDIOT ASYLUMS.

Reprinted by permission from the "Edinburgh Review,"

No. CCXLIX, July, 1865;

AND PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE

EARLSWOOD ASYLUM, REDHILL, SURREY.

REVISED BY THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, READER, AND DYER.

1866.

IDIOT ASYLUMS.

Containing a Description of the Hospitals, Asylums, and

Asylums for the Insane, in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

AND FORMERLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE

EASTWOOD ASYLUM, REDHILL, SURREY.

REVISED BY THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, GREEN, READER, AND DYER.

1868.

IDIOT ASYLUMS.

Idiotcy is unquestionably one of the most fearful of the host of maladies, which pass like gloomy shadows over the brightest spots of human civilisation. Its intensity has also been much increased by the impression which so long prevailed, that it was almost incapable of any palliative, and certainly of anything in the shape of a remedy. Modern science and an enlarged philanthropy are, however, gradually removing this unhappy idea, and are showing that there is no class of unfortunates of our species to whom enlightened treatment may be applied with a more cheering hope of success. In this country, on the continent of Europe, and in America, reports of the results of the efforts we are about to describe, are all equally replete with assurances that the increasing physiological and psychological knowledge, which is due to the researches of the strong-minded, is gradually becoming a great and unexpected boon to the feeble. These feeble ones are also shown to be far more numerous, both in the Old and New Worlds, than was generally imagined, and may in truth be numbered by many thousands, making an appalling array in the ranks of miseries. Mr. Byrne, in his Treatise on Lunacy and Law, speaking of idiots, says: "That there are thousands of such is fully borne out by the Report of the Poor Law Board (1862-3), where it appears that, on the 1st of January, 1862, there were in 649 unions and parishes 34,271 insane *paupers*, of whom 18,311 were idiots" (p. 12). Now, though the idiot requires a *special* treatment, and one totally distinct from the lunatic, being in fact absolutely *injured* by his contact with the insane, yet the only place provided for him is the county asylum, which, of course, subjects him to a treat-

ment the opposite of being suitable. From page 20 of the same report, it appears that a new statute has been enacted, called "An Act to provide for the Education and Maintenance of Pauper Children in certain Schools and Institutions, 25 & 26 Vict. c. 43. This Act enables the guardians of a union to contract with the managers of any institution, supported wholly or in part by voluntary contributions, for the education of idiotic persons, and to pay for their maintenance and education a sum not exceeding the cost of their relief in the workhouse. At present, however, such institutions are by no means in sufficient number to meet the want of them; but, happily, many intelligent and influential minds are now becoming acquainted with the subject, and alive to the serious duties it entails.

Nearly up to the present time, the miserable idiot has been regarded as one of a Pariah caste, rather to be ignored as much as possible than sought out and succoured. Till the beginning of this century, idiots were regarded either with superstitious awe or abhorrence; and it is even said that Luther would fain have had one put to death as a monster filled with Satanic possession. In 1803, Abercromby, after Foderé* and Wenzel,† who wrote upon Cretins, turned his thoughts to the improvement of their condition; and in 1819, Dr. Poole communicated an important treatise on the subject to the *Encyclopædia Edinensis*. Light, however, broke in slowly and feebly. We are told by Mr. Scott, that, in the year 1839, Dr. Vosin, a French physician, gave in London some *Orthophrenic lectures*, which were apparently for the purpose of drawing attention to an institution he was connected with in France, called the *Etablissement Orthophrenic*, which was specially directed to sufferers from mental weakness. No interest, however, was awakened by these lectures. Mr. Scott goes on to inform us, by a quotation from a German paper, that "the instruction of idiots has succeeded. The problem theoretically and practically has been solved by M. Sargent, in conjunction with Mr. Sachs, first teacher of the establishment (the Deaf and Dumb Institution, Berlin), and this solution has been successfully proved and acknowledged

* *Traité du Gâté et du Cretinisme*: 1800.

† *Ueber der Kretinismus*: 1802.

by our eminent physicians, Dr. Barry and Dr. Joseph Müller. So fully assured are the Prussian Government of the complete efficacy of the system, that a portion of the Deaf and Dumb Institution at Berlin is to be permanently set aside as a hospital for idiots, where the most effective methods of education can be tested and carried out." In September, 1844, M. Sargent had twelve pupils, and employed a master to assist in their instruction, and two females to take care of them, the whole being most anxiously attended to according to his own plans. All were imbeciles, and some idiots of a very low grade; but in time they became improved. Two of them were deaf mutes, and others were unable to walk or help themselves in any way; but those who could hear had more or less learned to speak, and some to sew, to draw, and to write, while several played about cheerfully like other youths, appearing ameliorated both in body and mind. A "deaf boy, who was one of the worst cases, washed and dressed himself daily without assistance, walked, and even ran about the house and yard, and was learning to draw," though his actions were not all exempt from the appearance of his malady. Such is the account of the fruits of M. Sargent's treatment.

The large work of M. Edouard Séguin was published at Paris, in the spring of 1846. It had been preceded by several pamphlets by the same author, and an extended notice of them appeared in the pages of Mr. Scott, who dedicated his book, from which we have already quoted, to Lord Ashley, now the Earl of Shaftesbury, the friend and promoter of so many philanthropic projects. M. Séguin's first efforts were directed to ten idiots in the Hospital of Incurables at Paris. Their success received the approbation of the Council General of Hospitals, and the Academy of Sciences commended his writings on the results which subsequently followed his method at the Bicêtre on the idiots there. Under the title of "*Traitément Moral, Hygiène, et Education des Idiots*," he has comprised the following topics:—The reflections which idiotcy had suggested to him—the most remarkable observations on idiotcy and imbecility furnished by his practice—the methods of treatment which have been proved to be most efficacious—and the confirmed opinions which have arisen from ten years' active experience.

Previously to the time of the publication of the volume

last noticed, but not before its author had commenced his work amongst idiots, the late Dr. Guggenbühl had been engaged in endeavours to ameliorate the dreadful condition of cretins. He had observed that young children affected with cretinism were chiefly found in the valleys, and he conceived that their removal to more elevated places, together with proper treatment, might work a great change in them. Cretinism neglected degenerates into the lowest idiocy, and exhibits the human form in its most repulsive state. Cretins were divided by Dr. Guggenbühl into four classes:—the atrophied, with emaciated bodies and paralysed extremities; rickety, with soft bones and bent limbs; hydrocephalic, with chronic water in the head; and cretins, diseased from birth, the worst and most intractable. It is said, however, that where there is a goitre from birth, the brain is not so much deteriorated as in other cases. The cretins, under the care of Dr. Guggenbühl, were removed from the low places to a retreat on the Abendberg, a hill 4,000 feet above the level of the sea, and situated in one of the most splendid scenes of Switzerland, surrounded by snowy peaks of the Mönch, the Eiger, and the Jungfrau, and looking down on the Fine Vale of Interlachen and the lovely Lake of Brienz. From this unique institution, true cretins are said to have returned to their families more or less restored to health in body and mind. That the plan of the Abendberg is the right method for cretins is beyond doubt; and there is recorded a remarkable instance of the complete cure of cretinism in the person of a Dr. Odet, once resident at Montpellier, who was in childhood a cretin, but recovered, passed through a professional education, and became the author of a book on Cretinism. A pupil of Dr. Guggenbühl was sufficiently cured to become a schoolmaster, and was capable of instructing his scholars, more or less, in four languages.

While these and other institutions were being formed in Europe, the philanthropists of the western hemisphere became alive also to their importance and value. It seems as if some providential impulse were given at this moment simultaneously to the friends of humanity, to arouse themselves to the aid of the most repulsive and pitiable of its sufferers. In 1846, the authorities of Massachusetts appointed the well-known Dr. S. G. Howe, so celebrated for his treatment of the

blind and deaf mute, Laura Bridgman, to inquire into the condition of idiots in the commonwealth, and to discover if anything could be done in their behalf. The reports of Dr. Howe exhibit the greatest zeal, energy, and talent; and he brought all the force of his powerful and original intellect to bear upon this object, with the happiest consequences. Without being prepared to admit the correctness of all his conclusions in his published theories of the causes of idiotcy, which are, in our view, of far too speculative a nature, without adducing sufficient facts for his generalisations, we cannot but regard his labours and their fruits with real satisfaction. He assures us that his hopes and expectations have been fulfilled amongst the children trained and instructed. "Several," he says, "who were in a state of hopeless idiotcy have gained useful knowledge; most of them have become cleanly, decent, docile, and industrious; and all of them are happier and better in consequence of the efforts made in their behalf." Some of these were in a state of drivelling impotency, unable to do more than swallow their food; they had no speech, no apparent understanding, and their habits were disgusting. They became gentle, docile, and obedient, governable by the simplest means, able to work, speak, and read, comparatively happy and intelligent, as well as useful, and stood before their friends as rescued ones, through the treatment they received.

Pennsylvania followed this example by founding a kindred institution, which comprised at once a hospital for the unhealthy, a gymnasium for physical culture, a school for such as could be led on to learn, and provision of workshops and land for the exercise of mechanical, horticultural, and agricultural industry, with a view to the self-support of the inmates. At the request of the managers of this asylum, the legislature of New Jersey granted an appropriation for the maintenance within its walls of fifteen feeble-minded children. The building was most carefully constructed, and placed on an eligible site, with an unfailing supply of the best spring water, and sheltered from the cold winds by a grove of ten acres, the shade of which was regarded as a great boon in summer. The promoters of this asylum state their conviction that it is necessary for the advantage of the young imbeciles, in their training, that they should be collected together in numbers.

"Childhood," they assert, "in all conditions needs society; and those who are of natural mental powers cannot adapt themselves to those of feeble mind. Under the most favourable circumstances, an imbecile child at home has a tendency to solitude or exclusiveness; it cannot play with other children, and they cannot join in its amusements. It is a lonely being. However loving and tender its associations may be, it lacks suitable companionship. It needs to be with those who are like itself. Its instincts lead it to fellowship with its own grade and stamp of mind, and this association produces friction, and friction produces growth. There is an unconscious self-culture resulting from the mere force of association. In this lies one secret of success in institutions for the feeble-minded."

New York was not behind in like projects for the Idiot. The first step was taken by the Hon. Frederick Backus, a member of the Senate, in the winter of 1845 and 1846. He introduced a bill for the establishment of an asylum for idiots, which passed the Senate by a vote of eleven to ten. Though at first agreed to by the Assembly, it was ultimately rejected by a vote of fifty-eight to forty-seven. Dr. Backus, however, was not daunted by this defeat, but laboured with the greatest zeal, communicated with M. Sargent, of Berlin, and embodied translations of his reports in the document he again presented to the legislature, and at length effected his object by the aid of the governor, but not without another previous defeat. When agreed upon, the nature of the institution was accurately defined, especially that it was not to be merely custodial, but "an establishment for the management and education of young idiots; an extension of the blessings of education of an appropriate character to a class of persons of a teachable age—not deaf mutes or blind—whose faculties are not susceptible of development under the customary conditions and facilities of a common education."

