

The Leeds infirmary : a sermon / by ... Joseph Priestly.

Contributors

Priestley, Joseph, 1733-1804.
University of Leeds. Library

Publication/Creation

Leeds : Jackson, 1910.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/jrfuu59q>

Provider

Leeds University Archive

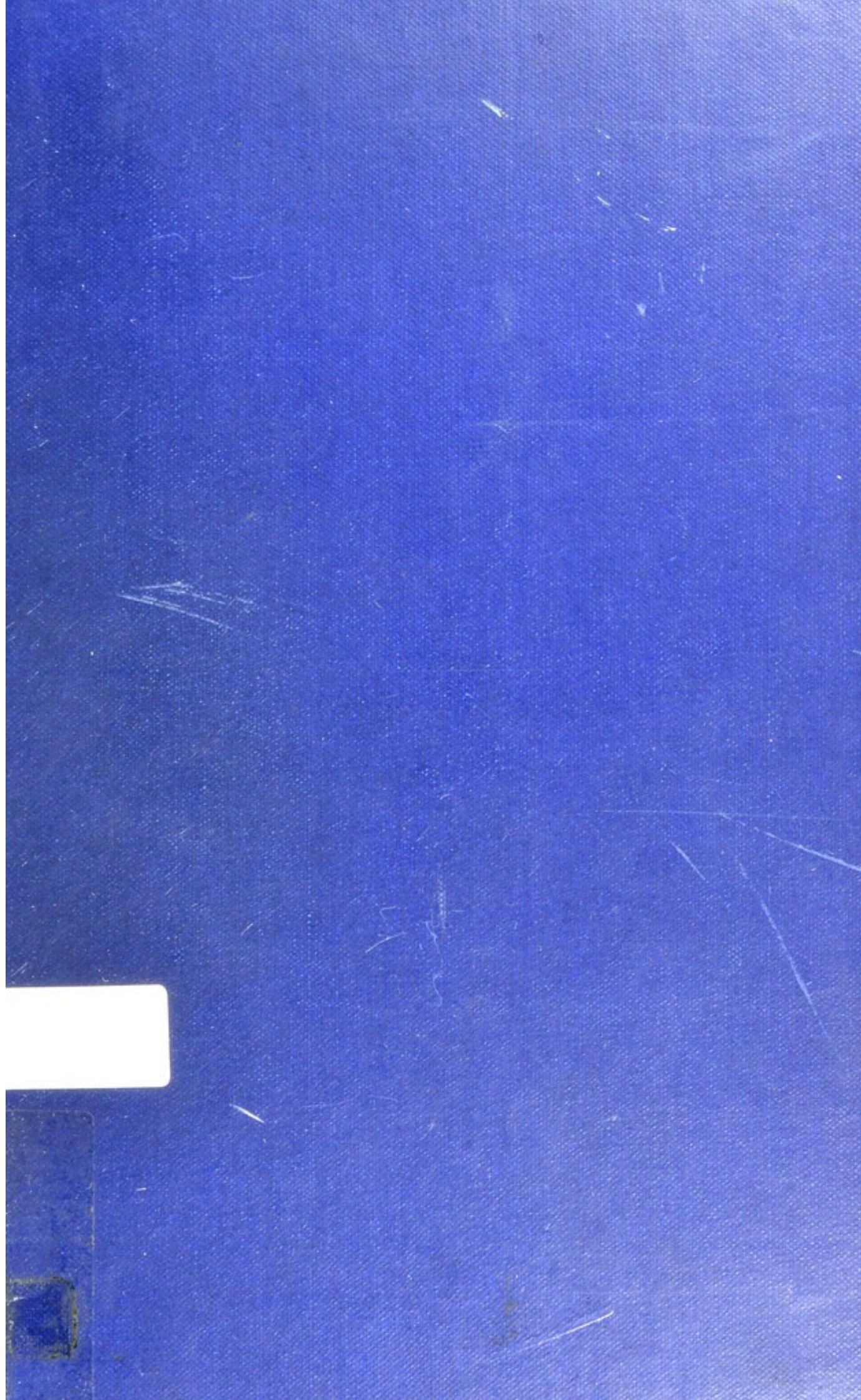
License and attribution

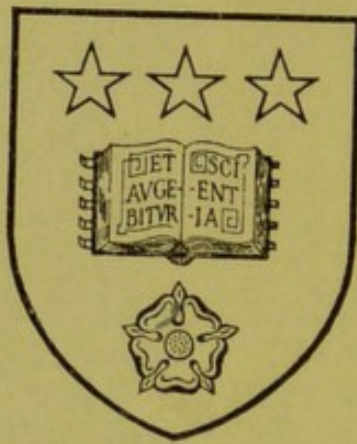
This material has been provided by This material has been provided by The University of Leeds Library. The original may be consulted at The University of Leeds Library. where the originals may be consulted.

Conditions of use: it is possible this item is protected by copyright and/or related rights. You are free to use this item in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s).

