

Observations on the bad effects which are to be dreaded from the establishment of a founding hospital at Edinburgh : and on the benefit which may be expected from a proper lunatic asylum.

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Publication/Creation

Edinburgh : printed by D. Willison, 1800.

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OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
BAD EFFECTS
WHICH ARE
TO BE DREADED FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
A FOUNDLING HOSPITAL,
AT EDINBURGH ;
AND ON THE
BENEFIT
WHICH MAY BE EXPECTED FROM A PROPER
LUNATIC ASYLUM.

EDINBURGH :

Printed by D. WILLISON, Craig's Close.

1800.

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OBSERVATIONS, &c.

THE late Mr John Watson, writer to the signet, who died in 1763, left a considerable sum of money, to be employed for some useful and charitable purpose, in the City of Edinburgh. He appointed the late Lord Milton, and Mr M'Kenzie of Delvin, trustees for executing his will, at the sight of the Lord Provost and Magistrates of the City of Edinburgh *. These trustees executed a deed of destination in 1764, directing that money to be employed in establishing a Foundling Hospital, in the City of Edinburgh; and leaving the management of it, after their decease, to the Principal Keeper, Deputy Keeper, and Commissioners of the Writers to the Signet, for the time being †. This money has not yet been appropriated to any purpose whatever, and, by the accumulation of interest, now amounts to more than sixteen thousand pounds. The present age, however, has

* *Vide* Appendix, No. I. † *Vide* Appendix, No. II.

has certainly, from the will of Mr Watson, some claim that the interest at least of this money should be employed for its benefit. And it is unfair that it should any longer continue to be accumulated only for the benefit of posterity.

The following observations will, it is presumed, demonstrate, that Mr Watson's fund, or some part of it at least, would be much better employed upon a Lunatic Asylum, than on a Foundling Hospital; and that a Foundling Hospital, far from being useful, is in every respect, and to the highest degree, pernicious to society; far more pernicious than could ever have been foreseen or believed, without the most ample and decisive experience of its bad effects.

Foundling Hospitals have been established at different places, on the supposition, that many infants, who would otherwise perish from want of care in their parents, might, in them, be reared to be useful subjects, and that, by means of them, the unnatural crime of child-murder might be entirely prevented. But experience has now abundantly proved, that neither supposition is well founded. Child-murder is chiefly perpetrated with the view of concealing child-birth from every person whatever: and this crime is as frequent where there are Foundling Hospitals, as where there are none.

From

From what has happened at London and Dublin, as well as at other places, it is now clearly proved, that Foundling Hospitals are very far from tending to the preservation of children. With the human species, so necessary is the care of an affectionate mother for rearing her offspring, that the number of infants who die in Foundling Hospitals, is great beyond all belief.

But besides the very great mortality in Foundling Hospitals, they are also liable to many other strong objections. They afford too ready a way, for indifferent and unfeeling parents, to get rid of their offspring; and they enable such parents to spend, often in a vicious manner, what should be appropriated to rearing their progeny. Thus they remove one of the strongest motives to virtue, industry and frugality. When a child is sent to a Foundling Hospital, all the natural ties of parental affection, and filial duty, are for ever destroyed; the first and most sacred bond of human society is broken; and the parents, when age and infirmities unfit them for labour, are deprived of that aid, which children, reared by parental care, will rejoice to afford to their parents in time of need. And if such an institution shall be established here, there must soon be an end of that first and greatest duty, which has long been, and, it is to be hoped, shall

shall ever be, the characteristick virtue of the Scottish poor.

On the part of parents, then, the sending their infants to a Foundling Hospital, may be considered as burying them alive; and, on the part of children, it is a mode of making them artificial orphans, though their parents be still living. A well regulated state should never permit such institutions; and, instead of giving opportunity, and even encouragement, to parents to throw away their children, will inflict severe and exemplary punishment on an unnatural mother, convicted of having exposed an infant.

Such being the case with respect to a Foundling Hospital, and known and admitted by all judicious and well informed persons, and even ascertained by proceedings before Parliament *, no such institution will probably ever be permitted in this city, by the Magistrates, or by the Legislature: consequently, the destination of Mr Watson's fund to that purpose, a destination not made, nor perhaps ever thought of by him, but made by his trustees after his death, must be set aside one way or another; either by a court of justice, as not legal or competent for them to make; or else by the Legislature itself, as a great evil not provided against by law: and then the fund must be

* *Vide* Appendix, No. III.

be applied to some pious and charitable uses in this city, according to the original good and rational intentions of Mr Watson.