While these institutions were being established on the continent of Europe and in America, this country also, whose benevolence knows no limits but the boundaries of human want, became alive to the necessity of special provision for the idiot. The first practical endeavour for this object was that made by Miss White, at Bath, in 1846, when four pupils were placed under the care of a matron, and with such success that the institution has been removed to an airy, elevated situation, and contains about two dozen pupils, the number of which it is still desired to augment. In January, 1847, there

appeared in "Chambers' Edinburgh Journal," a paper giving an account of the education of idiots by M. Séguin, at the Bicêtre, to which previous reference has been made. In the following month it was succeeded by another, and both are due to the pen of Mr. Gaskell, Medical Superintendent of the Lancashire Lunatic Asylum, and now a Commissioner of Lunacy. A lady residing in London, of the name of Plumbe, had her interest greatly excited by reading these articles, and she called on Dr. Andrew Reed, the philanthropic founder of so many great charities, to represent her views. The idea had, however, been before in his mind; so he simply told his kind-hearted visitor to go out some morning and see how many destitute idiots she could find in the neighbourhood, and she came to him again with a list of twenty-eight. But, before he began to develop his plans, he determined to visit the receptacles for the imbecile on the Continent. On his return, he secured the invaluable assistance of Dr. Conolly and others, which resulted in a meeting to institute an asylum, over which Sir George Carroll, then Lord Mayor, presided; the result of which was the hire of Park House, Highgate, with several acres of land surrounding it. Here, in six months, the change was so great, that Dr. Conolly declared he could scarcely believe the pupils to be the same who had been originally received, and whose first gathering together was so shocking a scene that it begat in some present disgust and in others despair. We extract the following account of it, taken from the Report of 1850:—

"The first gathering of the idiotic family was a spectacle unique in itself, sufficiently discouraging to the most resolved, and not to be forgotten in after time by any. It was a period of distraction, disorder, and noise of the most unnatural character. Some had defective sight; most had defective or no utterance; most were lame in limb or muscle; and all were of weak and perverted mind. Some had been spoiled, some neglected, and some ill-used. Some were clamorous and rebellious, some were sullen and perverse, and some unconscious and inert. Some were screaming at the top of the voice; some making constant and involuntary noises from nervous irritation; and some, terrified at scorn and ill-treatment, hid themselves in a corner from the face of man, as the face of an enemy. Windows were smashed, wainscoting broken, boundaries defied; and the spirit of mischief and disobedience prevailed. It seemed as though nothing less than the accommodation of a prison would meet the wants of such a family. Some who witnessed the scene retired

from it in disgust, and others in despair. How very different the impression is at present many can testify. Here is now order, obedience to authority, classification, improvement, and cheerful occupation. Every hour has its duties; and these duties are steadily fulfilled. Windows are now safe, boundaries are observed without rules, and doors are safe without locks. The desire now is, not to get away, but to stay. They are essentially not only an improving but a *happy family*. And all this is secured without the aid of *correction* or *coercion*. The principle which rules in the house is *Love—Charity—Divine Charity.*"

The success of the Highgate Asylum having awakened the benevolent interest of the Queen and received Her Majesty's patronage, the establishment was soon visited by her beloved and lamented consort. The building speedily became too small for the numerous applicants, and it was necessary to have a branch, till one large national asylum could be erected. For this purpose, Essex Hall, Colchester, a commodious and handsome building, the property of Sir Morton Peto, was obtained upon advantageous terms, and a portion of the pupils were received there. The Prince Consort, who paid it a visit, expressed his admiration of the aspect of the place. At length, in 1853, his Royal Highness laid the foundation-stone of the National Asylum at Earlswood, near Redhill, and such was the interest taken in the work, that about £10,000 were placed before him as offerings on the stone. In 1855, the asylum was opened by the Prince in person, and the inmates of Essex Hall having been removed thither, the place, which had been previously a branch, became a separate institution for the eastern counties, and is still in effective operation.

Space will not allow of further history of the progress of establishments of the same kind, except to say that Scotland has not been wanting in the benevolent duty. The work commenced at Aldovan, near Dundee, being promoted by Sir John Ogilvy; and Dr. Brodie began the same operations in Gayfield Square, Edinburgh, and now superintends the New Scotch Asylum at Larbert, near Falkirk, which is intended for the reception of 200 pupils, and was zealously aided both in the capital and at Glasgow. In this effectual manner has the leaven spread over the greater part of the civilised world, and will ultimately become a relief to a class of unfortunates greatly in need of help.

In all the various countries in which the uniformly success-

ful experiment has been tried of ameliorating the state of the idiot, there has been a remarkable uniformity of principle and practice, as if a bright wave of physiological and psychological light had simultaneously cast its radiance on them all. The first effect of it was to enable those who directed their attention to the subject to determine the real characteristics of the true idiot, and to separate him distinctly from the insane. It has been too common to connect them with each other, though the acute mind of Locke perceived the difference, calling idiots "naturals," and advising "an exact observation of their several ways of faltering;" which has been indeed the true key to their release from the organic impediments that have prevented the development of the faculties of the mind. M. Séguin defines a typical idiot as one who knows nothing, can do nothing, and cannot even desire to do anything, which condition must certainly be regarded as the maximum; and, as Dr. Howe observes, it would be hardly possible to find such a being in human shape, little above a sensitive plant, fashioned externally as man, but shorn of all other human attributes. Yet one such recurs to our recollection, who was, in addition to his never manifesting any desire, blind if not deaf.

Dr. Howe divides idiots into three classes, and observes:—

"Idiots of the lowest class are mere organisms, masses of flesh and bone in human shape, in which the brain and nervous system have no command over the system of voluntary muscles; and which, consequently, are without power of locomotion, without speech, without any manifestation of intellectual or affective faculties. Fools are a higher class of idiots, in whom the brain and nervous system are so far developed as to give partial command of the voluntary muscles; who have consequently considerable power of locomotion and animal action; partial development of the affective and intellectual faculties, but only the faintest glimmer of reason, and very imperfect speech. Simpletons are the highest class of idiots in whom the harmony between the nervous and muscular system is nearly perfect; who, consequently, have normal powers of locomotion and animal action; considerable activity of the perceptive and affective faculties; and reason enough for their simple individual guidance, but not enough for their social relations."

Generally speaking, these descriptions will be found to meet the various degrees of idiocy. Still there is nothing more difficult to define, nothing of which it is less possible to find a standard. The word *ιδίος* points to a human being isolated

from his fellows, and no better term in the midst of the many used to designate his condition has been found than that of *ἰδιωτης*. The words folly, imbecility, fatuity, stupidity, and others employed by various writers, are but different expressions of the same thing. "Amentia, imbecillitas, oblitération des facultés," says M. Séguin, "sont autant de synonymes, plus ou moins laconiques, plus ou moins verbeux, surajoutés à l'énergique *ἰδιος* des Grecs, qui rest encore aujourd'hui intact, sans équivalent comme sans définition." Nor can any dimensions of the head, except in the extremest diminutiveness, nor other measurements often relied upon, be regarded as true criteria of idiocy; though it is remarkably curious that in an immense number of cases examined by Dr. Down, of Earlswood, as we shall see hereafter, the formation of the mouth was abnormal, and the face had unequal sides. The mental manifestations are not always regulated by the volume of the brain, but by its quality and condition, and those of the whole nervous system. The body is but the instrument, the mind the unseen musician, and the strings must be in tune or no harmony can be produced by the most skilful hand. Thus the corporeal state of the idiot being disordered, discord results from the agency of the mind upon it. All that can be said of what the idiot really is terminates in this—that an idiot is one wanting in power, greater or less, to develop and manifest the normal human faculties by reason of organic defects. The general peculiarities of body are all abnormal, including health, temperament, and members, as hands, wrists, legs, and feet. The nerves of motion and sensation are without due action. Hence arise irritability or apathy, spasms, epilepsy, and chorea. Hence also the prehension, touch, smell, hearing, feeding, mastication, deglutition, digestion, secretions, circulation, and speech are faulty, the last in many cases absent. Yet the inability to speak, though often apparent, is not always real. A boy who was never known to utter an articulate sound, and had reached about fourteen years of age, was suddenly heard to chant a psalm in the night with correctness. Of course his teacher made use of this sudden exhibition, and he now speaks constantly. Another pupil, who had always been mute, was nevertheless brought to write legibly on a slate, and some one having rubbed out his writing in his absence, he became much excited, and angrily

asked, "Who rubbed out my slate?" These were the first words he had ever been heard to utter, but afterwards he became induced to speak.

As the bodily condition is abnormal, so is the manifestation of mind in idiots. Attention, perception, will, comparison, judgment, combination, invention, foresight, and reflection are all imperfect in various degrees. Yet nothing further can be safely stated as a generalisation, than that as a rule the perceptive powers are defective, the fancy frivolous, and the whole bearing more or less eccentric. Some are vociferous, grinning, and facetious; others mutter, mope, and sulk, and are very vicious. Again, many are mild, affectionate, and tractable, while others are violent, depraved, filthy, and repulsive. What the facetious will say no one can guess under any circumstances. One that was reproved by the clergyman for laughing in church, said, "You should have looked at your book, and you would not have seen me." Another, corrected for stealing, and asked to promise not to repeat the fault, replied, "I will not do so again, if you will give me everything I want." The ideas of these poor creatures have no definite regulation; hence joy, drollery, anger, sorrow, and loquacious nonsense alternate without reason. The classification of idiots is no easy task, and it is well said by Dr. Howe, that—

"The highest of the lower class of idiots can hardly be distinguished from the fool; the least stupid of fools can hardly be distinguished from the simpleton; and the highest among simpletons stand very near the level of hundreds who pass in society for feeble-minded persons, but still for responsible free agents. These latter, indeed, are looked down upon by the crowd, but then the crowd is looked down upon by tall men, and these in their turn are looked down upon by the few intellectual giants of each generation who stand higher by the whole head and shoulders than the rest. This view of the gradation of intellect should teach us not only humility but humanity; and increase our interest in those who are only more unfortunate than we are, in that their capacity for seeing and understanding the wisdom, power, and love of our common Father, is more limited than ours, in this stage of our being."

It may be added to what has been already said in the foregoing sketch of idiots, that some idiots actually possess special powers, only abnormal in being above the common standard as relates to music, the art of drawing or modelling,

and in powers of memory and arithmetic, and instead of dulness, imperfection, and deprivation, have, in some direction or other, a strange exaltation.

