

## **What are delusions? or, Two years in an asylum : an episode in the life of an inventor.**

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# WHAT ARE DELUSIONS ?

OR,

## TWO YEARS IN AN ASYLUM.

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### AN EPISODE

IN THE LIFE OF

AN INVENTOR.



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THE AUTHORS' ALLIANCE, LIMITED,  
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The Rectory

Shenley

Sept 1889.

to the President  
C.P. Edinburgh 1889  
Arthur  
Duff

Dear Sir,

I send by this Post two little pamphlets which as relating to some of your profession and especially to one of your predecessors may be thought worthy of perusal. -

The facts stated in them I am ready to confirm on oath. My case is that I (supposed to have been once insane) passed through various phases of mental illness, even imbecility, and at last by some medical treatment perfectly recovered. The subject of Lunacy is always ignored by my relations and pensioners, and the subject avoided in consideration of my feelings. I need not repeat what you may read on point, but with any of your profession believe that a person declared by the President of the Royal C.P. on Thursday should be requested to conduct Divine Service at the asylum on the following Sunday, which as my detention there was evidently owing to some mistake that would end, I supposed, in a day or two by the order of the Commissioners. I consented after one week to do. When transferred by fresh obtained Certificates as to having become imbecile to England I was again at once requested to act as domestic Chaplain in the Doctors house and allowed unwatched though by that <sup>Doctor</sup> ~~Doctor~~ to be unduly

excited and restless" to associate with his young daughter  
who then treated me and have ever since as my own  
daughter does. It only proves that with many of your  
Profession, their hearts are better than their heads -

What I now request is to get an opinion from your  
College that there was an unfortunate want of  
care and Judgment, in believing the reports of my  
good but over anxious wife and sister, who had deceived  
Dr Lowe, who thereupon deceived the two Physicians,  
whose Certificates were taken for granted by the Court.

Why were those two Physicians kept away from me?  
Why was I refused to have a Jury of any number  
of your Profession or any other Persons and offered  
to abide by their decision? And I want to know what  
were the reports made to the Commissioners, which perhaps  
though they refuse to me they may supply at your  
request to you. As well as I have ever been for the  
last thirty years, I received letters from members though  
not allowed to write to them "regretting my illness"  
"hoping my disorder was but temporary" lamenting  
"my melancholy state" as reported to be no better"  
begging me "not to resist the means of cure": a brother  
supposes that "he will never see me again and hopes  
we may meet in a better world" my wife says though  
bodily well "I am mentally ill" and the Proprietor  
of the Asylum declares I am excited in mind though  
not in body = Mens insana in corpore sano. A brother  
in law declares there is just one string out of tune and  
my foolish wife coming after a year to see me having

signed of fresh Certificate, runs away crying because  
though she can see nothing the Commissioners will not  
discharge me. She was not aware that occupation in  
several pursuits at the same time is a proof of a clear  
mind, and gave the cause of my imaginary illness  
overwork continuing for four months while a  
my slight attack of fever caught in a sick room  
and lasted about 4 days - She has now just the  
same fears and thinks that if I walk ten miles  
I shall overwork myself. or if I turn round in  
my bed that I do not sleep enough -

I trust that I have not tired your patience  
with this what Dr Fox would call a long sigmarole  
but I may apply to your Honourable College if not  
to you personally. Horace's line "Nec Deus in seculis  
ignarus vendicæ nodus incidit."

I ask therefore whether you will kindly consult  
with a number of your brethren, let me tell my  
own tale before them, produce the Certificates,  
be examined on oath, and I will conceal nothing;  
and procure from them a unanimous opinion  
which I may produce to my neighbours, that I  
never was insane or at least ill at all and it  
may possibly persuade my wife that my life was not  
ruined by her action in consulting an Asylum M.D.

I am Dr Sir yrs very truly  
Henry J Newcome

Sept 20 1889

Dear Sir

on my return to town  
this evening above named

Your letter of Sept 1889  
with accompanying 2 paup  
lets for drink accept my  
thanks -

Yours truly

R. L. R

R. L. R

Per Henry J. Newcomb  
Secretary.

TO THE  
HONOURABLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
IN LUNACY,

AND TO THE  
MEDICAL PROFESSION IN GENERAL,

AND  
CURERS OF MENTAL DISEASES IN  
PARTICULAR,

THESE PAGES  
ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

## INTRODUCTION.



**I**N tearing up a number of old papers I came upon a parcel of letters which has been lying unopened for the last twenty-seven years. All these letters were addressed to the writer, to the number of about eighty, when he had been entrapped into an Asylum, and was reported to have shut himself in for two years; and while some dozens of anxious friends and parishioners were praying for his recovery from some state of body or mind which only existed in their own imaginations. His not being conscious of the slightest degree of illness, was only a proof that his mind must be disordered. The extraordinary degree of ignorance of what madness (or whatever other name it goes by) really is, is very possibly shared by many persons besides the writers of these letters. To all such it may be of some interest to give a half-hour to the following pages, nearly every word of which is literally and strictly true.