**wellcome
collection**

Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>



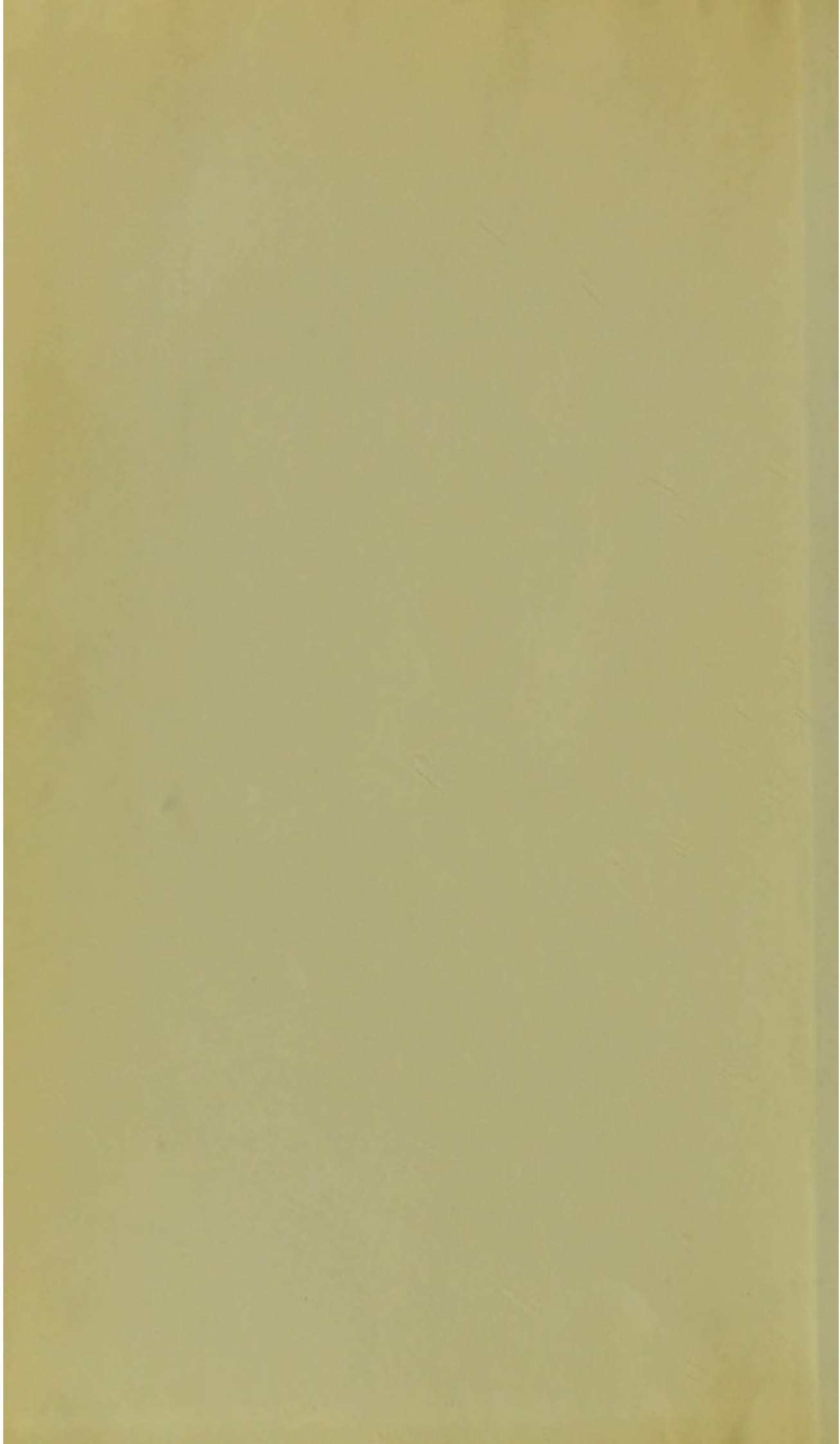


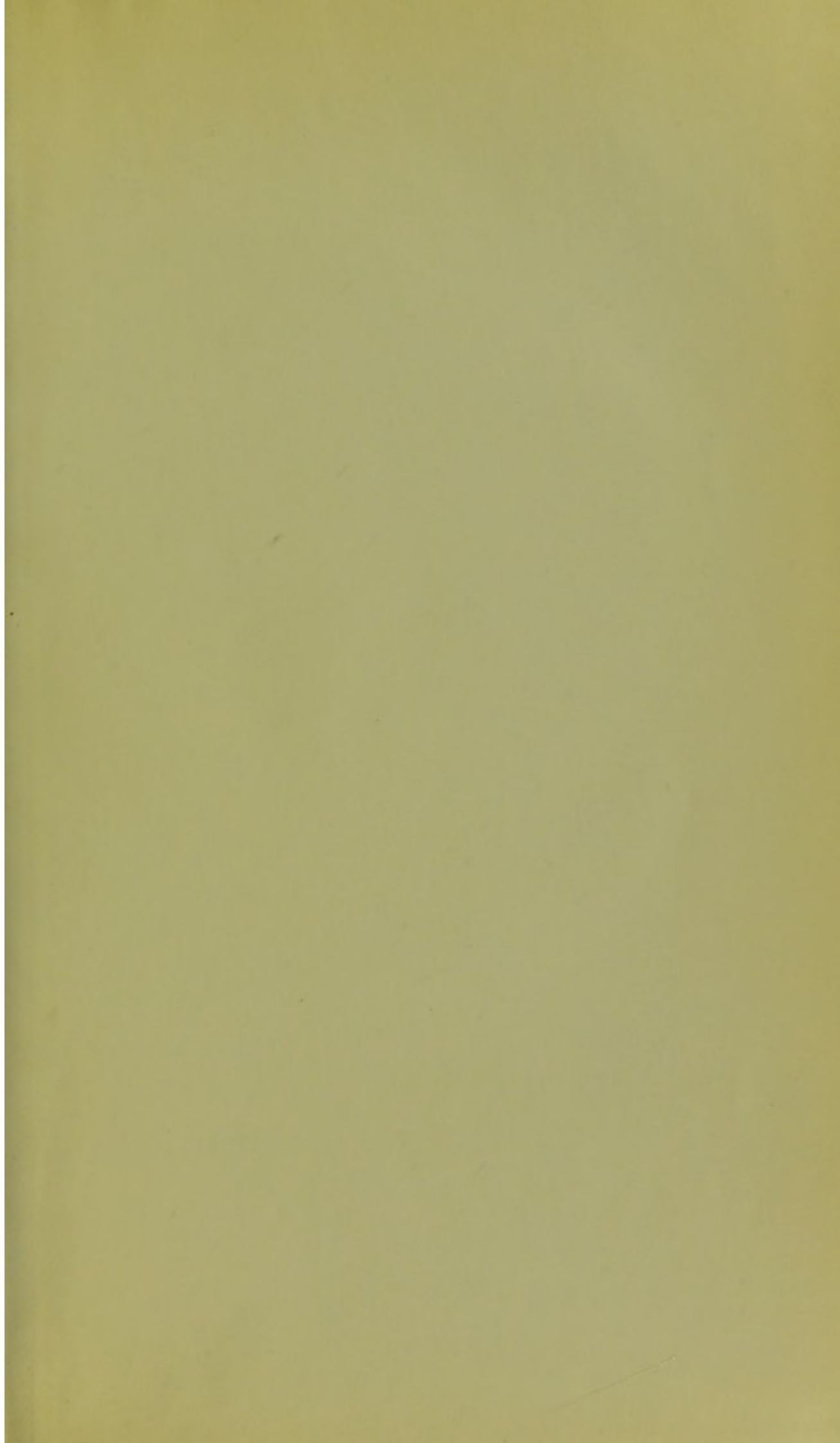
*The University Library
Leeds*

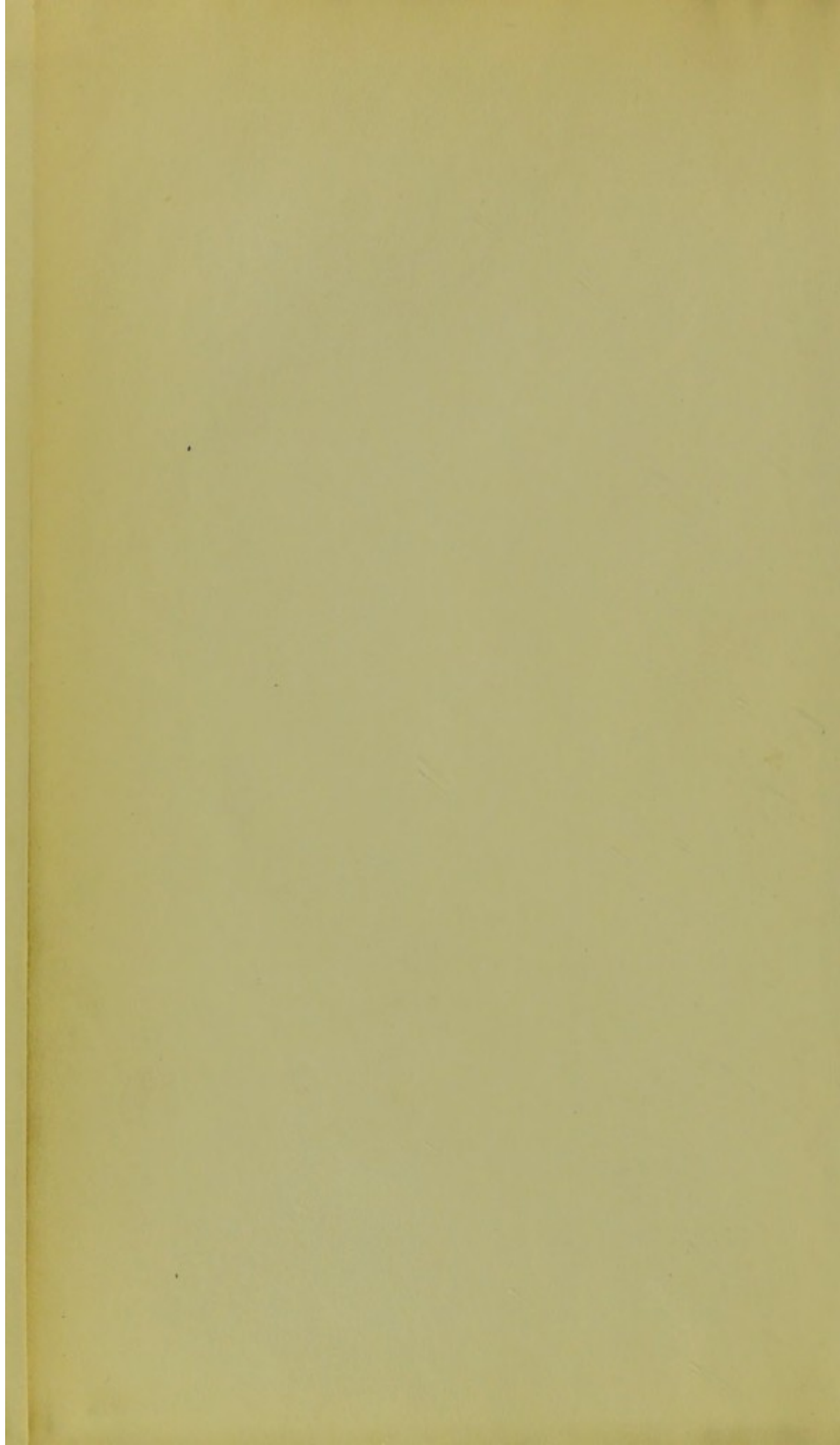
PR1

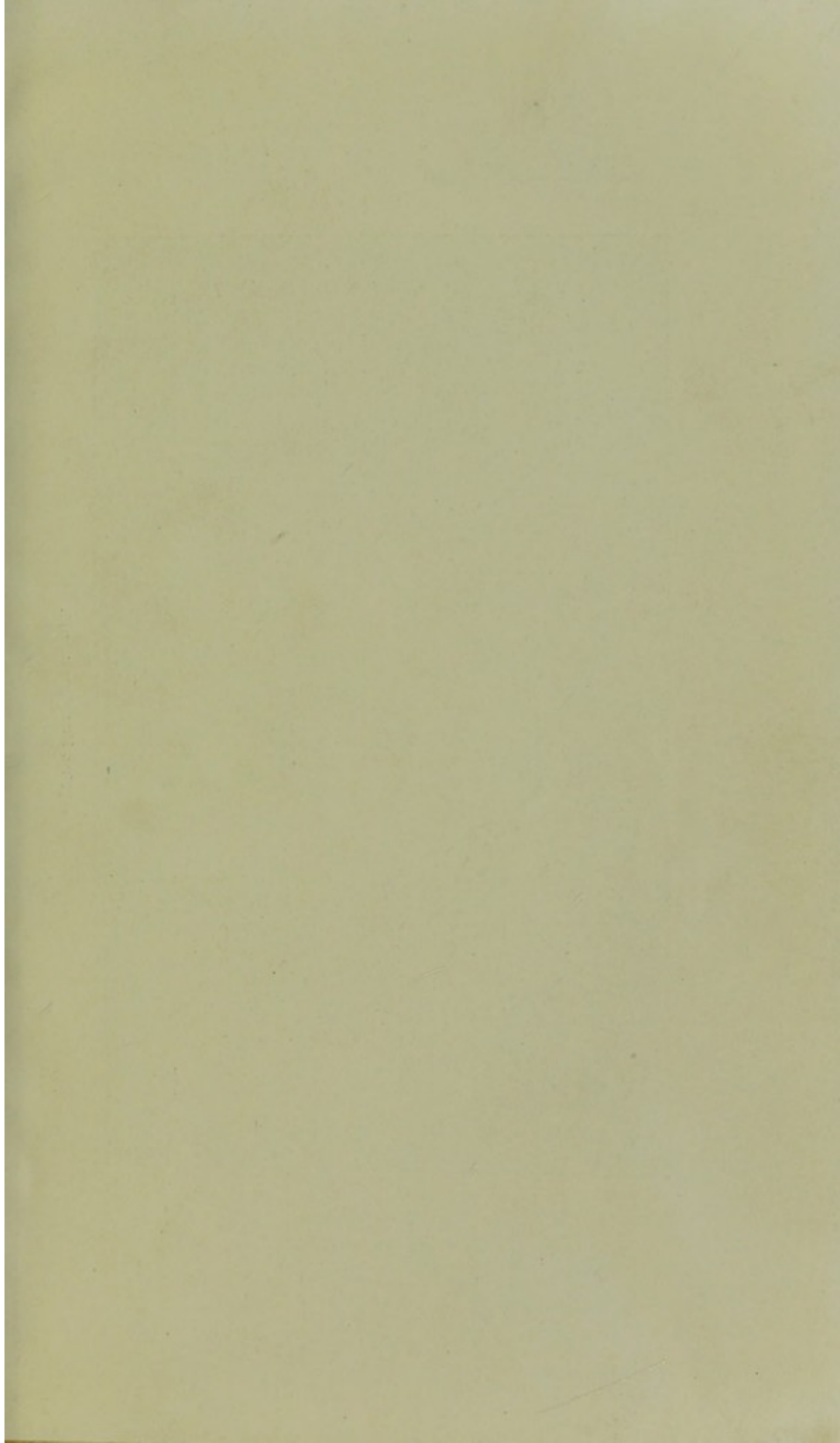


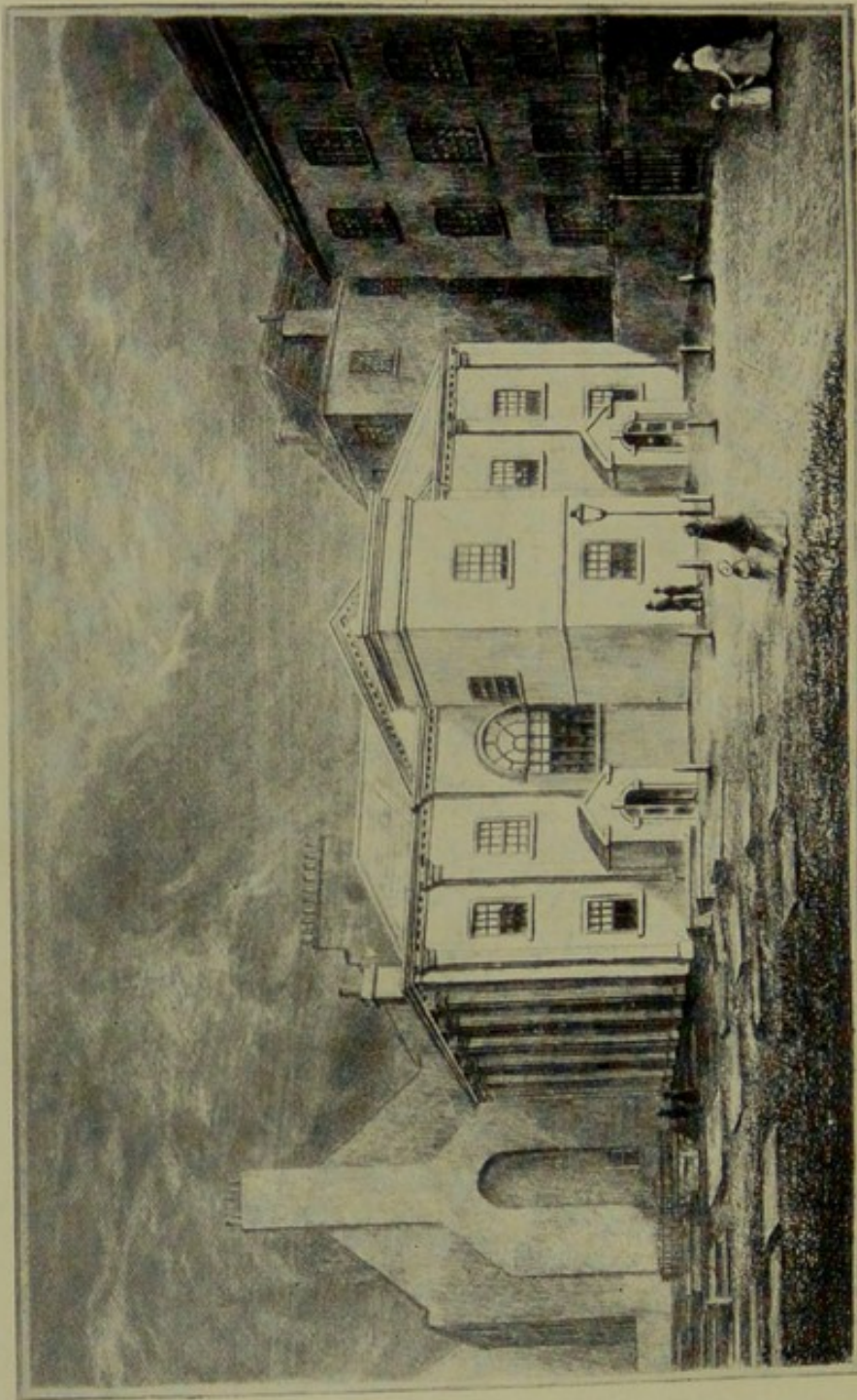
30106017758920











MILL HILL CHAPEL, 1768.

THE LEEDS INFIRMARY

A SERMON

By the
REV. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY,
LL.D., F.R.S., &c.

FIRST PREACHED AT MILL HILL CHAPEL
IN THE YEAR 1768

AND FOR THE SECOND TIME IN 1910
BY
HIS SUCCESSOR, THE REV. CHARLES HARGROVE, M.A.,
ON HOSPITAL SUNDAY, 1910

Now for the first time printed together with a Reprint
of the First Annual Report of the Infirmary
therein referred to.

LEEDS:
RICHARD JACKSON,
16 & 17, COMMERCIAL STREET,
1910.

TO THE MEMORY
OF
MY REVEREND AND ILLUSTRIOUS PREDECESSOR
JOSEPH PRIESTLEY
AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS PRESUMED INTENTION
I HAVE CAUSED THIS SERMON
TO BE PRINTED AND PUBLISHED
AND NOW DEDICATE IT ANEW
TO ALL THE INHABITANTS OF THIS CITY.
CHARLES HARGROVE.

4654 690124
UNIVERSITY
OF LEEDS
MEDICAL LIBRARY.

P R E F A C E .

Through the kindness of a great grand-daughter of Dr. Priestley, I became possessed of the manuscript sermon which now for the first time appears in print. From the dedication, of which a facsimile is given on page 7, it is evident that it was the preacher's intention to publish it, for one does not dedicate a work large or small to those who will have no opportunity of reading it. But this intention was not carried out; probably because of the cost, for the preacher was a