Enough, we conceive, has been said to show how unpromising was the hope that any efforts could be effectual in essentially bettering the condition of idiots to any social, moral, or useful extent. All endeavours, too, had long been retarded by want of physiological knowledge, by parental and common prejudices, by the hopeless exterior of the majority of cases, and even by an idea that amelioration, if possible, would be of no advantage by reason of the non-responsible being thus made responsible.

The way is, however, now clear of such obstacles to progress, and there is ample, indeed, universal proof, that the idiot can be greatly improved and often beneficially educated. From what has been before stated, it may be readily supposed that the basis of all attempts to effect this object would be to commence first with endeavouring to ameliorate the condition of the body. The true principle is, that there is mind in all these wretched members of the human family, and that its manifestations are only hindered by a defective organism. The first care, then, must be to put the *instrument* as far as may be in tune. Upon this has depended the success of all the recent experiments, and like consequences have been found in all places; because everywhere it has been regarded as certain that the vigour and force of manifestations of mind depend, though in what way may be a matter needing fuller inquiry, on the state of health in certain parts of the bodily organisation. To attain this requisite condition, the only mode is to endeavour to put the whole system into a healthful power of action, as far as can be done by suitable appliances to raise the depressed physical powers. Hence gymnastic exercises are adopted, varied according to the different stages of advancement, to bring the muscles into due action in the upper extremities, in the trunk, and in the lower limbs; and upon these a great amount of ingenuity has been expended. In every asylum there should be both an open and a covered gymnasium, with soft ground and ample space, and attendants extremely careful that no falls occur. The things to be aimed at are development of instinctive muscular action in the inert, to promote the health of the bodily organs, and a better

oxygenation of the blood in the lungs. Torpor must be awakened, and over-excitement allayed; and it must be borne in mind that nearly every sense is wrong, so that one cannot be made compensatory to another, as in the cases of blind pupils and deaf mutes. The vacant eye must gradually be trained to see, the ear to hear, while the voice must be instructed how to utter aright. Thought must be elicited and power to learn. Obedience must be gained by kindness and firmness without severity, and right habits encouraged for daily life. All sorts of inducements must be held out to secure some proper employment; and as the mind improves, it must be a great object to raise it to God, to religion, to duty, conscience, hope, and moral sense. The choice of masters and teachers is by no means easy. They must be *born* teachers, devoted to their work, men in whom no weakness is visible, endued with extreme patience, and able to command with calmness, force, and decision. Great medical tact and skill are also needed, and that gentle treatment of invalids which caused a youth at Earlswood to say, "I love the doctor better than my mother." It is only such a person who will observe with practical advantage the needful psychological indications, such as are briefly enumerated by Mr. Sidney, in his lecture to the Society of Arts. He says:—

"Idiots are perceived to have certain wants, tastes, appetites, inclinations, desires, repugnances, fears, and preferences, shown in some way or other peculiar to each individual, and indicating that, though fettered, obscured, and disordered by a defective bodily organism, there still exist certain limited sensations, sentiments, and perceptions, which, if rectified, will tend also to rectify their manifestations and emancipate them from their circumscribed condition. If an idiot can distinguish his food, he has some perception; if he shows a longing for things which please him, he has some internal and external sensations; if he can choose between two objects offered him, he has some comparison and judgment; if he yields to gentle persuasion and severity of manner, he has some understanding; if he has any tastes, however limited, there is something occupying his mind. In all these the trainer sees capacities for improvement. His principle is, that these unfortunates not only are endowed with the animal instincts and propensities, but with the feeble germs of those better qualities which are superadded to our physical nature, and which never could occur in the best-trained lower animal, even if its perceptive faculties were more acute than theirs."

It is from such observations that the true method of treat-

ing idiots has been derived. Every idiot case is a problem, and such problems have only been well solved in recent institutions, because there all efforts are concentrated on this one object, and all imaginable appliances are provided. As may be concluded from what has been said before, the great point is a good dynamic condition of the body, only to be gained by wholesome air, proper medical attention, exercise, and diet. If the digestion and the secretions are wrong, the nervous system soon becomes disordered, and there is no due response from one organ to the stimulant applied to the other, because the nerves, which are the wires of the vital telegraph, have lost the power of conducting. We often see an idiot with a feeble body, a moral sense obscured or perverted, and an understanding clouded by dark and doleful shadows, yet with a nature that will not be quiet, without balance of any of the functions, bodily or mental, and seeming as if it were impossible for him to manifest obedience to any influence or law. An appetite depraved beyond control makes him ready to prey on the filthiest and most disgusting garbage, and to seize with a brutal propensity anything that comes near him. Every desire is unreasonable, and what he demands, if he can speak, and what he babbles and cries for if he cannot, is always unreasonable and mostly hurtful. But when the skilled physician has furnished the required medicament for due stimulus of his digestive organs, directs his nutriment aright, controls the ravenous craving for food, and after a time effects a change in the brain and nervous forces, an exercise of self-control becomes possible, and in consequence a reconstruction, as it were, of the whole physical and moral being. The most hopeless generally are idiots afflicted with epilepsy, which are a numerous class, and beyond the reach of any certain cure; yet their malady may be much subdued as regards the frequency of attacks and their violence, by invigorating inducements to cheerfulness, by employments to which the sufferers have shown an inclination, and by such modes of living as experience suggests.

From the description given of the commencement of the Asylum at Highgate, it may be readily conceived how much experience was needed before idiots received as inmates could be rendered at all tractable. Yet such is the result of perpetual practice that it is now speedily accomplished. At

Earlswood, the reception is so kind, and the aspect of the place so attractive, that Dr. Down, the resident physician, finds little trouble with the pupils when first left there by their friends. Inquiry is carefully made of those who bring them, into their history, traits of character, predilections, repugnances, and habits. The objective facts relative to their bodily condition, and the state of the organs of sense are, of course, well observed and registered, to which is added due vigilance. The first concern is to eradicate bad habits, and, as soon as may be, to engage the pupils in some occupation bringing them praise and encouragement, instead of the contemptuous rebuffs too many of them have been subject to. These employments are of the simplest kind; as the unravelling cocoa-fibre for mats, splitting rods for baskets, and preparing horsehair for mattresses. Besides these gentle inducements to do something, the improvement of the bodily condition before alluded to as most essential, and the eradication of all evil habits, are matters of daily and hourly care. After this comes classification for sleeping, meals, school, drill, and such employment in what may be called a trade or business, as the pupils may show to be of their own preference. For cases that are less hopeful, all that can be done is careful supervision and the tender treatment which makes them in a degree comfortable. All this is insured by the care of the physician, and the assiduous attention of the matron and the well-chosen staff.

A few years since schools for idiots would have been classed amongst the wildest of projects, but they have not only been successful as regards their primary design, but have afforded reflex lessons useful in all cases of tuition of the young, especially as to the importance of mixing healthful exercise with application to books, and making the act of learning a pleasure instead of a drudgery, with a tendency to over-strain the youthful powers. Idiot schools have those alternations of pleasant exercise with tuition which prevent it from wearying, and make the return to it a pleasure. The possibility of teaching an idiot to read, write, and cast accounts depends much on taking advantage of personal peculiarities, and a perseverance which knows of no limit to its repetitions of the same thing till the conquest is achieved. In some instances letters have been learnt by rendering them vividly luminous,

and the strong impression on the brain has succeeded. How much the lamentable state of imbecility depends on the brain may be inferred from two cases of brain fever, in one of which restoration to ordinary powers took place, and in the other the same happened during the height of the disease, but ceased on recovery. It was excitement which caused the mutes before referred to, to speak. Also any observation may be adroitly turned to account. A boy had shown a great love of playing at nine-pins, and when the bowl knocked one down, was in an ecstasy of delight. The master at once had the letters of the alphabet carved on the pins, and whenever one fell, the pupil was made to name the letter upon it; and by these means, in time, he learnt to read well, after first acquiring his letters in this original manner. It would take too much space, and be wearisome to enumerate the school methods in the various institutions, or indeed in any one. All that can be said is, that they are furnished with the most ingenious appliances, and something new is being perpetually added. We can only shortly allude to a few of the most remarkable as adopted in our English institutions. For instance, to improve the speech, there is, at Earlswood, a cabinet full of objects, the names of which give all the sounds of our language. Thus, if the sound to be made is that of the letter *t*, the teacher holds up a *top*, and the pupils are required to pronounce the word together and with distinctness. He next shows them a *letter*, and then a *pot*, with the requirement that they shall be enunciated with the same plainness. Suppose, again, the sound coming after that of *t* has been duly mastered, is that of *d*, a *dog*, a *ladder*, and something coloured *red* will be resorted to. The eye of an idiot must also be trained. This, Mr. Sidney remarks, "is a matter of great difficulty. He may see the figure of his teacher in the mass, but it is most probable that he does not perceive any part of his person or its appendages in detail, unless some glittering object, as an eye-glass, a chain, or a seal catch the eye. But he must be taught to notice with perception and distinction particular and minute objects. This is done by laying before him, on a table, a number of geometrical figures cut out of wood; and as the teacher takes up one, the learner is directed to take a similar one. Another lesson is the holding up the fingers

one by one, and the pupil must hold up the same finger of the same hand."

Varied and clever use of the black board is productive of great effects. The master may draw on it some animal, and see if the [pupil can tell what it is, and distinguish one part from another. Boys who have commenced learning in this way have become great proficient in drawing, and one youth especially, whose drawings have attracted the attention of the most celebrated of modern artists of animal forms, Sir Edwin Landseer. Yet it was six months before he could be taught to distinguish with certainty a dog's head from his tail, a fact which Mr. Sidney says he mentioned to the late Prince Consort, when he inquired if the youth whose drawings he was admiring could have ever been an idiot. Some subjects are taught to a large number collectively. The multiplication tables are sung, accompanied by various movements of the arms and legs. Reading, writing, arithmetic, drawing, and, in the lower cases, letters and figures, counting, imitation, speaking, weighing, telling the time, colours, and other simple things are taught to less numbers together. Some lessons are made as amusing as possible, and at the same time practically valuable. One of those at Earlswood always gratifies visitors from its novelty, and is very useful for giving the inmates an idea of the value of articles, and how to buy and sell. It is called the Shop Lesson, and proceeds thus:—In one part of the schoolroom there are the usual fittings of a general shop, consisting of drawers marked plainly on the outside with the names of their contents. Above these there is a row of canisters. The pupils are seated in the gallery, with a table or counter placed in front, on which are laid scales, weights, money, and measures. A boy is selected as shopkeeper, and placed behind the counter. He begins with asking for custom, which he often does with much humour, and many hands are speedily held up, when one boy is selected to come down and make some purchase. When an article is asked for, the shopman examines the labels on the drawers till he finds it. Then comes the weighing, which is sometimes a puzzle as to the value of the pounds and ounces. Before any weight taken up by the shopman is put into the scale, the class is well questioned upon it. Next comes the placing in the scale the correct quantity of the sugar, rice, or whatever else is asked for, and it is often

amusing to observe the shopman beginning with little spoonfuls when the quantity may be large; and sometimes, when the balance is nearly complete, it is a thorough poser whether to complete it by adding to or taking from the mass. The paying and the calculation are quite a scene, the whole class checking the sums at every step. Frequently the combinations of pence and halfpence cause a long stop in the proceedings. Here, however, the purchaser not unfrequently shows great cunning, and puts down a shilling, a florin, or half-crown, and throws the determination of the proper change on the shopman. To witness this lesson is most amusing. In a report of the Commissioners of Lunacy this method of instruction is especially commended.