Since the following pages were published, the writer has obtained an inspection of the Medical certificates through which his detention in an asylum was procured. The grounds stated by the Medical men for considering him of unsound mind are set forth by both in nearly identical terms—that he considered that some conspiracy existed among his servants and others to rob him,\* and that he exhibited some excitement of manner which required medical care. As both those Physicians—one the President of the Royal Society—have been for some time dead, and therefore beyond any questioning on the subject, the patient can only solemnly affirm, and would affirm it by oath in any Court of Justice, that not a single word upon such a subject was ever spoken or even hinted at, and that there was no examination of his state of mind of any kind whatever.† The information on which they signed those Certificates was reported to them by the Superintendent of an Asylum, who, having been consulted by his relations and informed of what they considered his DELUSIONS, retailed them to his brother Physicians, and described him as a voluntary patient who wished to take advantage of his skill and care, and who had persuaded his anxious relatives that a cure for such a state of mind could not be effected under two years' residence in his house.

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\* This had taken place a month previously, and 400 miles distant.

† See Page 12.



# LUNACY.

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IN making some remarks on this subject, I am of necessity obliged to refer to the Medical profession, many or certain members of which are supposed to have made what they call Mental disorders their peculiar study, and which they claim to be especially competent to diagnose (if there be such a word) and to cure.

Now, I am not going to run atilt against the medical profession generally. I must, in the course of my life, have become more or less acquainted with some forty of them, and I have hardly but once found one who was not a kind and considerate friend; and very few who were not gentlemanly and educated men.

The law has entrusted to this body generally the task of deciding in all cases of lunacy or mental disorders, and I find no fault in that respect, for if it must be entrusted to a body of educated and responsible men, the Medical profession is as good if not better than some others.

But here I must give my opinion, though perhaps of little worth, that no Medical man is in the least degree, whatever his special training or experience may have been, a better judge of a case of lunacy than any other sane man in any profession whatever. A great many books no doubt have been written by Medical men on the subject, and it has been kept under a cloud or mystery; but there is no mystery at all about it. I affirm that the attendants at an asylum know quite as well and better which of their patients' minds are affected than the doctors or even the Commissioner themselves. And I would here suggest that the Commissioners, instead of depending only on the reports of the Medical Superintendents, should take the evidence on oath, if they preferred it, of the attendants—as to the conduct and language of any patient whom they have

daily seen, and who has written to the Commissioners sensible letters, and of whose state there is any doubt. My complaint is that the whole Medical profession, who are proprietors of asylums or have been connected with them, are so tied together by professional etiquette that they dare not speak what they really think, and therefore are obliged to accept Medical certificates as not only their authority for detaining a patient, but as describing the true state of his case, which they find at once to be false. No doubt to get a nice quiet inmate at five guineas a week is very pleasant to the proprietor of an asylum, and I am not putting forward the vulgar idea that he would keep him as long as possible for the sake of the money ; but there may well be other causes which operate on his mind. He may say and think that it takes many months to test the sanity of his patient, that he has not yet discovered his particular delusions, &c. If then he at once pronounced that there was nothing amiss, the whole system of Medical certificates by experts would receive a shock, and no doubt his Asylum would suffer ; for what Medical man would ever recommend it ? I do not know the details of the new Lunacy Bill, except that a patient must be seen by a magistrate before being consigned to medical care. I wish that the Bill also provided that the Asylums should be also open to any visitors who could make a declaration before a magistrate that they were desirous to study the subject upon which so much had been written, and that they did not wish to gratify a vain curiosity—and would break no rules and divulge no secrets of the prison house. “ Is it then a matter of mere curiosity that has brought you here ? ” said a lady in the Asylum at Hanwell to me, mistaking me for one of the visiting magistrates, when I assured her that I had no power to procure her release ; and I was obliged to confess that it was so.

Let me now attempt to dispel from the minds of my readers a belief in those many tales which we have heard of the cunning of lunatics, and of their combining to throw their keeper out of the top window, and his escaping by offering to jump up from the ground instead of jumping down. It is perfectly beyond all credence. They can no more combine than a flock of sheep.

That single lunatics have attacked and killed their fellows, and even their keepers, doctors, and even a Commissioner, is also true; but these cases have been the result of some sudden impulse or excitement, but of no conspiracy. How could two or three attendants be safe and feel themselves so among thirty or forty insane creatures, unless fortunately their want of the power of communicating with one another rendered them perfectly harmless? This then is one of the fallacies about lunatics which may be at once set aside.