poor man, with a wife and children and but a small salary, and he needed all he could spare for his scientific experiments. Possibly, it has occurred to me, because certain opinions expressed in it were open to question and might have given offence, for a man who will be very bold when he feels himself standing on safe ground may rightly hesitate when he is not so sure, and wait to consider further before he commits himself in print.

The date of preaching is fixed by the allusion to "the first Annual Report just printed."* This was issued in the autumn of 1768.

The greater part of the sermon is of the inevitable type of charitable appeals, old and new, but there are allusions to the local situation and some original remarks on the relation of justice to charity which give to it a permanent interest.

This sermon after having been laid aside for more than one hundred and forty years was brought out once more and preached by Dr. Priestley's successor, on the same site, though not in the same building, where it was first heard.

It is now published in honour of a man whose brief tenure of the Mill Hill pulpit and consequent residence in the town has made Leeds well known in the world of science.

C.H.

* Reprinted on page 4-5.

THE ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE STATE OF THE
GENERAL INFIRMARY, AT LEEDS,
FROM
SEPTEMBER 29TH, 1767, TO SEPTEMBER 29TH, 1768.

The several Infirmaries erected in different Places throughout this Kingdom, and the great success attending them, have encouraged a like Undertaking in this very populous Part of the Country, where numbers of distressed objects daily present themselves, and where it is hoped there never will be wanting a proportionable Number of well-disposed Persons, able and willing to support so charitable and useful a design.

The Design of this, as of all other Foundations of the same Kind, is to supply the honest and industrious Poor, and all, who under Sickness or Casualties are unable to supply themselves, with Advice, Medicine, and every necessary Means of Cure.

The great Advantages arising from hence are obvious.

There are many useful and industrious Manufacturers and Labourers who, whilst they are in Health, are able to provide well for the present Subsistence of themselves and Families, but with all their œconomy can make no great provision against the time of sickness. And others who have no care of a family, will inconsiderately spend the fruit of their labour as it comes in. Now when any of these are by Sickness, accidental Hurt, unfit for work, they are commonly unable to procure any medical assistance: Whereas, by the advantage of an Infirmary, many of them will probably soon be restored to the strength and Capacity of Labour.

Another Advantage also, it is hoped, may be added, that many of the Patients by the regular Devotion of the Place, and the Assiduity with which religious Principles will be instilled by the Reverend the Clergy of the Town, who attend for such purposes, will return to their several Callings with a due Sense of the Mercies they have received, and a firm Resolution of serving God with their restored Strength, in a more faithful manner than they have hitherto done.

The frequent Attendance, and in Cases requiring it, the immediate Consultations of learned and experienced Physicians