Another lesson is learning to tell the time by the clock, which forms a good test of power. Out of one hundred and thirty-four pupils attending together, three could tell the time to a minute, twelve to a quarter of an hour, while twenty-two could be certain only of the hours, and the rest were unable to say what o'clock it was at all. Several who can tell the hours will only name them with regard to particular occurrences of the day, as "time for dinner," "time for tea," or other similar references.

As the pupils advance, of course the teaching advances also, to writing from dictation, to reading in classes, to object-lessons, and to introduction into the writing, arithmetic, and drawing schoolrooms. New expedients for instruction at the Earlswood Asylum are continually called into action by Dr. Down, whose ingenious and intelligent mind is always at work to find out something for the welfare of his anxious charge. The pains, too, taken by Mr. Millard at the Colchester Asylum, are unremitted and effective in the same way. Dr. Down's great desire is to elicit observation, and to cultivate all possible habits of order and usefulness. He has had fitted up numerous neat cabinets with specimens of natural productions, and these are used as objects for lessons to be described in simple language, and the class is questioned on them, which tends very much to strengthen the powers of inquiry and observation. Pieces of wood, coloured in different ways, and cut into appropriate shapes, are found useful to be united to form figures and plans likely to be attractive, the putting them together making a good exercise, and the whole becoming objects of use for description of form, colours, shape, and

other properties. To these it is probable will soon be added a printing-press for the advanced pupils, and there is no doubt of its being of much value to them. Advantage is likewise taken of the fondness of idiots for dumb animals, and aviaries are provided, and these also are made to become instructive. Canaries, gold and silver pheasants, and other birds, as well as rabbits or squirrels, or guinea-pigs, are great favourites, and become beneficial aids to the general design.

The same variety is provided for the girls, and there cannot be a more interesting sight than a school of these poor imbeciles under a skilful and zealous governess. Imitation is invaluable, that whatever is done to instruct may be duly copied. They are fond of marching round the room, singing or repeating after their leader. Stories well told are listened to by those who have thrown off their torpor, with extreme delight, and nothing awakens their attention more completely. Everything is done that can make learning enjoyable, and the powers are never overtaxed by dwelling on any one thing too long together. The useful needlework accomplished is surprising, and the most proficient are allowed certain times for making fancy articles, the beauty of which has astonished those who have attended bazaars for the benefit of the charity. When a visitor goes into a workroom, the girls exhibit their sewing most eagerly, and are enchanted by expressions of approbation. All the fittings of the rooms have a tendency to keep the pupils in a state of pleasant feeling, and they are provided with cases of ferns, flowers, pictures, maps, giving the apartments a most cheerful aspect, which tells well upon their occupants. Indeed, there is scarcely any easily procurable attraction which has not been more or less brought into this benevolent service, and never in vain. Even the feeblest seem calm and contented, while those who are capable of improvement form such a joyous family as it would not be easy to find elsewhere. Persons who have had opportunities of examining classes of the more advanced pupils have invariably been astonished at their answers, and especially in the historical and simple practical truths of the Scriptures, which they read and are questioned on daily. Nothing is more striking in many idiots than their susceptibility of religious impression and instruction, happily verifying the beatitude uttered by the Saviour in reference to the poor in spirit. Every observer of these bereaved imbeciles attests

this, from Calamy, when he wrote his affecting story of "Poor Joseph," down to the present moment. Mr. Sidney dwells emphatically on these impressions on the idiot pupils, and gives instances of a discriminating and tender conscientiousness, and of hope and consolation under the pressure of sickness, such as can never fail to be cherished in the memories of those who have witnessed such hallowed brightenings of the feeble mind. The thoughts consequent on these results of pious labours to raise the depressed spirit are happily expressed in the lines prefixed to Mr. Brady's pamphlet :

". . . to us is lent—
To us on whom the ends of the world are come—
New miracles of love, when sages said
That miracles were o'er, like life from the dead,
Water from rocks, or music from the dumb;
For lo! to thoughtful touch of Christian care
The idiot's babbling lips breathe forth a prayer."

It is most certain that many idiots who were once profane and vulgar, have been thus brought into the sunlight of religious purity and decency, and taught the fear of God and the necessity of keeping His commandments, with a sense of moral obligation seemingly beyond the scope of their limited capacities, because they have been led to look to Him who alone can bring light out of darkness. The late Joseph John Gurney published the following lines as the authenticated composition of an idiot, and they who have witnessed many an imbecile's manifestations of capability of such thoughts more recently will not be surprised when they are read by them :—

"Could we with ink the ocean fill—
Were the whole earth of parchment made—
Were every single stick a quill—
And every man a scribe by trade :—
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry ;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole
If stretched from sky to sky."

The eccentricity of the language is much like what many of the same class would use if the like thoughts were presented to their minds ; but sometimes they break forth with a nobler glow, as in the case of the boy at Essex Hall, who, when walking in the fields before harvest, turned to his attendant

and quoted the passage from the Psalms :—"The fields stand so thick with corn that they laugh and sing." We have, then, in such an asylum, as was observed of the one in Pennsylvania,—

"A home with good nursing for the very young, a school for such as may be qualified to enter upon its humble curriculum, and a course of physical training for those who need it; while the genius of a cheerful, hopeful morality, and a faith in the spirit and principles of a pure Christianity, are cherished as the only safe foundation for this, and every work which has for its end the highest good of the race."

It was, in furthering the many schemes for the improvement of idiots, a most important object to enable those capable of reaping the highest advantages to become adepts in some useful branch of industry, and to make their work remunerative, exchanging their solitary and idle habits for social, industrious, and productive occupation. One of the employments in which it has been found that they may be profitably engaged is that of mat-making. Some learn to plait the cocoa-fibre, and others to make the mats. In time they advance beyond the plain mats, and make excellent figured hearthrugs, and hall and door-mats. Some are even capable, under direction, of producing good matting for corridors or churches, or even fancy mats, and the work is generally done in a creditable manner. Those who are thus engaged have mostly selected this department of industry by their own choice, and are exceedingly proud of it; and if a visitor meets one of them in any other portion of the establishment, he is sure to be eagerly invited to come and look at his progress, or is told by him, "I can make fancy mats now." On one occasion, when the boys were taking a walk, a mat-maker lagged behind, and, on being asked why he did so, he answered, "I was thinking of a new pattern for my mat;" and nothing could more strongly show the pleasure which useful work affords to the rescued imbecile, often previously miserable by reason of a blank mind and listless body. As in the school so in the workshop, the pupil must never be allowed to become wearied or jaded by too long continuance in the same occupation, and the consequence is that both learning and labour are looked upon as recreations. Out of between seventy and eighty mat-weavers and helpers at Earlswood, it would be rare to see one showing symptoms of the work be-

coming irksome, but all goes on with the greatest cheerfulness and good-humour. Amongst them, at this time, is one boy who was, on entering the asylum, helpless, and unable even to feed himself, and yet he is now no common adept at making mats with pretty borders. Such a fact as this is of great value, as it shows clearly what a change may be hoped for, under the treatment we have described, in almost any idiot. The eccentric bearing of an idiot will always, as far as may be judged from experience, more or less remain; but, nevertheless, he may become, in all essential characteristics, an elevated, happy, and useful being. As an interesting confirmation of this, it may be mentioned that a boy, graciously placed in the asylum by the Queen, succeeded in making mats that were accepted for use in the palace of his beneficent sovereign. He is now advanced to the office of letter-carrier, taking the letters to and from the post twice or thrice daily; but he still shows what he has been and the remains of it, by standing erect and making a grand military salute when he meets any person to whom he considers this respect due.

Shoemaking is also one of the favourite trades with the imbecile pupils, but there are not found so many ready to engage in it, or qualified, as for the mat-shops. Nor has any one yet been found able to measure the foot or cut out the boot or shoe; but when these are done for them by a skilful hand, they learn to sew them admirably. One boy at Earlswood makes a pair of boots a day in workmanlike style, and declares he could make seven pairs in the six days if they would but let him have his tea a little stronger, which is a sample of the funny sayings heard by visitors in every department. Many persons go to the asylum thinking they shall see nothing but wretchedness and misery, and come away astonished at the merriment which pervades almost every room in the building, and every turn of the grounds. Sometimes there is the most facetious politeness, as was shown to a lady of rank who asked one of the shoemakers what he would charge for making her a pair of slippers, when he replied "four shillings," on which another exclaimed, "I would do it *only for the honour.*"

Sometimes a few of the pupils take to basket-making, but it does not generally prove a favourite trade. Tailoring, however, is readily adopted, and a lively board it is. Mr. Sidney gives a humorous description of their fitting Punch with a new

suit preparatory to a grand performance of Punch and Judy; and gentlemen who go into the shop are eagerly asked if they have any loose buttons to sew on. One youth, he also tells us, who was deemed altogether impracticable, now makes good trousers and waistcoats, and is becoming a clever hand at coats. In this work, as well as in the shoemaking, a cutter-out is required; but the sewing is so good that, at one time, much journey-work was sent to the asylum at Colchester, and satisfaction was given. At Earlswood, now, every suit worn in the establishment is made in these shops, and gives full employment.

Some reclaimed idiots make excellent carpenters, and several have quitted the asylum who are now earning good wages as journeymen under due supervision, getting as much, near London, as from four to five shillings a day. What a change is this from being drivellers, moping in a lane or street, teased by idle boys, or slobbering in helpless degradation in a seat in some cottage, where the parent's eye glistens with tears as it looks on such a revolting offspring! Doors, tables, desks, chests of drawers, and all sorts of carpenter and cabinet-work are readily made by the pupils, and they can be produced in sufficient quantity to supply all that is needed for furniture in a large asylum. At Earlswood, there are about twenty such carpenters at this time, who show their work with an eagerness that is sometimes dangerous to the feet of those who examine it, lest the heavy articles they hold up should fall upon them, for now and then there are such accidents in the struggle for approbation.

In the same way, all sorts of useful employments are devised for the females, and some of them become so good at household work that they make valuable servants, and diminish the number that it is needful to hire. A great many can be taught needlework so well that all required for a large asylum may be done by them with a certain amount of guidance and help, while a dozen or more may be constantly employed in repairing the clothing and linen. It has been before noticed that some of the fancy work is beautiful; but this is only an indulgence consequent on the previous work being useful, and so allowed as an encouragement, which is found to have a quickening influence.