But while many and great evils would necessarily arise from a Foundling Hospital at Edinburgh, much good would be obtained by the establishment, as, in fact, much inconvenience has been felt from the want, of a proper Lunatic Asylum.

Almost every practitioner in Edinburgh has experienced, with sincere regret, numerous difficulties and embarrassments in the treatment of insane persons, who are still in a recoverable state. An attempt to cure them, can very seldom be conducted with safety, either to themselves or their families, while they remain in their own houses. Nay, the condition of an unfortunate maniac is often such, as to give great uneasiness and alarm to his neighbours; and when a lodging in a retired situation is hired on purpose, the expence of accommodation and attendants is not only very great, but many particulars, which might be conducive to a cure, are still in general wanting. Even in a retired lodging, the name, as well as the situation of the unfortunate patient, cannot be properly concealed from the public. But in a well constructed and well regulated asylum, lunatics are much more favourably situate, with respect to safety, to secrecy, and to successful practice,

tice, than they can be in any other place; while, at the same time, they may enjoy every comfort and accommodation which is suited to their condition, at much less expence than either in their own habitations, or in apartments hired for them.

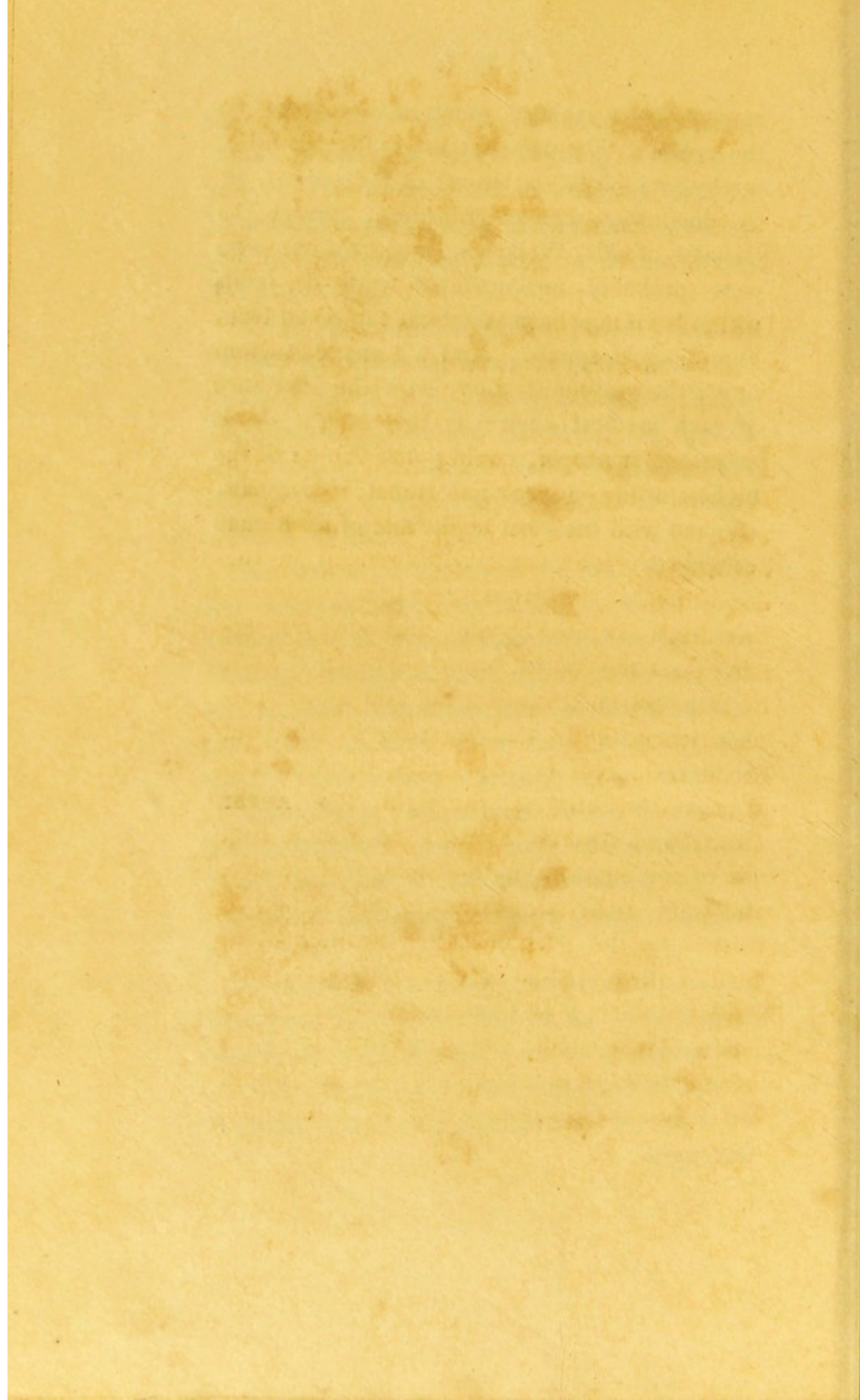
From these considerations, proper hospitals for the treatment of lunatics have been established, not only in London, but also in York, Manchester, Liverpool, Leicester, and several other places; and at all these, experience has clearly shown, that many important advantages result from them.