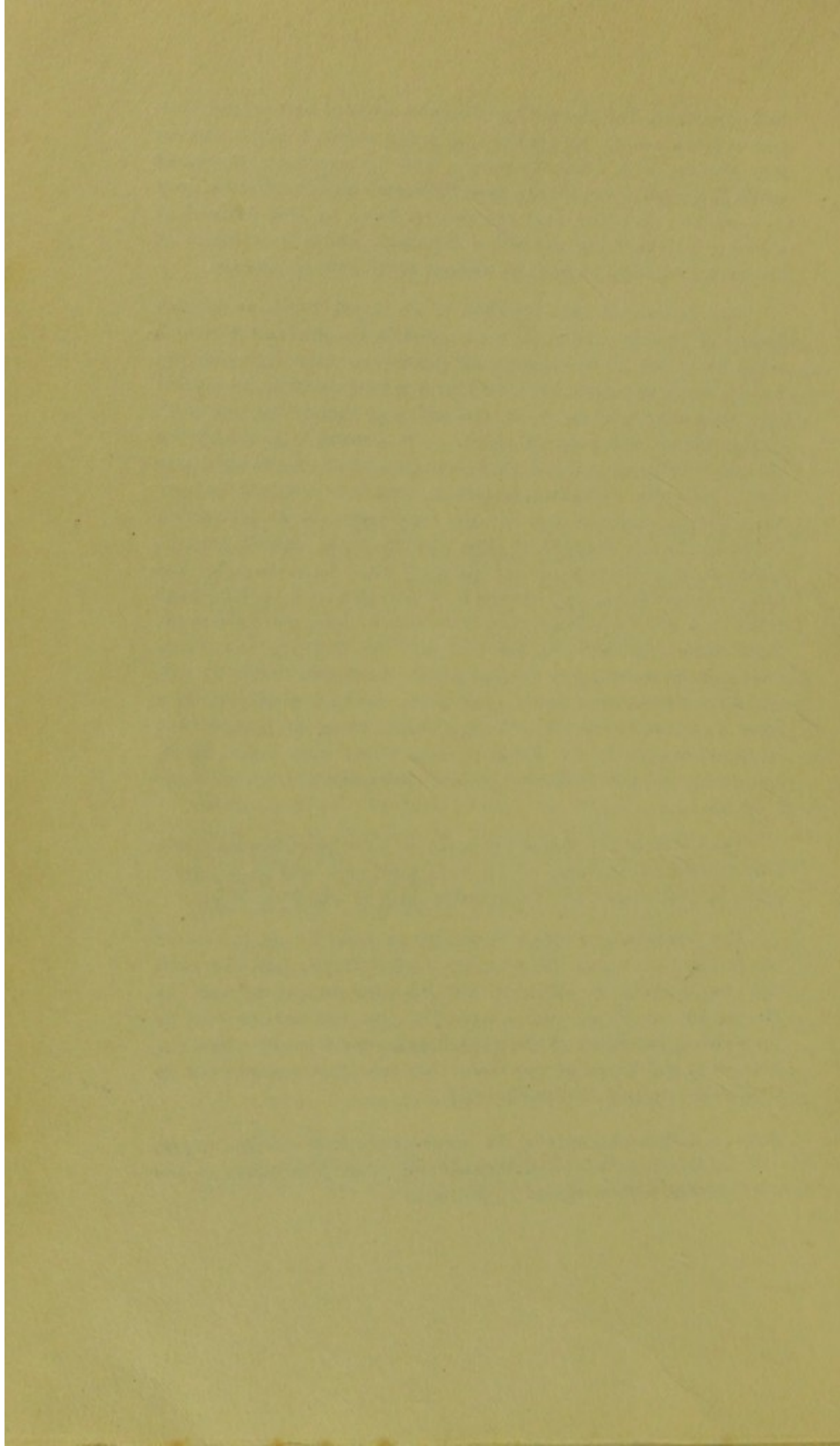
and Surgeons; the careful Appointment of good and proper Diet, and of Medicines the best in their kind, and regularly administered; airy Rooms, with clean Furniture, and the constant attendance of Persons well approved for their Diligence and Tenderness, may be sufficient, to shew, that the poorest have, in this Method of Charity, all the Help towards a Recovery, which even those of the better Sort can reasonably expect, or be able to procure.

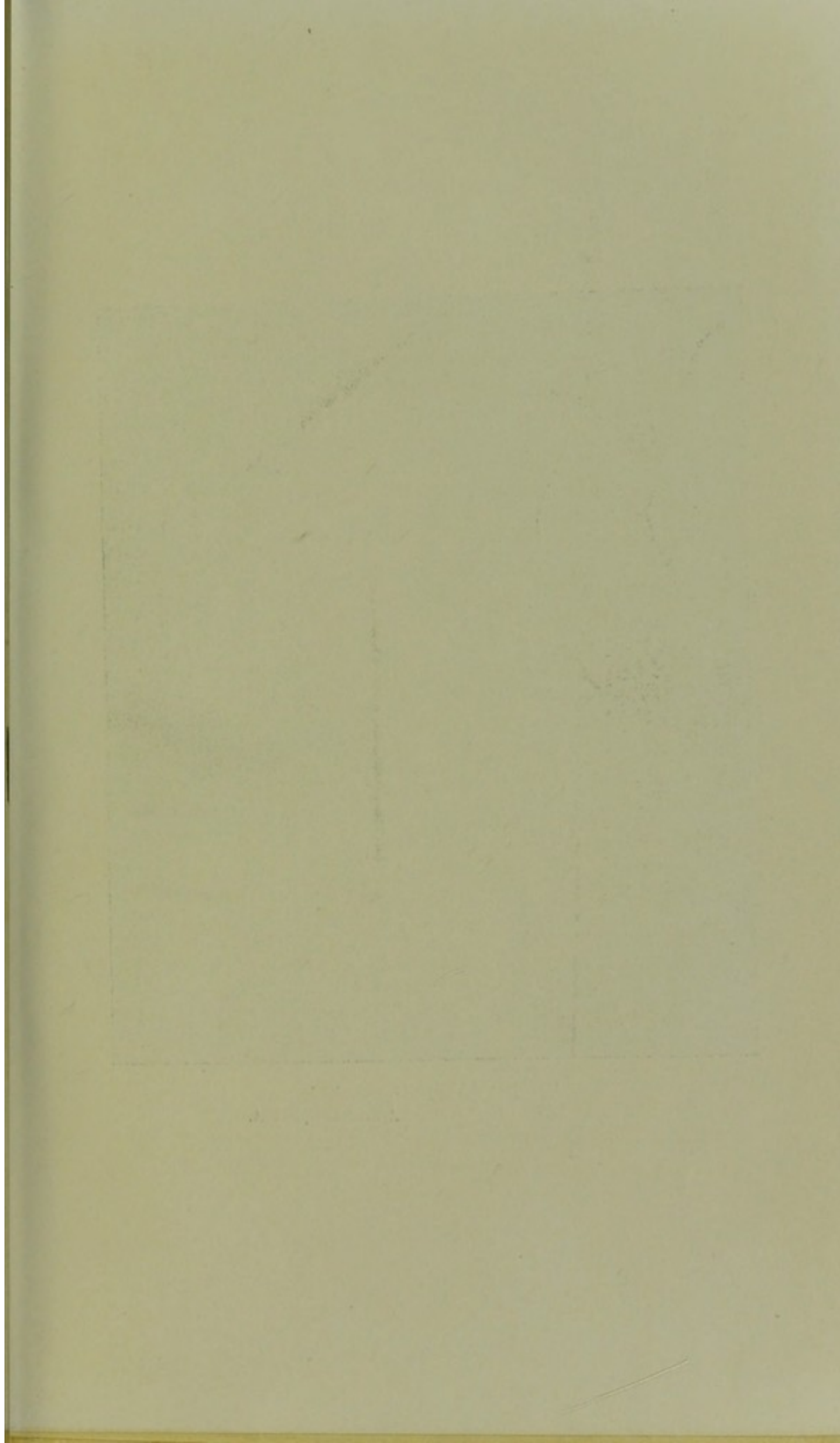
The Success of this Hospital in its infant State, as appears from the Numbers admitted and cured in the Account annexed, must raise our most sanguine Expectations from it, when put upon a more extensive Plan, and such a plan ready to be carried into Execution, with as much Dispatch and Expedition, as a work of this nature will possibly admit. The Ground is prepared, the Materials in readiness, and Contracts are actually made with able and experienced Workmen, insomuch, that it is proposed to have the patients removed into a new and commodious Habitation sometime in the Summer of 1770. In the mean time it must be observed, that the expenses of the first Year, have exceeded the annual Subscription, and therefore it is hoped, that such as have subscribed more sparingly than they would otherwise have done, thro' some diffidence of Success, may be disposed to enlarge their Bounty according to the benevolent Feelings of their Hearts, and that others, who have as yet given nothing at all, out of a settled persuasion that the Design would come to nought, will now, encouraged by the Prospect that is laid open before them, contribute liberally to the support of so beneficial and charitable a Work.