No idiot asylum should be without a farm and a garden, and if the number of pupils is large they should be of con-

siderable extent. There are between twenty and thirty farmers and gardeners at Earlswood, while at Essex Hall, the employment of pupils able to do the work assigned to them in the garden has long been found most attractive and beneficial. In the first-named place, the garden consists of about eight acres, and is admirably kept by the young gardeners under superintendence. The vegetables required in the establishment are well and abundantly grown, and in the flower-borders, which are in excellent taste, it is almost impossible to find a weed. There is a greenhouse, and also there are some frames for preserving the plants to be bedded out in the summer, and every part of them has been made in the place in a workmanlike manner. Now and then, at both the asylums just named, prizes have been gained for cucumbers, celery, and other produce, at the neighbouring horticultural shows, to the great joy and triumph of their growers. Such an occupation has a most happy influence on the imbeciles employed in it, while it secures abundance of excellent fresh vegetables and summer and winter fruits for their use, a part of their diet of great importance.

To see the poor fellows watching their plants and trees, and in summer parading near the peas and currants, with their clackers to frighten the birds, is a most exhilarating spectacle when contrasted with the uselessness and wretchedness of their previous lives. The great object of ambition, however, is to be a farmer. "I am a farmer now," is the proudest boast of some poor fellow promoted to that post. The attention paid to the live animals of the farm is unfailing; whatever danger of neglect keepers of cows might fear from the boys who tend them, there is none from the idiots. The cows are the special object of their regard, and when a calf comes, or a litter of pigs, they are welcomed and cared for with enthusiasm, and they will run eagerly to the house to tell of the addition to the stock; only perhaps in mistaken terms, as one boy did out of breath—"Sir, sir, the pig has *calved*." All the hay of a large acreage is easily made by the idiots, only they would fail without guidance in constructing the ricks. Idiot haymakers are a joyous company, and the hay-field is a source of pleasure to those too feeble to do any work in it. Nor is this labour without profit, for the farm produce has been sold at Earlswood for more than £1,000 in one year. Some boys are trusted with milking, and nothing in the way

of pleasure would keep them from this duty, to which they go just before the tea is ready. Somebody asked one of them, who sat tugging at a cow's dug after all the milk seemed to have been exhausted, "How do you know when to leave off?" "Oh," said he, "when the tea-bell rings." It is a pleasant sight to see them come in from the farm to a meal; how carefully they wash their hands, and clean their shoes, and take off their working clothes to go into the common eating-room neat and with all propriety. It would have been considered as utterly impossible to have achieved such order and decorum with pupils whose previous habits tended to the reverse, but it may be witnessed daily.

Indeed, the sight of a large company of well-trained idiots at table is most remarkable, and none are allowed to dine in the principal dining-hall, till they have acquired all the acts of feeding and sitting at their meals with due decorum. When they first come into the establishment, unless they belong to the class who mope and are sluggish, they are often as greedy and ravenous as wild beasts, seizing and bolting everything brought near them in the way of food, with a tendency, if not checked, to gorge themselves to excess. In time, however, they are brought to enter the apartment in regular order, the females arranging themselves on one side, and the males on the other. By means of apparatus for the purpose, the room being close to and upon the level with the kitchen, the dinner with the portion of each on a separate plate, is served in a very short time. No one begins till all are ready, when they sing, under the leadership of their master, a short grace, and then commence. There is no apparent greediness, no unseemly feeding, but they form a cheerful and well-conducted company, much gratified by the notice of visitors. The dinner concludes, as it began, with another grace, and the room is quitted in a quiet and orderly manner. Some of the pay cases at Earlswood have a dining-room apart, where the meal is served as nearly as possible in the way they would have it at home, and thus when restored to their friends they are not excluded from the family dinner because of any improprieties. The preparation for dinner in the kitchen is a lively scene at Earlswood, for there are about a dozen of the pupils engaged as cooks in a subordinate capacity, and they are dressed in white with the usual caps, looking the perfection of cleanliness and neatness. They work with the greatest delight in this employment, and are

very fond of it. This occupation does not interfere with the work at any trade, and it is one of those beneficial changes in the daily routine which are found so desirable. One boy has extreme pleasure in washing the plates and dishes, doing it well. So absorbed is he in this undertaking, that it is his principal thought; and when asked which he liked best, his present or former residence, he replied, "O, this, because there is a better sink here." Amongst the cooks there is one noticed by Mr. Sidney as the strangest specimen of unequal powers that could be found. A real simpleton, utterly without judgment, he has a memory that is prodigious, and a singular tendency to make puns. When spoken to about his kitchen duties, he said, "Though I am a *cook*, I hope I shall never be a *sauce-box*." Being wonderfully versed in history, he was requested to describe the Rye-House Plot, when busy helping to make a pudding, but he excused himself by remarking drolly, "I am so busy with the *meal-tub plot*, just now, that I have no time to tell you about the *Rye-House Plot*." If desired to give an account of almost any prominent event in ancient or modern history, he will repeat whole pages of what he has read, and there is no stopping him. When giving the history of Talleyrand in no complimentary terms, he was interrupted by a high dignitary of the Church, so he said sharply, "he was one of the clergy, any how," and went off to his cookery quite affronted. Besides his work in the kitchen, he is a good shoemaker, but in all other things a palpable imbecile. How impossible is it, in the present state of our knowledge, to account for such a human being, with a memory of incredible power, with a capability of exercising a certain handicraft, and yet without any faculty that could guide him in the commonest paths of daily life! It may seem trifling to enter into the particulars adduced in the few last pages, but on reflection it must be seen we could not otherwise properly describe the characters of those to whom benefits have accrued from the endeavours made to rescue them from the slough of their condition. The last-mentioned pupil was called by Mr. Sidney "the historical cook," and he is also alluded to by Mr. Brady, who says of him: "He can repeat whole pages of history. We asked him several questions, nearly all of which he answered with marvellous accuracy. Amongst his replies, he gave us an account of the Peloponnesian War, showing that he was intimately acquainted with its details. He mentioned its duration, date, and cause; the

resources of the combatants; the gains and losses on either side; the temporary peace; the renewal of the war after the Spartan success; and the final defeat of the Athenians by Lysander." Another of these cooks delights in mincing the food for those who cannot masticate, and at present do not dine at the principal table. He works with an ingenious apparatus which reduces the food to the condition of potted meat. Not one of these youths when they came to the institution could have been trusted near a fire,—a fact which strongly attests the judgment and skill by which they have been made so docile and useful.

Much depends on classification, and hence arises one great advantage of an asylum on a large scale like that so skilfully managed by Dr. Down, who makes it a point of the greatest care. Even the amusements of the pupils are thus regulated, as it would be obviously absurd to let any one of them belong to a group with powers he did not possess. Hence all the play-rooms and games are arranged to meet the requirements of the inmates of different degrees. Cricket requires considerable bodily activity and a quick eye, yet here are a few who play very neatly, and in Essex they were sometimes invited to carry on the game in the grounds of neighbouring gentlemen, who kindly fêted the players, and made them very happy by such an indulgence. Croquet is also a favourite game, but every one must be led to these exercises for pleasure, according to the grade of the class to which each belongs. There are abundance of cheerful methods also of entertaining the pupils, both male and female gathered together; as Punch and Judy, the magic lantern, the oxy-calcium microscope, and the band, of which the attendants are the chief musicians, while one of the pupils plays the big drum, and another the triangle, keeping good time, which is the great difficulty. Idiots easily learn tunes, but few, however, can master notes and time. Many concerts take place at Earlswood in the winter season, and parties are invited to them. They add much to the life of the place, and are extremely prized by the pupils. At Christmas they have a regular performance of a charade or some kindred spectacle, in which the attendants are the actors, accompanied by some forty of their charge. The dialogues are all written by Dr. Down, and Mrs. Down arranges the scenery and dresses, all of which are executed in the house. One performance last year was attended by more than three hundred inmates, and a good

many of the neighbouring gentry, who came as visitors, expressed the greatest wonder and satisfaction at the intense enjoyment and behaviour of the uncommon audience. The best of the pupils profit much by excursions to the sea-side or to the Crystal Palace; and indeed by any well-selected change that tends to awaken their faculties, and to excite them in a right direction.

From the statements which have been cursorily made, it will be evident that those who peruse the books in our list* will find them to contain no common matter for reflection; but we propose still further to elucidate the subject by allusion to some individual cases as special examples, contrasting their present with their former condition. In no other way can the work be appreciated, nor the transforming efficacy of the appliances made use of comprehended. The promoters of the Philadelphian Institution or Training School considered that much service would accrue to the cause of the idiot by publishing a brief history of twenty-two imbecile children, and the volume came out with the title of "The Mind Unveiled." To make it as attractive as possible it was embellished by photographs of some of the most peculiar examples, and the descriptions of each are written in an agreeable style. One of them is designated "A boy that we are proud of," and in his appearance as seen in the photograph, though the expression of the countenance may seem singular when viewed closely, there is nothing to indicate his condition. Yet he was an idiot of the most depraved class—"a moral idiot," with no fear of the consequences of doing wrong, and very dishonest; with "a good share of secretiveness too, so that the most disguised cross-questioning rarely discovered the truth. His honest face covered the most mature dishonesty." A more cunning thief could not be conceived, and on coming to the asylum he soon ran away; and he was, besides, deplorably ignorant and indifferent. He was subject to chorea, could scarcely speak, and was as obstinate as a mule. Judicious treatment soon began to alter his conduct, and it was found that his great delight was to hear some narrative well told; and by taking advantage of this propensity, he soon became an attentive listener to beneficial lessons, and he was found to have a susceptible heart, as easily led into right as it had been darkened

* This refers to the list of Books at the head of the Article in the Review.

and misled by wrong. He gave evidence in time of strong religious feeling, and became so honest that he was trusted with money, while in the schoolroom his progress was surprising. The chorea ceased to affect his gait as before, and instead of thieving he gave a poor woman in poverty and rags a large portion of his Christmas savings, describing himself, when asked how he felt after his charity, as "feeling big in here," laying his hand on his heart with great pathos. Interesting as his case is, the accounts of several of the girls are equally worthy of attention, especially a group called "Our Sewing Girls." But it is desirable to show an alteration in one of the very lowest cases, and we have not room for more. This example goes by the name of "Our Southern Boy." He is photographed exercising the dumb-bells with his teacher; he appears to be well formed, but his countenance is of a low type of expression. His condition was so unpromising that he "employed no articulate speech, either by persuasion or imitation, and expressed no natural wants even by signs." "We considered him," the account says, "one of our lowest cases of idiocy. No dawn of cheering intelligence beamed from those leaden eyes; no smile of pleasure played over those marred features; the semblance of man only was seen—impassive, unobserving, and intellectually dead. He would lounge by the hour basking himself in the warm sun; no question could arouse him, no want compel him to change his favourite place." Every conceivable attempt was for a long time made in vain to stimulate him to some exertion; efforts were directed to make him use his limbs in walking, aided by support, but he resisted violently, making horrible grimaces. Nothing was ever apparently noticed by him till he saw a coloured man, such as he used to see in the South, whence he came; and he seemed to recognise him with pleasure, exclaiming "Oh you!" as if in dim remembrance of his former home. All attempts to make him move frightened him, and when tempted by the odour of dinner, which alone could rouse him, it was amusing to see him crawl down stairs feet foremost. Swings, rocking-boats, ladders, wheelbarrows, all seemed to terrify him; and though liking music, when drawn to it he resisted, crying, "Oh! my sakes! I's scared; car' me out." At last he was pushed towards the black board, kicking and screaming, with a bit of chalk in his hand, with which he was made to mark the board, and this pleased him so that he soon took to making random markings.