But another is that the medical proprietor has the peculiar power of not only discerning Mental diseases, but also by various methods of his own of curing them and restoring the patient to his right senses. There is no mystery at all about the matter. No doubt he will do all he can by medicine and external applications to subdue an excited brain, and if a patient is violent place him in a padded room for a time; or, on the other hand, when a poor creature is brought in in a state of depression, try to arouse him by galvanism, and prevent him from dying of starvation by administering food by force; but as for any attempts to "minister to a mind diseased," he never thinks of it, for he knows it would be perfectly futile. He will visit the patients once a day, enquire of the attendant if any particular case requires attention, and prescribe for it as he would for a child; but as for joining in conversation or in anything of the kind, if he ever has attempted it he has given it up as hopeless. Of course, I have had but a limited acquaintance with those suffering from what an authority on the subject has designated as "obscure diseases of the brain and mind," but from perhaps seeing nearly a hundred cases, and that for the space of two years, I do not believe that there is any such thing as a person being perfectly right in every point but one, which is so constantly put forward by the Asylum proprietors, and implicitly believed by the public at large, I may mention the case of one as told me by himself, and which was called and was, I believe, his *delusion*. He had the idea fully fixed in his mind that a child of his had attempted to poison him. The fact was, I fancy, that being very ill from a fever, a dose of opium or something of the kind had been administered by force;

that it excited him instead of composing him, as it was intended, and that he became so violent that it was needful to convey him with two keepers into the Asylum, and that there he had continued ever since. It was no doubt the safest place for him, for he was naturally of an impetuous quarrelsome disposition, and had, I imagine, got into trouble more than once through an ungovernable temper when at large. But I can safely say that he was not in any sense a madman, except on the plea, "*Ira furor brevis est.*" There were two more who suffered from the same infirmity of temper, which must have made their friends too glad of an excuse to get rid of them, and quietly put them out of the way into safe keeping.

If I am asked how I would distinguish between a sound and unsound mind, I should say that any person who can take an interest in passing events, study a new subject, turn from one subject to another, and talk sensibly upon any matter that is introduced in conversation, and wish to gain information, is of sound mind. The insane will indeed take a book or paper in their hand from habit, but as often as not it will be upside down. I may compare the two states of mind to a ball, or the governors of a steam-engine, which, while there is any force at work, continue to revolve; but which, when the steam (call it brain) is exhausted, describes a smaller and smaller circle till at last they cease to revolve at all. I am thinking of one afflicted friend, an accomplished, well-educated man, who was always writing poetry in his early days, and who continued the habit, but only to re-write his own compositions, and present them to his acquaintance, but whom it was impossible to arouse to take an interest in anything else. "Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove," but as to making him a companion, even to talk of old times, was altogether a futile attempt.

But what are mental disorders, and what their causes? My simple explanation in the greater number of cases of lunacy would be that we all have some part of our bodies weaker than the rest, and that when any illness, fever or other disease, attacks us—if that weaker portion is the brain, it gives way, and the mind fails.

Of course there are numberless other causes, as accidents, sunstrokes, over-anxiety, love affairs, paralysis—and very possibly softening of the brain may come on gradually without any of these previous causes. I need not mention that debauchery has many a victim, and above all, intemperance—little suspected, perhaps, but which gives the doctors the opportunity of blowing a wonderful trumpet, and proclaiming to the world cases of most remarkable cures accomplished by the skilful treatment of Mental disorders known and practised only by the Faculty. I allude to a case of a lady who had been alarmed by the sudden alteration in her husband, being altogether ignorant that he was getting into the habit of secretly drinking spirits. Upon coming to himself, he enquired where he was, and what he could get, and was gravely informed by the steward that he was in a Temperance Hotel, and that nothing in the way of drink could be allowed. In a few days he was reported to be perfectly cured, and his wife, I suppose, attributed it all to the skilful treatment he had met with, by which an incipient disease had been nipped in the bud.

### TREATMENT.

Let me describe in a few words this wonderful course of treatment which was supposed to have been so effectual in restoring a disordered mind to health. At about 7.30 an attendant unlocks the door of the bedroom and brings in a chair on which the patient's clothes have been resting all the night. At eight, or soon after, the breakfast bell rings, and a basin of tea and a fixed quantity of bread or toast and butter is placed before each patient. Then you may sit idle or walk in the passages, or play billiards till 11 a.m. The door opens, and the head attendant says, "Walk, gentlemen." We go downstairs, change slippers for walking shoes, and emerge into a large high-walled garden. Here I found about twenty fellow creatures, three-fourths of them manifestly imbecile; one or two walking arm in arm with an attendant, others wandering listlessly about, one running round and touching the wall, another rapidly pursuing the devil, and cursing and