No proper institution of this kind, however, has hitherto been established at Edinburgh. Lunatics, it is true, are not only received into Bedlam, connected with the Poor House, but also on some occasions, into the Royal Infirmary. But to both these receptacles for the insane, many strong objections occur, which it is unnecessary, and perhaps would be improper, to mention. And it may, with confidence, be affirmed, that no institution whatever is more wanted at Edinburgh than a proper Hospital for Lunatics.

If, therefore, the money, or part of the money which was left by Mr Watson for some useful institution in Edinburgh, were to be appropriated to the establishment and support of a Lunatic Asylum, it is hardly possible that it could be employed

employed in a manner more advantageous to the public. The present trustees for that fund, might very easily, by an act of Parliament, or by some other regular procedure, correct the mistake of Mr Watson's first trustees, who were probably unacquainted with the evils which have now been ascertained to result from Foundling Hospitals. And a Lunatic Asylum under their administration, with the assistance of such medical advice as they might think necessary or proper, could not fail to be of the highest utility to many unfortunate individuals, afflicted with the most deplorable of all human calamities.

APPEN-



A P P E N D I X.

No. I.

DISPOSITION JOHN WATSON *to* TRUSTEES,
dated 2d July 1759, registered 8th November
1763.

I JOHN WATSON, writer to the signet; Whereas I have disposed to Isobel Mudie my wife, my real and personal estate, with the burden of certain legacies mentioned in the disposition, in her favours, and in sundry other deeds executed by me; and now, for certain causes and considerations me moving, I do, by these presents, appoint my said spouse, after payment of the said legacies, to lend out of the residue of my said estate, upon personal or real security, at the sight, and by the direction of Andrew Fletcher of Milton Esq. one of the Senators of the College of Justice, and John M'Kenzie writer to the signet, as trustees for the purposes after mentioned, or such of them as shall survive and accept, and, failing of them both by decease, or non-acceptance, at the sight, and by direction of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh for the time being, and William Morison writer in Edinburgh,

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son to John Morison wigmaker there, or such of them as shall accept, as trustees or trustee, for the saids uses and purposes after mentioned, the sum of one thousand three hundred pounds Sterling, and to take the rights and securities thereof, payable to herself in liferent, and to the said trustees or trustee in fee, to be applied for the purposes after mentioned. And I also appoint my said spouse, to retain, out of the said residue, the sum of two hundred pounds money foresaid, for mournings, and other uses; and, after deduction of the said legacies, and of the two sums before mentioned, I appoint my said spouse to convey and make over the residue or reversion of my said estate, (my household furniture in Edinburgh, and silver-plate and china excepted), in favours of the said trustees or trustee who shall survive and accept; which sum of one thousand three hundred pounds, after the decease of my said spouse, together with the said residue and reversion, I appoint my saids trustees or trustee, at the sight of the Magistrates of the said City of Edinburgh, to apply to such pious and charitable uses, within the said City, as the said trustees or trustee shall think proper. And my will is, that each of the said trustees who shall survive, accept of, and execute the said trust, shall retain, out of the said residue or reversion, twenty-five pounds Sterling for
their

their or his trouble. And, to prevent all mistakes, I declare my meaning and intention is, that my said wife is to receive out of my said estate, for her own proper use, no more than the interest of the said sum of one thousand three hundred pounds, the said sum of two hundred pounds, the furniture of my said house, plate and china; and that she shall be obliged either to convey or account for the residue to the said trustees or trustee, in their or his option. And I do farther declare, that the legacies bequeathed by me, and made payable at the decease of my said spouse, shall be paid within one year after my own decease. Consenting to the registration, &c.

No. II.

DEED *of* DESTINATION *of the* FUNDS
of Mr JOHN WATSON, *Writer to the Signet,*
executed by LORD MILTON *and* Mr M'KEN-
 ZIE *of* Delvin, *dated at* Edinburgh *the* 13th
of August 1764, *and Registered in the Books*
of Session (H. R.) 15th December *same* year.