Still there was no other sign of the least independent action till he was observed *playing with a straw*, which he discontinued as soon as perceived, being at the time a bit of an impostor. His teacher, however, made this trifle an interesting point in his development; it was one of those first and feeblest in the series of voluntary actions, which those engaged in the training of idiots so well know how to turn to good account. One day he was suddenly made to take a walk, and became roused by a series of incidents. At length he became imitative, called a puppy "pretty little dog," after pretending to be terrified at it, took an interest in pictures, and seeing one of a fox, said, "Stinky," the southern name for the animal. In time his indolence was overcome, and he became fond of the exercises he so vehemently resisted; was the first to run when the call was given, "Ladder-boys, form line," and took to dancing after genuine plantation fashion to the music of the violin, as well as to joining occasionally in the school choruses. In other respects also he made gradual advances, the first indication of his case becoming at all practicable being the circumstance of his playing of his own account with a straw, which showed to the skilled observer that there were in him both will and power if they could be elicited.

We have seen that in our asylums encouragement is wisely given to certain amusements, and when they become exercises of ideality they are improving. Such are the charades and pantomimes at Earlswood, and in the Pennsylvanian Asylum they have curious original plays. A young child in the normal condition amuses himself greatly by personifying things about him—making one chair his horse, another his carriage, whipping away as if his imaginations were realities. An uneducated idiot never does this, nor till he begins to advance does he ever find a way to amuse himself that at all approaches to the likeness of an ordinary child, any approximation to which is an encouraging sight to those who have the care of him. Every phase approaching the normal is hailed with much pleasure, and mimic play, whether at an imaginary meal, or horses, or any little thing, is a proof of progress. When invention appears, it denotes an approximation towards the imagery of healthful childhood, and there is hope that much may accrue from it. In the volume from which our American cases have been taken, we are told that the pupils were so much awakened as to have originated a drama so peculiar, that the like, probably, has

never been played, except it may be the "Malade Imaginaire." This farce, for so it is, they called "The Doctor." One boy falls in a violent epileptic convulsion, well assumed; a girl, called "the good old soul," nurses the patient, shouting for the doctor. In comes the doctor, generally tardy, but now very brisk, and administers his remedies, while the patient indicates returning consciousness by showing the greatest disgust for them. Another pretends a bad fever, and the doctor is hurried off, till at length half-a-dozen victims are prostrated, and the doctor is in the most ludicrous perplexity. The compiler of the narrative, Dr. Kerlin, of Germanstown, describes this "as a most amusing drama;" but the most extraordinary part of it is, that it should be entirely due to the fancy of the imbecile actors.

Whatever may be thought of these specimens of idiots under culture on the other side of the Atlantic, they are all much surpassed by an individual at Earlswood, described by Mr. Sidney, as proving how possible it is for one defective in many powers to have special capabilities beyond the ordinary standard. Some years ago a boy came under the care of the establishment belonging to this asylum, then at Essex Hall. He was of well-proportioned frame, but with a singularly formed head, and wild, sullen, and with scarcely any speech. He was, in fact, the pupil who was six months learning the difference between a dog's head and his tail. If spoken to, he uttered by no means pleasant sounds, and when corrected would run away and hide himself if possible. It is not necessary to give in detail the history of his progress, but his accomplishments at this time are such as to enable him to earn his own living, and even more, in the establishment, while his smile is most agreeable, and his manners very attractive, indeed refined. Yet even now his speech is scarcely intelligible to those who know him well, and he has not a quality of any kind which could enable him without guidance to manage even small sums of money, or the simplest economy of daily life. Yet he is a carpenter and cabinet-maker, the workman to whose skill is due a great deal of the neat furniture of the house; and he can paint, glaze, and varnish in excellent style. Many of the doors are made and finished by him. He runs with the rapidity of an American Indian, fences so as to compete with a good master, and plays the drum in the band. More than this, he has made a model of a man-of-war which has been several

times exhibited in London, and accomplished his first attempt at this achievement merely by seeing a drawing of one on a figured handkerchief. He was told that the instant it was launched it would fall on its side for want of ballast and due calculation, but would not believe it till he witnessed the disaster, to his own dismay. Another effort was made, and the finish, proportions, and general plan are now perfect. He was furnished with metal guns by the generosity of a member of the board, and to hear him explain his ingenious methods of proceeding, as he stands before his model, is perfectly unlike anything else ever seen or heard; while his meaning must be more than half guessed, from his want of words and expression. He is now making a model of the "Great Eastern" iron ship, thirteen feet long. He has made all the working drawings, and will accomplish the feat admirably. From morning to night he is constantly employed, and when his regular work in the carpenter's shop ceases for the use of the house, he spends his time in these sort of fancy works, including a gigantic flying kite, and in copying fine engravings. These drawings, in dark and coloured chalk, are most meritorious, and many of them, framed and glazed by himself, adorn the corridor and other parts of the asylum. One was graciously approved and accepted by the Queen, who was kindly pleased to send the artist a present; and Mr. Sidney had the honour of showing some of them to the Prince Consort, no common judge of art, who expressed the greatest surprise that one so gifted was still to be kept in the category of idiots, or ever had been one. His Royal Highness was particularly astonished, not merely by his copies of first-rate engravings, but by an imaginary drawing made by him of the siege of Sebastopol, partly from the "Illustrated London News," and partly from his own ideas. He dislikes writing, and holds it very cheap, and, like the ancient inhabitants of certain portions of the American continent, would make his communications pictorial. If offended and intending to complain, he draws the incident, and makes his views of things about the house and his requests known in the same way. He has made a drawing of the future launch of his great ship, himself the principal figure, and all the inmates of the house cheering him and waving their caps. In short, he has seemingly just missed, by defect in some faculties and the want of equilibrium in those he possesses, being a distinguished genius. He is passionate in temper, but relents and punishes himself; he set

a trap for Dr. Down, when he offended him, but was very sorry for it; he kicked a panel out of a door in a rage, and afterwards refused to go to Brighton on an excursion of pleasure because he did not deserve it for this misconduct. He is conscientious, gentle, and generally well behaved, and is now considered on the staff, dines with the attendants, and, some say, he fancies the establishment could scarcely go on without him. He has a brother afflicted with the same malady as himself in the asylum, to whom his attentions are constant and affectionate. To explain the physical and psychological mysteries of such a human being is beyond the present powers of any known science, and must puzzle the most ingenious speculators on the frontal, parietal, temporal, and occipital divisions of the human skull, as indicating idiocy or normal powers. There is no knowing what an idiot can do till tried, and such as can be taught nothing in one way may learn much in another. For instance, a girl clever at arithmetic persisted in calling the first three rules *contrition*, *consumption*, and *distraction*, instead of their proper names. The youth just described, with all his cleverness, could never be made to understand that an annual sum paid quarterly would equal in amount the same paid weekly; yet another, stupid at all other things, will make arithmetical calculations, mentally, of great extent, with perfect accuracy and marvellous readiness.

No condition of those afflicted with this malady need be despaired of in experienced and judicious hands. It is not long since Dr. Down, the physician at Earlswood, was requested to see a boy living in London with his mother and sisters, and who was becoming altogether unmanageable. He was filthy, obstinate, and dangerous to a degree that caused him to be dreaded. Dr. Down recommended his being sent to Earlswood,—advice very reluctantly taken. He came in a horrid condition, and was to all appearance hopelessly vicious, at first refusing every kindness and even food, threatening any person who came near him, thinking to terrify his attendants as he had done his relatives. Dr. Down met his menaces kindly, by perseverance won him, and in a month changed him into a tractable being. When this was reported to his mother, she became uneasy, fearing that violent measures had been taken, and hastened to the asylum. Placed in one of the rooms, she saw her son cross the garden, and heard Dr. Down ask him to gather him a rose, which he brought, to her asto-

nishment, to the doctor in a pleasant manner. It was still thought advisable that he should, during this visit of his mother, not know that she was present. In two months from this time they were allowed to meet, and she talked with joy to her altered son. She declared that all was to her a mystery, for nothing but brute force could do anything with him before; and here was the great mistake. This unpromising youth joined the party in the carpenter's shop, working diligently and cheerfully at this trade of his own selection. The proper method was here pursued by the judicious and experienced physician, and the issue was a great success. Itard failed with the wild boy of Arveyron who roamed in the woods and was caught rolling in the snow, because he treated him not as an idiot but as a savage.

The writings from which most of these cases are selected are all replete with instances of success. It must be most gratifying in an asylum to see the reclaimed patients doing the work of the establishment, and rendering fewer servants necessary in almost every department. Some are even sent to purchase articles at shops, and on various errands of confidence. It scarcely ever happens that they fail in their particular message, but what they may have to say on returning from a neighbouring town it is impossible to predict. For instance, a boy came home from a place where an election was going on, and said the successful candidate *had won the pig*. Every one was puzzled till it was made out that he was at *the head of the poll*, which the poor imbecile thought meant *the pole*, and supposed that he had been climbing a greasy pole, as they do in rustic games, for the prize of a fat pig! The carrier at Earlswood has passed through many grades of occupation, having been a tailor, cook, gardener, mason, and farmer. He now goes to Redhill two or three times a day, and is entirely to be trusted. He was originally a pitiable specimen, skulking about in his native place with pockets full of torn leaves of books and filthy bits of newspaper, all the rude boys around following and teasing him. He has now been taught all the employments named, and exhibits a feeling of religion and a sense of duty of the most exemplary kind, being truthful, extremely well-behaved, well versed in the Scriptures, and rebuking every kind of deception or impropriety, while he himself is an admirable example.