swearing at him as if he saw him under his feet, another gibbering like an ape, another trying to and being prevented daubing himself with filth, and one who came up to me with a face and contortions more like one of the demoniacs mentioned in the Bible than anything else that I could conceive. There was not the slightest attempt of any of these to associate with another. They strode silently along, round and round the garden, till at 1 p.m. a whistle sounded, and in the whole set flocked, changed their shoes for slippers again, and retired to their respective quarters. The worst afflicted and noisiest were kept in apartments by themselves. Dinner served like breakfast, food well cooked, for the knives purposely would not cut, and the forks had prongs only one-sixth of an inch long—a wise precaution against violence. At 3 a repetition of exercise, and for the evening, for those who cared for it, billiards, backgammon, whist, or lying listlessly on a sofa with a book or paper. Being the only one who had not quarrelled, it fell to me to be asked to play first by one or another, at billiards or other games, till I was heartily tired of them all. I soon found out those who were sensible, and learnt their history, and indeed that of others. Two, of good family, were born idiots. Another had been sent to Australia, and was soon sent home, and being fond of “toddy,” and a trouble to his family, had been quietly “put away.” Another was disgracing his good family name by his boasted acts of debauchery. Another had been a rather noted surgeon, but had had a paralytic stroke, and his wife had left him in the doctor’s hands. I need hardly say that most of these knew and cared nothing about their friends and relations, and the doctors when requested reported their state. Not so in my case; I was altogether in a maze, and thought there must be some mistake, for I was asked why I came. “You are said to be a voluntary patient; why do not you go away?” I happily had shown no symptoms of anger, for that would have been described as excitement, nor any sulkiness or moping, for that would have been depression; and when I asked the doctor what was the matter with me, he could only say that I was laughing. My state had been described, I believe, as “rushing

about," whereas he found me day after day lying on a sofa and reading my Bible, and books of various sorts. I believe that I contributed something to make that Asylum a happier place, both to patients and attendants, for they said, "I wish, sir, they were all like you." Now, letters began to arrive, and puzzled me the more. "I am glad," said one, "that you have placed yourself under Dr. ——'s care. I hope you will soon be restored to health." "As you have consulted Dr. ——, it would do no good to come and see you; you must abide by his decision." "The more you say you are quite well, it only proves that your mind is affected."

"Your self exaltation and the letters you write only prove how unfit you are to be at large. Do now co-operate with the doctor and not resist the means taken for your recovery. I know this seems like hitting a man when he is down. To compare yourself to David and suppose that you can effect a revolution in the world by a rotten stove only shows your real state. We have had many happy days together, and perhaps we may never meet more in this world, but I hope we may in a better." "To try to make a laugh at your unhappy condition, which is causing such grief to all your friends, only shows how much your mind must be unhinged." (I had written a supposed dialogue between two medical dogs, without whose certificate my dog, who jumped over walls, carried about sticks and stones, and tried to commit suicide by drowning himself in the river, could not be admitted as a patient into the Asylum, where he was told to keep quiet.) "If you had only attended to your own duties instead of minding other things, you would never have upset your mind." "If you were bodily ill I would willingly come and nurse you night and day, but as yours is Mental illness I cannot do you any good." "All your friends are most anxious to hear how you are, and we are praying for your recovery." "I do not see how I can interfere." "Why not?" I wrote to some, "Come and see me and judge for yourselves." "Oh, I am afraid the doctor won't allow it."

I at last discovered that my nervous wife and sister had been secretly consulting this gentleman, who was

supposed to understand and cure mental disorders, describing me as wasting away (a perfect fallacy), and as having become more active than formerly, or as they would describe it "rushing about;" and he, completely taken in by their account, agreed to procure certificates from two of his acquaintance, asked me to take a drive with him, took me to call upon two friends of his; after half a minute's interview requested me to wait for a minute in his carriage while he procured their certificates, and on parting asked me to give him a call that afternoon, and upon my doing so, after sitting by the bedside of a sick young lady in the lodgings, and writing to a London bookseller for a book for her use, I was told by the senior proprietor of a private lunatic asylum that in *his* opinion I was in an exceedingly excited state of mind, and refusing my offer to dine with him, told me that I must accompany him and his partner to a fine looking house; and introducing me to the matron, said that I was coming to reside with her. I am sure that she never had had a patient before who could talk about the beauty of the place and other subjects, and so I became a CERTIFIED LUNATIC. My relations had been asked about details as to my state. "In what way was I altered?" "Had I any delusions?" "Oh yes, I had become very suspicious about the honesty of servants." It was true. I am the most unsuspecting person possible, but I had accused a man of robbing me, had given him in charge to the police, and the magistrate said it was a case of grave suspicion, but he could not commit him without more evidence of guilt; upon which he threatened me with an action. I had prepared five questions to ask him in court. Could he account for being on my premises at four in the morning? (My dog used to bark violently at that hour.) Could he account that when I had paid for two loads of straw, but little more than the refuse of one was found in the yard? Could he account that when a new horse was allowed two bushels of corn there was not the trace of husk in the droppings? He did account for some cases of meat and other stores, placed in a locked-up granary of which he had the key, being tampered with, by saying that *I* had left the window open and that anybody could get in by a ladder. Lastly, could he account for the