WE, Andrew Fletcher of Milton, one of the
 Senators of the College of Justice, and John
 M'Kenzie of Delvin, writer to the signet, trust-
 ees named and appointed by the now deceased
 John Watson, writer to the signet, in the dis-
 position

position and settlement of his estate, heritable and moveable, executed by him at St Hutton in Yorkshire, upon the 2d day of July 1759, and registered in the books of Session 8th November 1763, Do hereby finally and unalterably resolve to apply the free income arising from the residue of the said estate, after payment of his debts and legacies, provisions ascertained to Isobel Mudie his widow, and all necessary charges and expences, for the pious and charitable purposes of preventing child-murder, and for an hospital within the City of Edinburgh, for receiving, secretly, infant children, and bringing them up to be useful members of society; and by receiving, privately, women big with child, and assisting them in their delivery, so as to conceal their shame, and taking care of their children as foundlings, without any power to us, or the survivor of us, to alter the fundamental use and purpose aforesaid; reserving, nevertheless, to us, or the survivor of us, to establish such modes, rules, and regulations, for the management of this charity, from time to time, as shall be judged most expedient for attaining the good purpose before mentioned; and all this we shall do at the sight of the Lord Provost and Magistrates of Edinburgh for the time being; at least we, or the survivor of us, shall report to them, from time to time, our procedure therein,

therein, agreeable to the settlement aforesaid, executed by the said John Watson: And we hereby farther declare, that, after the decease of both of us, the management of the said charity shall devolve to, and come under the direction of, the Principal Keeper and Commissioners of the Writers to the Signet for the time being, with power to them, from time to time, to alter or improve or add to such modes, rules, or regulations, as we, or the survivor of us, may have laid down, according as future experience may require: And all the procedure or rules of management so to be had by the Keeper and Commissioners aforesaid, shall be reported to the Lord Provost and Magistrates of the said city, once in the year, or oftener, as the said Keeper and Commissioners shall think proper: And we hereby declare, that, notwithstanding the general destination above mentioned, we do hereby give and grant, out of the said charitable fund, to John Morison, barber, burgess of Edinburgh, and to him only, as near kinsman of the said John Watson, an annuity of fifteen pounds Sterling *per ann.* during his life, in consideration of his age and poverty; the said annuity to commence from the term of Martinmas 1762, being the first term after the decease of the said John Watson. Consenting to registration, &c.

No. III.

EXTRACT from LORD KAMES's *Sketches of the History of Man.* 2d edit. Lond. 1788. Vol. 3. p. 87.

OF all the mischiefs which have been engendered by over-anxiety about the poor, none have proved more fatal than Foundling Hospitals. They tend to cool affection for children, still more effectually than the English parish charity. At every occasional pinch for food, away goes a child to the Hospital; and parental affection among the lower sort turns so languid, that many who are in no pinch relieve themselves of trouble by the same means. It is affirmed, that of the children born annually in Paris, about a third part are sent to the Foundling Hospital. The Paris almanack for the year 1768 mentions, that there were baptised 18,576 infants, of whom the Foundling Hospital received 6,025. The same almanack for the year 1773, bears, that, of 18,518 children born and baptised, 5,989 were sent to the Foundling Hospital. The proportion originally was much less; but vice advances with a swift pace. How enormous must be the degeneracy of the Parisian populace, and their want of parental affection!

Let us next turn to infants shut up in this Hospital. Of all animals, infants of the human
race

race are the weakest : they require a mother's affection to guard them against numberless diseases and accidents : a wise appointment of Providence, to connect parents and children in the strictest union. In a Foundling Hospital, there is no fond mother to watch over her tender babe ; and the hireling nurse has no fondness, but for her own little profit. Need we any other cause for the destruction of infants in a Foundling Hospital, much greater in proportion than of those under the care of a mother ? And yet there is another cause equally potent, which is, corrupted air. What Mr Hanway observes upon parish work-houses, is equally applicable to a Foundling Hospital. " To attempt, says he, to nourish an infant in a work-house, where a number of nurses are congregated into one room, and consequently the air become putrid, I will pronounce, from intimate knowledge of the subject, to be but a small remove from slaughter : *for the child must die.* " It is computed, that, of the children in the London Foundling Hospital, the half do not live a year. It appears by the account given in to Parliament, that the money bestowed on that Hospital from its commencement till December 1757, amounted to 166,000l., and yet, during that period, 105 persons only were put out to do for themselves. Down then with Foundling Hospitals, more noxious than pestilence or famine !

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