Enough has now been stated to convince all inquirers that

the pains taken with idiots have not been unrequited. Mr. Sidney assures us that he has known parents to come and inquire for their child, and were unable to recognise him in a group when requested to do so; and he says he has seen a mother standing on the steps before the door of the asylum, and turning her son round and round with amazement, till the tears of joy flowed down her cheeks. We cannot therefore do otherwise than recognise with satisfaction the efforts now making in this nation to reclaim and educate idiots, and indeed in all parts of the world. It has been a happy and successful experiment, but there is much still to learn, and the progress of the work needs great vigilance and care, so that we may hope that if the British isles do actually contain 50,000 idiots or imbeciles, as has been asserted, they may all more or less find at least some effectual palliation of their wretched condition.

"The patient and well-directed efforts made in asylums already existing" says (Dr. Conolly) "for the imbecile and idiotic children, have proved that the senses may be educated, the muscular movements and powers improved, and the mental faculties in every case more or less cultivated. The faculty of speech may be, we may almost say, bestowed on many who appear at first to be unable to employ articulate language: all their habits may be amended; industrial power may be imparted to them; all their moral feelings awakened, and even devotional aspirations given to those in whom the attributes of soul were so obscured as to seem to be wanting."

All cannot be equally improved, but it is rare to discover a single instance in which some benefit is not imparted, while many may be raised to a position of social comfort, and to gain a good livelihood by the exercise of their respective handicrafts under vigilant employers, to whom they act as journeymen. Thus the solitary and useless are made social and industrious, while, relieved from the blight of their deplorable condition, they become conscious of their humanity, as well as, in a measure, independent, happy, and confident, instead of helpless, sad, and distrustful.

Nothing more surprises a visitor to a well-managed asylum for imbeciles than the entire absence of that gloom which most persons naturally expect to find hanging over it like a dark cloud. Mr. Sidney assures us that a summer fête at Earlswood was a truly joyous scene, and all the preparations for it in the shape of tents, flags, and preparations for games, gave the grounds before the building the aspect of great gaiety. These

of course would be readily provided by generous promoters of the charity anxious to give the inmates the pleasure of a gala; but the real matter of astonishment was in the fact that nearly every one of these useful and ornamental appendages of the holiday were made in the institution, and had been erected, coloured, painted, and otherwise decorated by the inmates. The same operatives constructed a balloon, painted and repaired Punch and Judy, and set out the croquet and wickets for cricket. Some formed a Nigger Troupe, and with blackened faces and grotesque dresses joined the attendants in a performance of great humour. Many of the pupils were to be seen leading their infirm fellows, and carefully tending them during the routine of the day. Nothing could be more decorous or more joyous, the discipline being perfectly maintained with the utmost liberty for the most unrestrained pleasure; and not a spectator left that home of those who but for the exertions made in their behalf would have been outcasts, without expressions of gratification and the conviction that the work was eminently compensating.

The consequences of judicious care bestowed by friends of the feeble-minded on the unfortunates to whom they are directed, we have described and illustrated by examples of individual benefit; we must now take a larger view as regards their extended influence on this mournfully numerous and helpless portion of the human family. To give freedom and happiness to thousands of imprisoned minds and miserable beings, is worthy of the anxious consideration of philanthropists in all nations. Wherever the great double experiment has been made—for it is double, medicinal and instructive, the skilled physician and patient teacher going hand in hand—all patients have been improved in personal appearance, health, habits, and comfort; *most* in vigour, decency, self-control, perception, speech, and knowledge of objects; *many* in powers of all kinds, observation, manners, thought, habits, pursuits, industry, and religion; while *some* are actually fitted to mingle with the world, and even educated persons, with due care. This age, in which men have penetrated into the hidden forces of matter, has also made great discoveries as regards the connexion between *organism* and mind. Hence it has been enabled to replace both senses in the cases of the blind and deaf mutes, and to raise defective powers in an idiot, kindness being the key-note of all progress.

In addition to the benefits conferred on the defective individuals who are raised by these institutions to the level of humanity, science has everything to gain from a more extended and systematic observation of the phenomena of idiocy. Inquiry may be made into all that has any bearing on cases of congenital idiots, and we may at last arrive at some more definite view of the causes of this malady than the present guess-work, on which, because it is so, we forbear to speculate. Most men who have thought much on the subject have had their notions and theories; but we are far from knowing certainly how it has happened that human beings have been born, in whom the harmony of nature has been so disturbed by the excesses or defects of physical constitution. American writers have been very forward in propounding their views, and we think they would have been more prudent and philosophical if they had waited for more complete investigation. We can only say of these helpless ones that they have entered life in a state of imperfection that has hitherto been regarded as hopeless; but by the means used to convert the hopeless into hopeful human beings, we shall best learn the needful lessons of every kind respecting them. We find in all a more or less incomplete physical structure; the bony parts of the body are fragile, the teeth are subject to very early decay, the muscles are infirm and often flabby, the gait is ill-balanced, the appetite is voracious, while the digestion is imperfect, the taste has no discrimination, the sensations are benumbed, and the blood and secretions impure. To make accurate investigation into all these things, with a view to beneficial operations, is due from society to the thousands of its members who are blighted and bowed down by them. No single accompaniment of such a condition, if it prevails largely, may be deemed unimportant, whether it belongs to one organ or another, to the brain, the tongue, the ear, the nose, the lips, the palate, or any part of the body.

Certain peculiarities of the ear are often seen in idiots. At one time there was a girl at Essex Hall whose ears were enormous, and flapped about in the most extraordinary manner, giving her an appearance singularly strange and grotesque, the more so as she was very lively and good-humoured, with a marked expression of drollery. There is an idea that the brain and these derangements mutually affect each other. The lobule of the ear and its position with regard to the cheek, as well as the formation of the helix, present, it is said, peculiar modifi-

cations in idiots, and also sometimes in lunatics, while there is often a flaccidity in the fleshy parts, which are turgid, and not symmetrical with those on the other side of the head. Nor is it unlikely that these several varieties differing from the normal condition may be due to a certain defective circulation, which may extend to the internal tissues of the brain, having at the same time relation to the encephalic development and that of the skull.

We have previously referred to the observations of Dr. Down with regard to certain facial inequalities perceptible in idiots, and they were made upon two hundred cases taken without any special selection from a large number. He well remarks that the opinions formed of idiots have arisen more from the representations of poets and romance-writers than from the deductions of rigid observation. Persons think their heads are formed like that in Lavater's portrait, or Homer's description of Thersites, so that all their notions are built on the strongest exaggerations, and not on true investigations of their physical and psychical conditions, which are the only real tests of their state. As in the case of the ear, so the formation of the mouth is often aberrant. The palate is found to be inordinately arched, and also unsymmetrical, one side plane, the other concave, or sometimes excessively flattened, while its veil, called the *velum palati*, is unusually flaccid, or the palate itself exceedingly narrow. The faulty nature of the teeth has been before alluded to; they are not only so in the way previously mentioned, but are irregular, crowded, sometimes to a degree of deformity, and all due to the imperfect development of the superior maxillary bone. The tongue likewise is out of order, so that many cannot protrude it, or is of inordinate size, resulting in defective articulation. Besides these defects, the tonsils and the mucous membrane are disordered, to which may be added elongation of the uvula. The flow of saliva from the mouth is another symptom of idiocy, and it is sometimes so excessive as to produce severe excoriation of the chin, and it is rarely unconnected, except in childhood, old age, or disease, or injury, with mental imbecility. This great secretion of saliva and its incontinent retention are capable of much improvement. All these observations are worthy of attention, because they exhibit the bodily characteristics of a class whose mental vigour is infirm; and the inference of Dr. Down is unquestionable, that the psychical condition of these unfortunates should be specially sought to be ameliorated by an improve-

ment of their physical condition. One conclusion seems to be certainly arrived at, which is, that the many different manifestations of want of harmony between the physical and mental powers of idiots are due either to some defect in the bodily organs, or to the derangement of their functions. To this it may be added, as is done by the author of the report of the New York Asylum, "that amidst all the diversities just alluded to there is one common point of resemblance not of a physical character, and that is the want of attention." Evidently this is due to an inability, arising from some physical cause, to concentrate the faculties and powers on a given object. This means that these faculties and powers are in such a state that they refuse, to the natural and normal extent, to obey the will. In allusion to this condition of all idiots in greater or less degree, the writer last referred to has the following observations:

"One peculiarity of our system of instruction consists, then, mainly in creating this power of attention; in the first place by exciting the will by appropriate stimuli, and then, by its continued exercise giving it the capability to control the other attributes of the individual. It should be mentioned, because of its relation to our mode of education, that there is a natural order both in the succession in which the will obtains the supremacy over the other powers, and also in the means by which that will is developed and strengthened. We see it in the infant naturally well endowed, and especially in the idiot, because of the more gradual progress in the control it first acquires over the muscular system, then over the intellect, and finally over the desires, the appetites, and the passions. That natural order in the means by which the will is developed is learned by a similar observation, and the knowledge of it has its practical value in our course of instruction. It is first excited by the instincts, then by the appetite; still again by the desires, the intellect, and finally the moral powers. Thus a child is sometimes seen who, with no lack of muscular power, is unwilling to take anything in his hand. The fear of falling, one development of the instinct of self-preservation, will, however, lead him to grasp with firmness the rounds of a ladder rather than suffer injury. Then he will hold food in his hand, or a cup of water, to gratify his appetite. Next he is induced to hold an object in his hand, to gratify his senses or his curiosity with reference to it. And so he goes from one step to another, the discipline acquired in accomplishing the lower enabling him to achieve the higher. Physical training will, then, form the basis of all well-directed efforts for the education of idiots; first, because of its direct effect to obviate the existing peculiarity of physical condition; and, secondly, because the gymnastic exercises constituting the physical training may be designed and adapted to develop the power of attention in conformity with the natural order of succession."

These are in truth the ideas which have been made to operate on the idiot with so much practical benefit both in Europe and in America, and if well reflected upon they will be found not merely to form the basis of the education of the imbecile, but, as has been hinted before, of those gifted with ordinary powers. All teachers may learn from the methods with idiots at Earlswood and elsewhere that no lesson, no pursuit ought, when once attention to it has been obtained, to be made fatiguing, and that a prudent change from one object to another, at due intervals, is absolutely essential. A *genius* may be stunted by over-work and mental fatigue, in the same way as the little *germ* of thought which lies buried in a deficient organism may be apparently extinguished; but both may be brought out by proper means. The difference between the teachers of the two is, that the one must reach to the height of the mental powers and bodily capabilities, while the other must be able to probe to the lowest depth of the concealed and feeble faculties. We agree with Mr. Sidney that

"the advancements made in the teaching of idiots will not be without great practical use in teaching others, and bringing to the mind many things of importance that have been overlooked. It will especially throw light on bodily training, as a valuable agent in assisting the mental and moral powers, though it has frequently been regarded merely as promotive of muscular strength and manual dexterity. Corporeal exercises in children need not be only idle amusements and useless pastimes—they may be made of more service, both for the intellect and the organism, than ill-considered tasks and injudicious lessons."