fact that when I had paid for a set of new stable implements only the old ones could be found? My suspicion was that as the straw never went by day, it was being quietly conveyed to a sheepfold erected against my hedge through which there was a large gap; and I believe that my dog, upon being loosed, actually came upon the man behind a large bush; for he came back perfectly quiet. A few days after I found him in a deep sleep which lasted twelve hours, and was unable to arouse him, and he did not recover for a day or two. I think he had been drugged, but my household put it down as my fancy, or in medical term, delusion. I may here mention the conclusion of this disturbance. The threatened action was brought, I never heard a word of it. My neighbours knew nothing of the facts, but employed a lawyer to defend me. There was no defence. Damages £50, costs £100. When I asked the chief doctor which was most likely, that I should be insane or a servant dishonest, he only answered that it was a very bad thing to take away a person's character, and that another of his blisters would do me good. The attendant who came to shave my head apologised for his task. "I am very sorry, sir, but I must obey the doctor's orders." Upon stating my treatment to the Commissioners, they answered that they declined to interfere with what they considered very "judicious treatment." "You say," said my one new friend in the Asylum, "that you have a hundred friends. I have not one, but I am just as well off as you are. Stay quiet and write to them that they may come and see you at any hour, day or night, and judge for themselves." If I learnt nothing else, I found out the real value of so called friends, and many a verse in the Psalms seemed to come home in a special manner. I can, however, make friends of acquaintance wherever I go, and, after all, I was no worse off than the attendants in being shut up in such a place. As for delusions, a gentleman whom I had discovered to have been a schoolfellow some thirty years before, warned me that if I had a pain in the stomach and said that a mouse was gnawing it, such a delusion would be considered a sufficient reason for detention for life.

At last, after about three month's detention, a sister

asked the doctor's permission to see me, and might we be allowed to take a walk together. After some common talk, I said what a mess their folly in consulting a lunatic doctor had got me into, and we had better walk into the City and see some sensible man, or even those who had been persuaded to sign my certificates. Oh no, it was impossible, for Dr. — would never allow it. Then said I, "I shall go by myself." So we parted, she to hurry back to the Asylum with the news that I had escaped, I to an hotel whence I sent a message to two M.D.'s, one of them who had written books on the subject and was quoted as an authority. I told my case very simply, paid them each £2 2s. as a fee, for I had power of drawing money from the bank, and had sent a cheque. "Would I consent," this gentleman asked, "to go to a quiet lodging he could recommend near the sea, while he went to see my wife, who was living in deep retirement some miles off." "Of course I would do anything he wished." I got into a fly, had not gone a hundred yards when the Head Attendant of the Asylum entered it, for this gentlemen had at once communicated my whereabouts to the Head Proprietor, and I was driven back in triumph, to the great regret of my friends there, shut up for a week in solitary confinement, had my head shaved and covered with a blister the size of a skull cap, as a lesson not to break the rules of the House and to give trouble again. I suppose that he extended the adage "all fair in war and love" to cases of lunacy as well. I from this time refused to leave the walls of the Asylum. Another visitor, in the person of a brother-in-law, came to see me; he knew nothing about mental disorders, but began to talk about one string being out of tune, but could not or would not say what that string was; but everybody was decided that my mind must be affected, for all the medical men who had seen me agreed on that point.

The very singular thing was that not a single stranger ever discovered the slightest trace of anything amiss, and it was confined entirely to those who had *heard* about me. Is it conceivable that the very day I was entrapped into an asylum a Presbyterian minister should have breakfasted with me, agreed to let me his

house for three months, and asked me whether I could not take his duty occasionally, when his substitutes failed; that then I should have gone to a daily service in church, and suddenly, without any cause, become excited, though my pulse never exceeded 68, as a medical man, though a patient himself in the Asylum, declared he would swear to in any court of law? My own explanation of the fear about my state is this. My wife having consulted a M.D. about me, persuaded me to take some pills, supposed to be mild liver pills. They must have contained strong doses of opium. In about three hours, though my eyes were quite open, I could not see out of the window, though it was broad daylight. My hearing became preternaturally acute and the sound of the railway whistle was like that of a trumpet. Then all sorts of dreadful visions passed before me as if the end of the world was coming. Then succeeded a wretched sinking, as if every moment I should die. These symptoms returned upon me after a railway journey next day, and would suddenly clear off like a cloud before the sun. I would take no more pills, and I had only just time to tell the M.D. that his pills had almost killed me when I was hurried out of the room, and he persuaded to sign my certificate. I explained all this quite calmly to Dr. — upon seeing him the next morning. I suggested that it must have been belladonna, which I had read affected the eyesight, told him that there was manifestly some mistake about me, and that if he would set matters right, I would promise that I would never say a word about the matter, for I supposed it would create a laugh against him. He merely replied that it was quite impossible; and I could only say that he would find me the worst patient that he had ever had there. I then offered to abide by the decision of any half-dozen gentleman of his own choosing, and if they found anything wrong about me I would stay there as long as he liked. He would do nothing of the sort. "Would he then allow the medical men whom I had seen and had signed my certificate, to visit me at my own expense?" "No, I had seen quite enough medical men, and they were all of the same opinion."