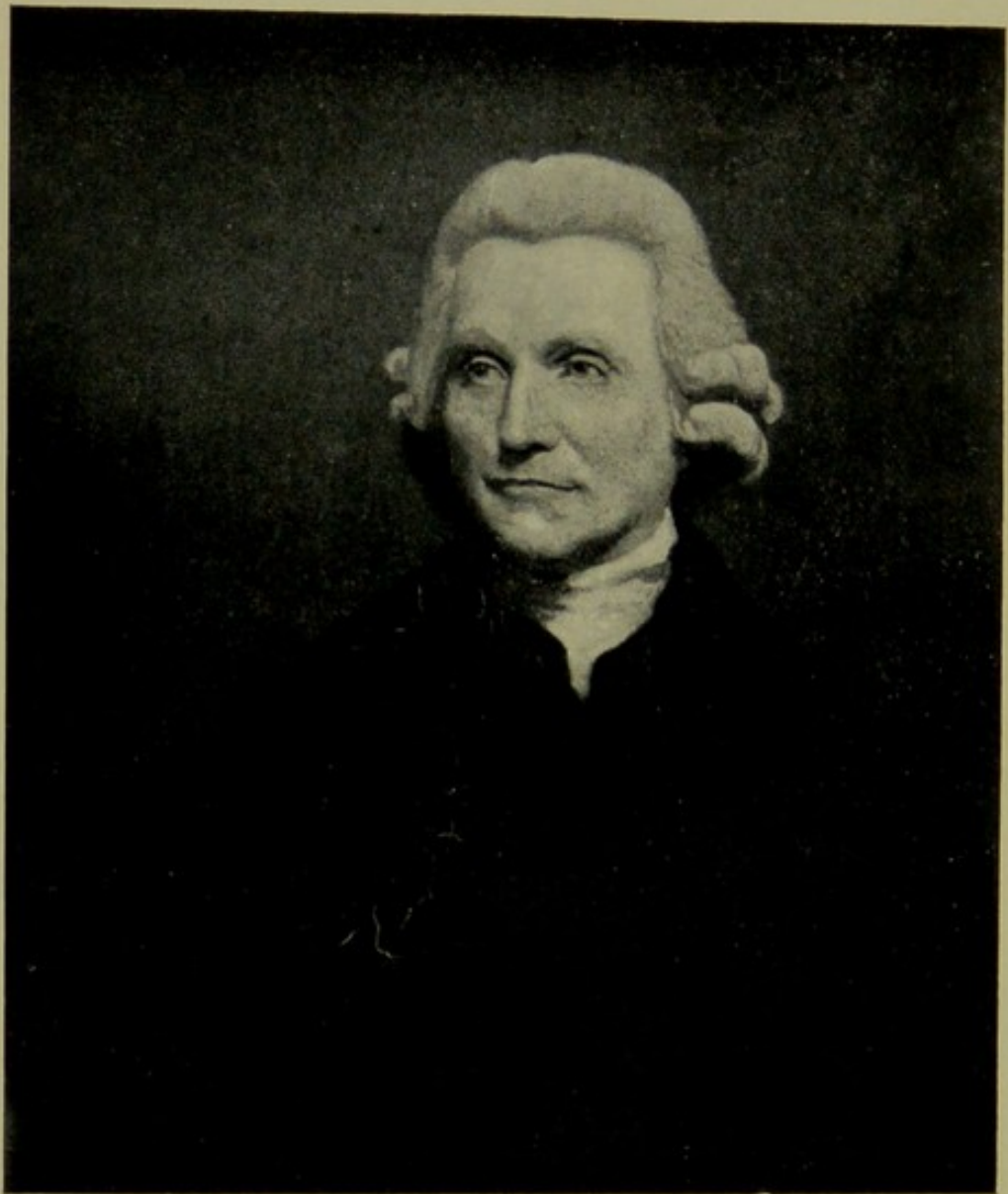
The Rules of the House are such, as have been recommended from established Societies of the same Kind, and will be improved upon, as Experience and Observation shall at any Time direct.

The Visitors, and others appointed in their Turns, to inspect the House, it is hoped will continue their Assiduity, and be careful that no Irregularity, either of the Patients or Servants in the House, escape their notice, And the just Censure, as well as deserved Appreciation of any Gentleman, who casually visits the Infirmary, and observes any thing that may be amended, will be thankfully received by the Trustees.

N.B.—A Faithful Account of the numbers admitted and discharged, of Receipts and disbursements and other proceedings in the House will be annually published.







REV. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, LL.D., F.R.S.

After John Opie, R.A.

An Address
to a Christian Society
at Leeds
on the behalf of the
General Infirmary
lately instituted in that place



“ And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan as he journeyed came where he was, and when he saw him he had compassion on him, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him ; and on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence and gave them to the host, and said unto him, take care of him and whatsoever thou spendest more when I come again, I will repay thee.”—Luke, x, 30-35.

This excellent parable of our Saviour's, I would recommend to your attention, my Christian brethren, while I address myself to you on the behalf of a scheme, calculated for the relief of the lame and the sick among your fellow creatures ; I mean the General Infirmary which has been lately established in this town. Undertakings of this nature do honour to humanity, and to the age in which they are formed. The present age in our country, has many institutions of this kind to boast of. Leeds has the merit, if not of the first of these establishments, yet that of not

being backward to follow so good an example when set by others. And we are not so late in the scheme, but it may be hoped, that our example may be of service to influence more places.

Lost as this age is in dissipation and immersed in vice, our vices are not the rough and violent ones, but vices of a softer nature, which leave room for the exercise of the softer virtues, and by no means shut the heart against the feelings of tenderness and compassion. Indeed, so excellent is the condition of things that nothing is absolutely evil both in its own nature and in all its consequences. The more atrocious crimes admit of some of the greater and more sublime virtues, and those virtuous dispositions which are the offspring of luxury and effeminacy have an affinity with that temper or mind which leads us to attend to the circumstances of others and to feel for their distresses. The vices to which we are too much addicted at this day are not of the dark and unsocial kind, but such as result from the refinements of society, and therefore may be expected not to be wholly unfavourable to the social virtues. If then, my brethren, we have caught any degree of infection from the vices of the age we live in, let us, at least, make some amends for it by giving a freer scope to the virtues of the age also, and not so far pervert our natures as to indulge an excessive love of pleasure and a fondness for the vain amusements of this dissipated age, and at the same time steel our hearts against the gentle influence of pity and compassion as if we lived in the barbarous, unsocial and brutish age of our ancestors.

If on the other hand we flatter ourselves that we have not caught this infection, but that we are so happy as to reap all the advantages of the real refinements and true polish of the present age, without exceeding the just medium of temperance in our enjoyments and pursuits, let us show, what is strictly true, that this medium is still more favourable to every virtue; and that though excess is not without some good consequences, and some vices have a connection with some virtues; yet that the virtues have a still stronger and more natural connection with one another; and that the man whose thoughts, whose time, and whose fortune are less engrossed by the pursuit of pleasure, is proportionately a less selfish being; that he has more room in his heart for the concerns of others; and that he has more of his time and more of his wealth to bestow upon them.

After these general and introductory observations, I shall proceed to explain to you what the scheme is, in favour of which, I now solicit your charitable contributions; and after that I shall point out some circumstances relating to it, which should more particularly recommend it to your regard.