The eminent medical gentlemen both in America, Great Britain, and other parts of Europe, who have assisted in the amelioration of the condition of the imbecile, ought to be regarded as amongst the truest benefactors of the pitiable objects afflicted by this dreadful calamity. In England, the asylum at Earlswood is worthy of the benevolence of a great nation, and we trust it has become a model and a stimulus in the right direction to the entire civilised world; for where is the community that has not been troubled with the disfiguring presence of idiocy, often studiously concealed and disregarded, but till these days of highly developed Christian philanthropy and science, never attempted to be solaced or improved by the skilled and benevolent hand of enlightened charity?

The National Asylum for Idiots, EARLSWOOD, RED HILL, SURREY.

OPEN TO CASES FROM ALL PARTS OF THE KINGDOM.

Under the Patronage of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen,
AND THEIR
ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES.

SPECIAL APPEAL FOR THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE BUILDING.

THIS National Asylum was first established at Highgate, in 1847. It was removed to Earlswood, near Reigate, in 1855; and the first stone of the new building was laid by HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE CONSORT, who subsequently presided at the opening of the same.

There are now more than 430 Inmates, and everything that kindness and science can suggest is employed to ameliorate their position. Most of them may be said to have shown a capability of improvement, and several of them have been taught to work at a trade, so as to become partially able to maintain themselves, if not out of the Institution, yet certainly beneath its fostering protection.

The Cases are at first admitted by the votes of the Subscribers for Five Years, and are then eligible to be re-elected for Life. Other Cases are admitted by Annual Payments, regulated by the Board. At each half-yearly Election there are generally from 180 to 200 applicants, of whom the Board can usually elect but 30.

THE ASYLUM IS NOW FULL, and the Board are desirous of gradually enlarging it so as to receive 800 inmates, as the applications for admission are very numerous.

In this endeavour the Board pledge themselves to incur NO DEBT, but to proceed only as they have funds in hand.

The Board submit the matter in its own urgency to a beneficent public, and earnestly entreat the needful assistance.

Shall they implore in vain? Is it not the CLAIM OF THE DAY? Has it not been *too long* neglected?

Should not those who hold their elevated position in society by the energetic use of a *sound mind* and a *noble intelligence*, pity the Idiot?

Should not the *Parent*, who, completely happy in his children, has escaped this fearful visitation, pity and help the Idiot, as a thanksgiving to Providence?

Should not the *Relative*—the Father, the Mother, the Brother, the Sister—who have witnessed this sore calamity in their endeared connections, and yet have personally escaped, pity and help the Idiot?

Should not the *Opulent*, to whom daily gains are a daily calculation, pity the poor Idiot, who gains nothing, and wants everything?

Should not the *Philanthropist*, by preference, pity the Idiot, since the noblest benevolence is most interested in those who are the *lowest in the scale* of humanity?

Should not the *Christian* especially pity and help the Idiot and Imbecile, who can in no way help themselves, and who, because they suffer so much, and suffer so innocently, and have so little of the world's sympathy, and so much of its scorn, have been pathetically called GOD'S CHILDREN?

AN ANNUAL SUBSCRIBER of Half-a-Guinea has One Vote at each half-yearly Election, and an additional Vote for every additional Half-Guinea.

A LIFE SUBSCRIBER of Five Guineas has One Vote for Life at each half-yearly Election, and an additional Vote for Life for every additional Five Guineas.

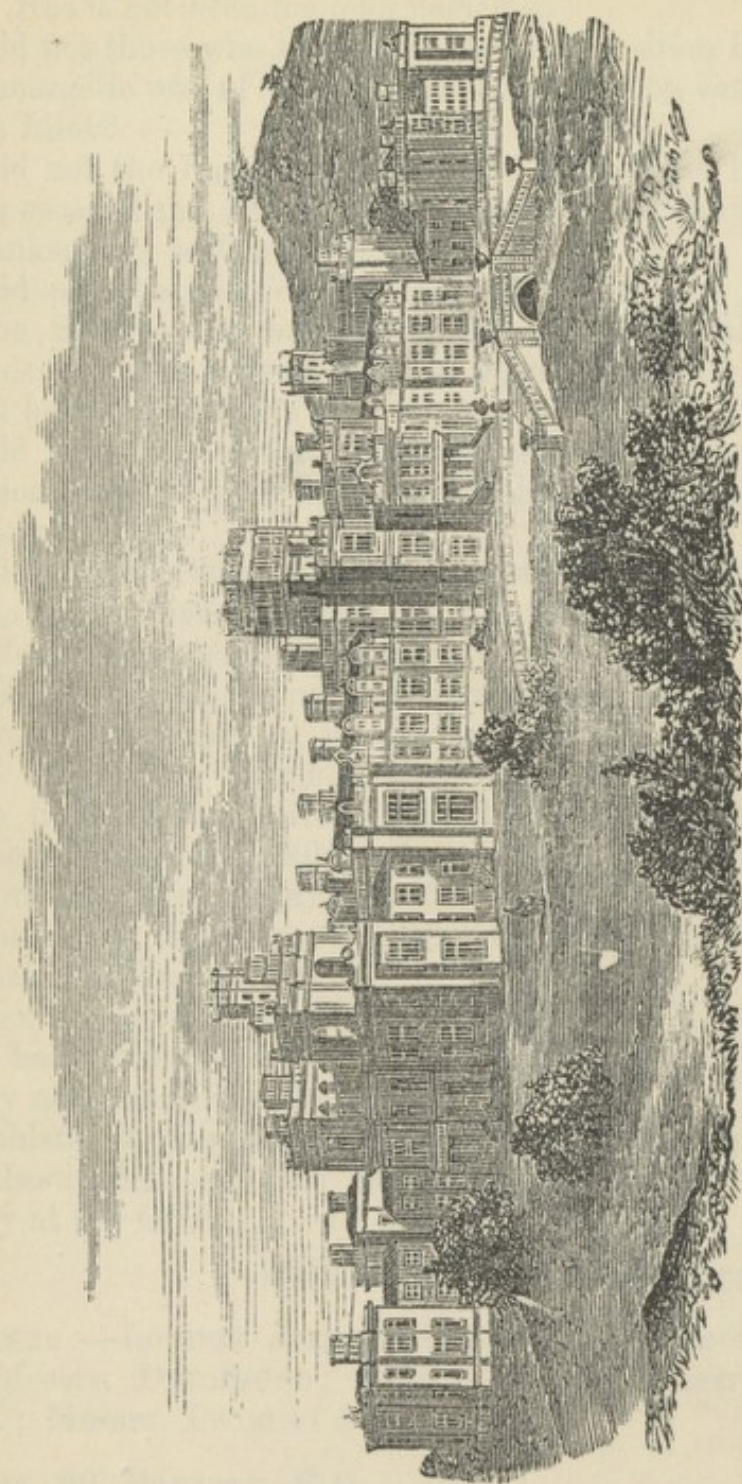
Pamphlets, by the Rev. EDWIN SIDNEY, A.M., explanatory of the Institution, and the Annual Report, may be had gratuitously at the Office.

WILLIAM NICHOLAS, SECRETARY.

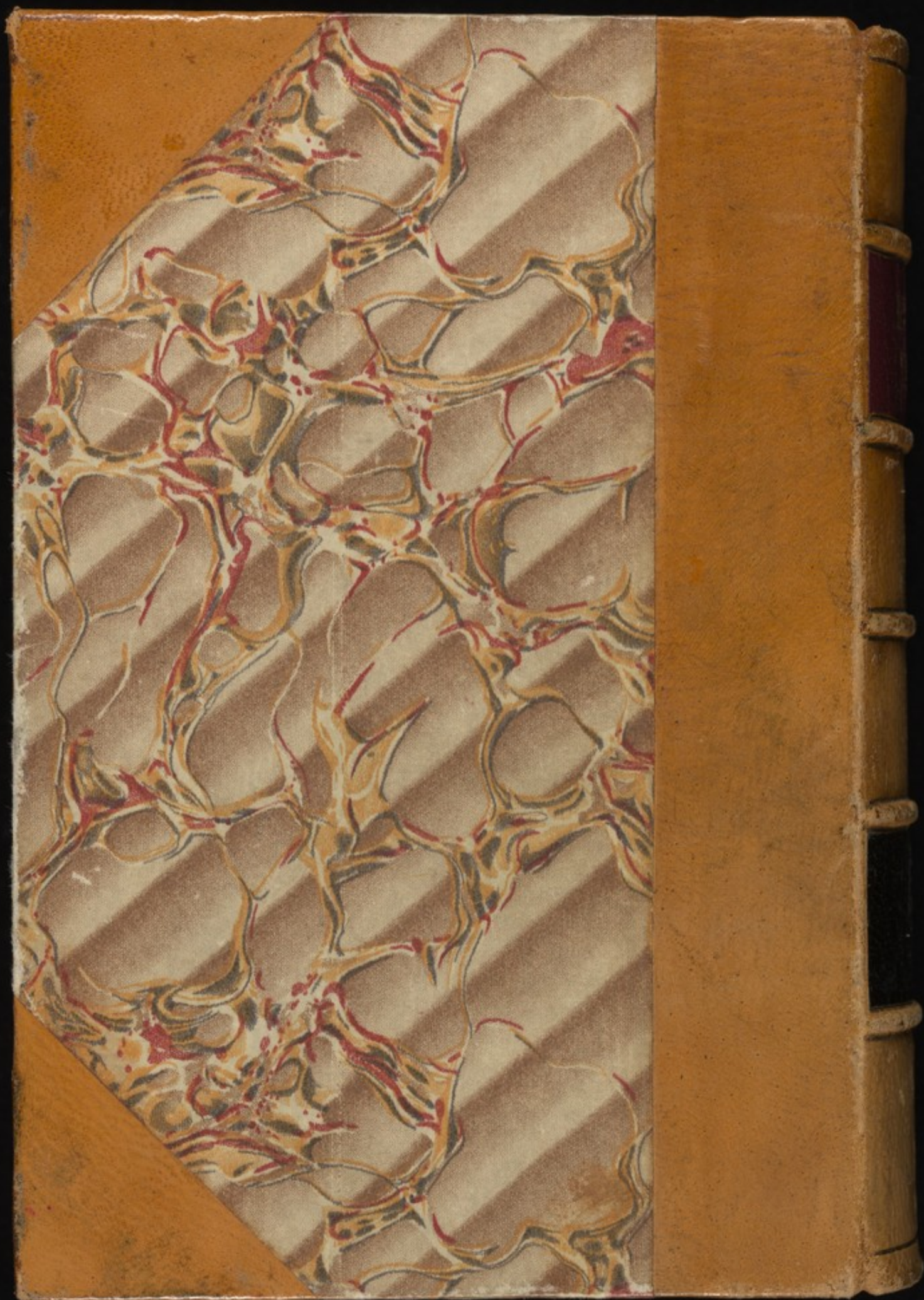
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