"Ah, what a tangled web we weave,  
When first we practise to deceive."

He had been deceived by my family, and had deceived the Commissioners and me, and how was he to escape with honour? I know not what his reports were, but among my letters were passages, "Dr. — says there is no change in your state, and he cannot report you any better." Of course not, for how can a man be better than perfectly well? I slept about seven hours, except one night, when an attendant put to sleep outside my door kept me awake by snoring, ate heartily, and could have eaten more; could sleep after every exercise or meal as I always can, received every week one or two letters, the only ones I think that ever came into that house directed to a patient, all written as to a perfectly sane man, ignoring totally my position but telling me all sorts of home and parish news and how many kind enquiries were made about me. "Why on earth," said my only friend there, "do they not come and see you themselves?" I asked the question of more than one. The reply was that as they could do no good, a visit would be useless. A visit from a gentleman who wished to obtain my signature to some business papers did once occur. He came in quite naturally, having obtained information that I was residing with a Dr. —. He certainly saw me just as he expected, and said so afterwards, and that he never detected the slightest aberration of mind. "You are living in a very pretty place," was his greeting. "Yes," I said, "it is a *pretty place*. Why, do you know that this is a Private Asylum, and that there are thirty or forty mad people here?" I think that he was glad to finish the visit, and escape as soon as possible. At length I got a hint as to the cause of my detention by a long-looked-for visit from the Commissioner. "You had some losses, had you not, at your home?" "Yes," I answered, "some very annoying ones." "Pray do you have any losses here?" "Oh, no," I answered, "we have nothing to lose." "Well, I am glad to see you better, and I should like you to stay a time under Miss — care." She was the Matron or Lady Superintendent, but of course we never saw her except at service on Sundays. All this time my wife was living in deep retirement, and soon returned home, diminished her establishment, shut up the stables, all

to be able to pay an Asylum Proprietor some four guineas a week. I believe that the one I have alluded to began to be heartily sick of his patient, and would be glad to be rid of me. Whether he recommended a change or not I am, of course, ignorant. One day when I was laughing at him, at high health being so dangerous, as described in one of Sir Walter's novels, he said, "I should never have thought about you if your wife and sister had not first come to me." "Then you ought to have put them in here, for they are always under delusions about me and about medical men's opinions." I might have added the words of an old song—

"'Tis a pity when charming women  
Talk of things which they don't understand."

The farce was, however, about to end, and the scene to change; my brother-in-law had procured the attendance, so as to secure the certificates, of the most distinguished medical experts in the City. One was my former acquaintance, who had betrayed me six months before. He looked rather ashamed, and excused himself by saying that he thought he was doing the best thing for me. Then began my examination about delusions. I know not who had primed him, but he began—"You made a wonderful discovery—will you explain it?" I did in as simple a way as I could, that it consisted in exposing an enormous amount of thin metal surface to the atmosphere, heated by a furnace burning any light fuel. "Pray what do you consider it to be worth? Do you think it worth six million pounds?" "It may be, if universally adopted. But I have a patent for it in this and other countries." "Then you expect to make six million pounds by it." "No," I replied; "I do not wish to make anything." "Good morning." And his certificate, as I was informed, affirmed that I was suffering from *IMBECILITY* and *AMENTIA*, a favourite theory and term of his. This gentleman was perfectly ignorant of the whole subject. I might surely apply to him what a bellringer in my first church said of some aspirant to the post, "Sir, don't let him have the key of the belfry; he knows no more of a bell than a young jackass knows of his grandfather." What the other certificate, signed by the head physician of the

Public Lunatic Asylum, contained I am quite ignorant, but with these certificates, without having a minute to say good-bye to my friends, I was hurried into a cab and conveyed that night 400 miles by my brother-in-law and a keeper to another and a very different Asylum.