The object in view is to provide a proper place to receive persons labouring under any disorders, or who have suffered by any accident, so as to be disabled from applying to the business by which they maintain themselves and their families, and who are so poor as not to be able to procure proper conveniences for themselves in these circumstances. There the best advice and assistance which the place can furnish, will constantly be given them, proper diet

medicines and attendance will be provided, and no accommodations will be wanting which the cases of such persons require. The scheme will always be conducted by a number of gentlemen of approved judgment and integrity, who are known to you all, persons who will examine all the accounts, and constantly inspect the state of the Infirmary ; to see that the patients are properly treated, and that every just complaint may be remedied as soon as possible. And as the diet of the sick will be properly regulated, and everything relating to their apartments, furniture, air and the like be properly adapted to their cases ; as good provision will hereby be made for the poor as the rich can procure for themselves in the same circumstances. It is even rather probable that the provision for the poor will, in general be the better of the two ; as no person will be suffered to receive the advantages of this institution, who will not submit to the salutary rules of it. Also every year a report of the state of the Infirmary will be printed for public view ; which reports will contain not only an account of all the expenses incurred in the execution of the scheme, but also an account of all the patients received, and the condition in which they were dismissed, and this properly attested, so that the real effect of it may be known to everybody. Lastly the fund to support the necessary expenses of this scheme will be chiefly an annual contribution, so that it will never meet with greater encouragement than it is generally believed to deserve, and therefore cannot be liable to those abuses which we see, by lamentable experience, never fail to creep into the disposal of fixed revenues of all

kinds. And in all this the gentlemen of this town are not acting at random, but going, I may say, improving upon the experience of all that have gone before them, and in some measure of their own too; for a successful trial hath already, been made of this scheme for a year past, so there is the greatest moral certainty of their gaining a most desirable and important end.* Indeed the advantages of this scheme are so obvious, and the prospect of succeeding in it so certain, that it is almost superfluous to point them out. I shall therefore only discourse on them, as we naturally do of things that please and interest us, viz., to communicate and enjoy our common sentiments, without thinking of giving information to one another. In this view then my friends give me your attention as to a subject that will please you, though you know as much of it, and are as well acquainted with what can be said in favour of it, as myself.

Methinks the poor especially amongst my hearers must already have anticipated everything I could say. Their hearts have leaped for joy at the recital of the particulars above mentioned. You who are now in years, and who in the course of your lives must often have struggled hard with affliction, with poverty, and a starving family at the same time and whose distempers

* From the first annual report which is just printed, it appears that this first year, 361 patients have been received into the Infirmary; of which number only ten have died and fourteen proved incurable; whereas 146 have been discharged cured, and 26 relieved; that 138 now remain on their books, of whom the greatest part are in a fair way of recovery; but (which is a sufficient reason for the present application) it appears, that though £469 have been expended to this excellent purpose the present annual subscription does not quite amount to £305.

have been greatly aggravated and prolonged by such a complication of misery; how would you have rejoiced if such a scheme had taken place in your day! how much less would you have suffered! how much easier would have been your present circumstances, how much happier I may add, and how much longer, your lives!

And do not your benevolent hearts now rejoice, that posterity will not be exposed to the hardships you have suffered; though you have been so happy as to weather through them, when numbers, alas! whom you could name of your neighbours, have sunk under them.

And consider I am now principally addressing myself to those persons who are in affluent circumstances, who through the favour of an indulgent Providence, have never stood in need of these assistances, and who have already, from a principle of generosity and compassion, entered into a liberal subscription for this excellent undertaking, but rather to those who are not able to contribute so largely, and therefore do not publicly give their names as subscribers to it, and even to those among you, who may have stood in need of this Infirmary, and may yet stand in need of it, but may nevertheless be able to contribute occasionally, as your circumstances will admit, to the support of a scheme of the advantage of which you yourselves, must of all others, be the most sensible. Reflect then on this occasion, on that excellent rule of our Saviour's which may be called a summary both of the law and the Gospel, to do to others as you would that they should have done to

you. You can perfectly enter into the feelings of the poor creatures for whose use this Infirmary is designed. You know what they want, and wish for, for you have wanted and wished for the same yourselves. Act, then, as those feelings dictate; and, as far as you are able, afford that relief to others which you have wanted yourselves. Remember of what value in the sight of God, who judges according to real worth, was the poor widow's mite; and consider with how much more satisfaction you will be able to receive the assistance of others, when you have, while you were able, contributed to the relief of others yourselves. You will then receive it not so much under the idea of a charity, as of a debt, which to persons of an ingenuous turn of mind, is a much more agreeable sensation. For if, as our saviour says, it be more blessed to give than to receive, it must be, proportionally, more blessed, and more happy, to receive what is in some sense your own, than what is altogether, and in every sense another's. Though no person should be above receiving pleasure from the most gratuitous obligation. Where else must favours begin, and how could the debt of proper charity be paid, if there were nobody to receive it?

I was saying that I meant to address myself, at this time more particularly to the middle and lower ranks of my hearers, even those who may have stood in need of the relief which this scheme now offers to themselves and their posterity; but even in this consideration, not the richest among you ought to look upon yourselves as having no concern. It is an argument,

that how affluent soever your circumstances may be, you ought to feel the weight of, and be influenced by. For such is the well known instability of all human things, that there is no situation in life exempt from calamity ; and property in trade is peculiarly fluctuating and uncertain. Should it then happen, which may the kind providence of God avert from you all, that you who are now rich, should become poor, and have occasion to avail yourselves of the fund to which you are now such liberal contributors ; what consolations will these contributions, which you can now so well spare, afford you ! How cheap will have been the purchase ! It will be sufficient to deprive almost all the evils of life of their sting and bitterness. You may then with confidence expect the assistance of your friends, and freely and cheerfully accept of it.

Think, my friends, how exquisite must have been the satisfaction of that good man Job, in the midst of all the distress to which he was reduced, when he could say to his ill-judging friends who, on account of his misfortunes only, accused him of having behaved ill in prosperity ; “ When the ear heard me, then it blessed me, and when the eye saw me, it gave witness unto me : because I delivered the poor that cried : the fatherless and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame, I was a father to the poor, and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” *Job. xxix, 11-16.*

And afterwards, speaking of his behaviour to the poor when he was in prosperity, he says, “ Did not he

that made me in the womb make him, did not one fashion us in the womb. If I have held the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail, or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless have not eaten thereof: if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering, if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep, then let my arm fall from the shoulder blade, and my arm be broken from the bone, for destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure. If I made gold my hope, or have said to fine gold, Thou art my confidence: if I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because my hand had gotten much, let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley." *Job. xxxi, 15 to end.*

If now we attend, as I proposed, to the peculiar advantages of this species of charity, we shall find it to be free from most of the objections which are brought against other charities.

In the first place; it cannot be said that it is the cause of idleness we are pleading; and that we are soliciting assistance for those who had better be made to help themselves. Were the objects of this charity persons in health, were they capable of labour to supply their own necessities, and employment might be had for applying for it; nothing it is owned could be said in their favour. But, alas! what can a man do who is deprived of his strength by sickness; or is the man who has a broken arm, a broken leg, or a fractured skull in a condition to labour? For this case it is plain, that a man of the greatest natural

strength, and who has not been in a capacity to lay up what is sufficient against such accidents as these, must absolutely perish, if he be cut off from the assistance of others. Also many persons, who are in these deplorable circumstances, have families depending upon that labour which is so precarious, for the supply of their manifold wants; wants, to which that labour, when exerted to the greatest advantage, is often a very inadequate supply, the wife, or the children being frequently sickly so that though they may not be in a condition to reap any advantage from such an institution as this, they are incapacitated for adding their little to the common stock, and have themselves also more wants, and those of a more expensive nature than persons in full health, though doing nothing, can have.

Here then, my brethren, if ever, when all other resources fail, should humanity step in, to save a poor creature and his dependents from perishing. In such cases as these, be you, my hearers, like the good Samaritan in the Testament, who, as soon as he cast his eyes on a helpless and perishing fellow mortal, had compassion on him, and who, as he was on a journey, must have put himself to some inconvenience to take care of and provide for him; whereas you are here put to no inconvenience whatever, no personal attendance being required, but something much easier to you, and of more use to them, as you only part with what you can well spare, in order to their being put under the care of persons who are better qualified to assist them than you are yourselves. In some kinds of charity, as in giving to the poor, it is acknowledged

to be in many cases extremely uncertain, whether you are doing good or harm upon the whole ; and with the best intention in the world, you may be doing nothing better than encouraging idleness, profligacy and imposture : but in the cases for which this Infirmary is provided, there can be no imposition, and avarice has none of its usual paltry excuses to avail itself of.