It is most difficult for gentlemen in the position of Proprietors of an Asylum to be consistent and act upon the opinions they profess to hold. Here was I, an *imbecile*, lapsed down at last into *idiotcy*, taken out the next day by the Doctor, introduced to his children, allowed to walk out with them: another day by another Doctor, asked to dine with a party of his friends, and always requested to read the Bible and prayers at his family worship; permitted to walk about in the neighbourhood wherever I pleased, unattended, and more than once addressed by strangers as one of the doctors. It was a dreadfully idle life, and my chief interest was studying these many fresh phases of lunacy. There could be no mistake about any of them. There were only three with whom I could hold any rational discourse. One was a gentleman whose friends had brought him there and who, finding himself quite as comfortable as at his home, had chosen to reside there. He died, however, quite suddenly. Another had fallen from a tree and broken his spine, the effect of which was that epileptic fits to which he had been subject entirely ceased. The lower portion of his body was completely paralysed. Another was perfectly sane but had broken down in one of the law courts and had become untidy in his person and disagreeable in his habits, and his wife had consigned him to the Asylum. Some fifteen others, all quiet, first-class patients, struck me as never speaking to each other. Our dinner and other meals were carried on in dead silence unless someone was chattering or talking to himself. One especially did this who was always challenging me to billiards, and forgetful that all titles originate from the Queen, he had repudiated his own name and adopted that of a nobleman, and would answer to no other. Again there was a military man who, having accused his wife of unfaithfulness, had been consigned to this establishment. It was very probably his delusion.

But to return to myself. At last my wife came to see me, and I thought that surely now this folly would end. Nothing of the sort. Away she went, writing me a note by way of saying farewell, and leaving me again at the cost of five guineas a week to pass another year in an Asylum. I was not going to run away, but what could I do? A few miles distant lived a medical man of whom she had the highest opinion. I would go over and consult him. I mentioned the whole matter to him, saying whence I came, and telling him my history, when, asking me to stay to breakfast, he at once telegraphed over to the Asylum, and a carriage soon appeared to convey me back, and I was told by letter that he at once had discovered something mentally wrong. I now appealed for a Commission of Lunacy to the London Commissioners. They referred me to the visiting magistrates. The one to whom I wrote, referred me to his fellow visitors. They, again, professed to have no authority, and handed me back to the Commissioners. I wrote to the Lord Chancellor, asking for a writ of Habeas Corpus, but, of course, received no answer. I wrote to the Lord Chief Justice with the same result. I applied to my county member, and others. Mr. Gladstone, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, wrote:—"I have read your letter with much interest and commiseration, but with the impression that you would have done better to address yourself to another quarter," mentioning the Commissioners. Perhaps his autograph may prove valuable in these stirring days.

At last a letter from the Commissioners proposed a change of scene preparatory to my perfect recovery of health. The farce was kept up by my taking a tour in Wales, and then my wife was told I was considered as perfectly recovered, and might return to my parish. Certainly, nothing of the sort. "What! ask an imbecile man to take charge of a large parish." "Oh, but you are not imbecile now. The Doctors declare that you are quite well again." As I felt not the slightest change in any way, I refused my Bishop's request to resume duties until he had let me appear before a commission of gentlemen, who should hear the evidence on both sides and make a report to him. This, he said, he was

unable to do, and so I kept away from my home for the next five years, and only on my wife's earnest entreaties consented to return to it.

### DELUSIONS.

It may be of some interest to those who have learnt something about Mental Disorders and their supposed treatment from perusing these pages to hear how this report of the sudden aberration of mind got about. I must apologise for being egotistical, but I can only tell my tale in my own person. My chief taste lies in mechanics and labour-saving machines. Economy in saving waste has always been my strong point. Knowing that the waste heat up a chimney must be enormous, it occurred to me (a happy thought) to save a portion by making a metal chimney in my church nearly 60 ft. long, but folded up one length over the other and heated by a furnace outside. The effect was perfectly astonishing. The heated air rushed in volumes over the building and made the place so hot that though there was a frost outside, the windows were obliged to be opened. To my great surprise I found that this result had been produced by less than half a bushel of coals. I reported this to a civil engineer, who came down, repeated the experiment, was equally surprised, and suggested that he might take out a Patent. I knew nothing about Patents, but understanding that anyone who saw it might secure all the benefits by applying first for a Patent, I consented. I then thought that I might as well apply the discovery in my own house, and the results were still more astonishing. A couple of newspapers warmed the metal through so that no portion 30 feet distant from the fire could be touched by the bare hand, and about 16 lbs. of wood and coal warmed first the room, and opening the door, a great portion of the house. This result was obtained at night. The Patent Agent had suggested that some foreign Patents should be secured, as he could at least part with them without loss, and possibly with some gain, and to this I had also consented. Wishing to make such a useful discovery known, I had my apparatus (only a tin chimney folded up and weighing a few pounds) exhibited in my parish, then at the