Neither, secondly, is it, in general, the cause of absolute strangers, persons whose necessities you are unacquainted with, and whom you might perhaps suspect, that we now recommend to you. For though no proper objects to whatever place they belong, will be excluded from this extensive and benevolent scheme (and greatly it is to its honour, that the benefits of it are not confined within the limits of any particular district), yet the persons who will generally receive advantage from it (because it will be most easy, and convenient for them to apply for it) will be your neighbours and acquaintances, in whose afflictions you will have previously sympathised, and in whose relief you can heartily rejoice. And will you not be able to congratulate your poor neighbours with more satisfaction upon their recovery from their disorders, when you have yourselves contributed to the support of the establishment, to which they are indebted for it?

Thirdly. It is an advantage of institutions of this kind, that you soon see the effect of your benevolence. For the infirmaries are not designed to be receptacles for the aged or incurable (though it is by no means denied that provisions for such persons are

exceedingly useful) but the persons who are benefited by these institutions will in general be soon restored to their usual employments, and be made useful in society. This makes it in reality the cheapest of all charities, the most great good being done with the least expense. In the case of the aged, and incurably infirm all you can do is to prolong a wretched existence, and to make that barely comfortable, or tolerable, which after all, can be of use only to the poor objects themselves: whereas in this, by means of only a temporary but seasonable relief, you prevent whole families from being absolutely reduced, and becoming burdensome to your parishes. You restore lives which would have been absolutely lost, or made incurably miserable, to a capacity of enjoying existence; and at the same time the community receives an useful and valuable member. It is not then a single person, but often a whole family, and in a sense the whole community, that by one instance of relief you hereby lay under obligations to you, and for a favour of real and considerable value.

Fourthly. It is a recommendation of this scheme, that the benefits of it are not confined to any particular sect or party in religion; but that it is equally open to all who may stand in need of it. It has therefore a natural claim to the patronage and support of all those who make pretensions to catholicism; and who while they profess to be *Christians* forget not that they are *men*, but bear an affectionate regard to all their brethren of mankind, however distinguished by religious epithets and denominations. Imitate then my liberal minded

hearers the good Samaritan in my text. The man, whom he relieved in the desperate situation in which he found him, was probably a Jew, as he was a person travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho: and yet, though the Jew and Samaritan in general, bore an inveterate hatred to one another, so that they would have no dealings together, he acts a very different part from that of the Priest and the levite, who were countrymen to the person wounded. They had both of them passed by, on the other side, leaving him as they found him: Whereas this Samaritan who might have been expected to rejoice at the misfortune of a Jew, the moment he sees him has compassion on him, binds up his wounds, applies the best remedies his circumstances afford, and makes the best provision that he can for completing his cure. There then, ye humane and generous souls, is an object suited to your own enlarged views. Shew therefore by the manner in which you embrace it, that you are what you pretend to be, lovers of mankind at large, and that you are more desirous to distinguish yourselves as men and Christians in general, than as abettors of any one particular party or denomination of Christians.

I would conclude this address with admonishing you, that the great prerogative of riches, and of every power of doing good, is, that they exalt those who are possessed of them to the important office of *stewards of the manifold grace of God*, and his agents in dispensing blessings to mankind. As stewards, then, be faithful to your trust, and omit not so fine an opportunity of acting in your high and proper character. Imagine not, that there is in your case, any real

difference between the obligations of justice and charity. They are both alike obligatory to every conscientious man, being founded on the general law of universal obligation, whereby we are enjoined to do all the good we can in our places. The only difference between them is this, that the rights of justice are more easily ascertained, so as to admit of the cognizance and sanction of human laws; where as the obligation of charity depends upon circumstances of which men cannot take cognizance. But when those proper circumstances do occur (of which, however, yourselves only can be judges) charity is no favour, as it is commonly reckoned, but strictly a debt; the proper objects of charity having a natural and absolute claim upon your benevolence; and in giving your money you only pay what you are in honour and conscience bound to discharge.

In withholding from the distressed what they want and what you can well spare you withhold from them what is their due; and though they are not able to call you to account for your injustice and inhumanity, the account will be exacted by that being who hath styled himself the friend of the poor, the father of the fatherless and the widow's God.

Besides there is a more immediate call upon you whose fortunes were got by trade and manufactures to exert yourselves in this case. The great and increasing populousness of this country, with the number of the poor and the disorders and accidents they are exposed to are all owing to its being the seat of that manufactory from which your wealth has been derived. Considering therefore the interest of the

whole commercial body of this place as one, those who are losers have a kind of right to be indemnified for what they suffer, out of the profits of those who are gainers. The poor objects who now solicit your charity, are the people who have been the means of raising you or your ancestors to your present affluent circumstances. Restore therefore part of your wealth to the channels out of which it was originally derived and which may be considered as drained and exhausted in supplying you.

It hath pleased divine providence to place men in a state of trial and probation, in which afflictions and hardships of various kinds are necessary. But why necessary? For the improvement and establishment of virtue, to exercise the virtues of patience and submission in some, and the virtues of compassion and liberality in others. The inequality therefore, which there is in the distribution of Divine Providence in this world may be considered as a chasm in the constitution and harmony of things, which was purposely left for us to fill up; it being judged by infinite wisdom, to be better for the whole, as more productive of our common happiness, that this defect should be supplied by us in the course of giving and receiving obligations, than that it should have been done immediately by himself. Hereby we are more intimately connected with each other, we learn to feel for each other, and sooner attain the proper sentiments and proper happiness of social beings. Let us then be fellow-workers together with God, in this greatest and best of causes, in lessening the wants and the miseries, and in pro-

moting the happiness of our fellow creatures of mankind.

There is nothing great and exalted in nature but what is thereby calculated to be more eminently serviceable in the system. That grand luminary, the sun, is not more distinguished for his glory and majesty than for the extent to which he conveys his cheering light and reviving warmth, whereby worlds are made habitable and masses of inanimate matter become the abodes of life and happiness. The mountains overlook and seem to command the countries in which they stand; but they attract and condense the clouds which float in the upper regions of the atmosphere; whereby they send water in plentiful rivers to moisten and fructify the plains through which they flow. The same will be found to be the case of everything distinguished in the world about us. Was man, then, alone raised so high above the rest of his fellow creatures for no good end to others? And were riches of all the gifts of God intended to be confined in their use, and their benefits limited to the nominal owners of them? By no means.

If we pay any regard to the nature of our holy religion, we shall find that as it was intended to promote virtue and happiness in general, so it seems to have been more particularly designed to come in aid of the virtues of meekness, benevolence and charity, those most important and necessary of virtues; mankind in general discovering too great a propensity to pride and selfishness. Hence the opposite virtues of meekness and compassion are allowed to have a more

particular claim to the title of christian virtues. These, my brethren, are the duties which our Lord took every opportunity of inculcating. Charity in its most extensive sense, including enemies as well as friends, and brotherly love or the most intimate and endearing sympathy, he again and again recommends to his disciples; and, what is in a particular manner deserving of our attention, he represents the great enquiry which will be made into our characters at the last day as turning upon this single point, whether we have administered meat to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, and clothing to the naked, whether we have received strangers, and visited and relieved those who were sick and in prison, as if our attention to these social duties was the most proper test whether christianity had had its just effect and influence upon our minds.

May these considerations, my christian brethren, have their proper effect upon your minds; and while from the fulness of a generous heart you are diffusing health and happiness to all around you, may God supply you all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. AMEN.



A