— Union, then taken up to London. Perhaps I do not always act like other men. I ought to have formed a Company, put out a prospectus of the "Universal Warm Air Company (Limited),—Shares, £500,000. Two hundred thousand to be paid to the vendor and fifty thousand shares fully paid up." I was comfortably provided for, and had no wish to make money, but why should not others benefit? My poor parishioners were buying coals by the pennyworth, and I had proved again and again that one pound of fuel might be made to go as far as three or four. If my Church could be warmed for sixpence, why not every other, for the chimney was not very costly. It was warmed for five years with this tin chimney and a common laundry stove. If my house could be warmed, why not others? And might not half the coals in the land used for warmth be saved? I decided, therefore, to announce my discovery by a letter to the *Times*. Just at this time I was much interested by reading a book\* in my library in which the writer argued that the only way to combat the horrible evil of prostitution was by conforming to God's moral law, of which "not one jot or tittle was to fail," in which it was enjoined that any man who seduced a woman had in God's sight made her his wife, and should be compelled to marry her, and so prevent her from ruin, whereas the laws which man had made allowed him to seduce a hundred, and cast them off upon the streets. I was greatly struck with this, and at once acted upon it in my own Parish. I persuaded a young man who had taken a neighbour's daughter to be his housekeeper (as he called it), to save her character from ruin by marrying her. I was successful, and in less than a month he was killed by a fall from his horse, and she came into a very comfortable independence. In another case, where a young reprobate had seduced the servant of a neighbour under promise of marriage, and then let the poor orphan child be sent to the Union Workhouse, I denounced his conduct publicly before a dozen of his companions, compelled them to condemn him, and procured his dismissal from the parish. What I had done, surely

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\* See Appendix.

others might do, if the subject could only be brought before the world. My letter to the *Times* was, I quite acknowledge, a singular one. Was I announcing a real valuable discovery, or, as I think I said, had I found only a mare's nest? Would any scientific men come and test my apparatus, and give me the benefit of their experience how to carry the thing out. I believe *now* that this is the most useful discovery of these days. The mass of the people care nothing for Telegraphs, nor indeed Railways, but all want warmth. Take a cottage without more than a brick fireplace, cut a hole through the side, place in the opening a few feet of 6-inch pipe, returning into the chimney; cover up the fire with a sheet of iron, throw in a few sticks of wood, put on a blower, and in a few minutes the whole house will be warmed. I may not live to see it, but in my fancy I can see half a dozen houses warmed by one apparatus fixed outside. Ask any Locomotive Engineer, what would be the effect if he took his engine into St. Paul's, stripped off the boiler plates, conducted the smoke by a flue to the external air, and consumed three or four bushels of coal in his furnace. If nearly 3,000 feet of air can be warmed as quick as one of water, I believe that the whole building would be filled with heated air in less than two hours. But to return to my story. I was announcing to the public my success in one subject from which *all* might benefit. Could I get my countrymen to take up the other subject, in which I had also succeeded in part, and bring public opinion to bear upon it? I therefore offered the free use of my Patent to anyone who would bring the matter to notice. Wishing to prove that I was really in earnest and not trying to make a fool of the Editor, I deposited with my letter a blank cheque as a proof of good faith. This however was filled up for £17 and the letter appeared as an advertisement. I did not regret it, for it was after all a cheap way of conveying to 100,000 of my countrymen what I considered a piece of good news. I think I said that a "good time was coming." In a day or two my relatives began to look alarmed about me. Letters came in suggesting that I *must* be out of my mind. My wife's brother appeared, looking quite anxious. Would I go and see a medical man? Yes,

certainly, to please him; a dozen if he wished it. Dr. Watson saw me, felt my pulse, which was 71. "Did I feel ill?" "No, not the least. Sleep good, appetite good, though I might be a little bilious." "Had I anything on my mind?" "Certainly not." He gave me a prescription and dismissed me. Then I was to go to Dr. Sutherland. He looked at me, asked me some questions, and suggested a tour by way of a change. I quite consented, but thought it would be leaving home on false pretences. "Oh, he would manage that." Then I said, "I wish you would allow me to come and stay here till I go." Quite surprised he asked why? "Because I shall not have the miserable looks of my relations." Oh, no, he could not think of it. Then began again what were considered my *delusions*. I have mentioned the dismissal of a servant for dishonesty. Another man, an acquaintance of his, had taken his place for a few days. I think that he must have been in collusion, and had been asked to keep my new horse in low condition, to prove the other's honesty. I followed him into the stable in about five minutes after his arrival in the morning, and said, "You had better feed the horse." He answered that he had had his corn, and bolted it. I had the whole of the dung washed out and there were neither oats nor husk. The horse was quite faint after a three mile journey. I dismissed him, and women who knew nothing about a horse declared it was all my *imagination*. I must own that just before this I had a slight attack of fever. I went to see a dying young man in a room only six feet high filled with a most offensive atmosphere. That night, when twenty miles off, the same odour came upon me from my own breath. My head was in a whirl. I got up, packed myself in a wet sheet and blankets, fell into a profuse perspiration, and awoke quite relieved. Now came a series of losses in the house. My razor disappeared, also a knife and scissors; really, I believe, put aside by my wife, or somebody who thought I might make a bad use of them. I believe now that I quite wrongly suspected a female servant, and that her frightened looks when I spoke to her, instead of being a proof of guilt were really caused by the idea that something must be wrong about *me*. It is curious to see how things act and react. Two schoolmistresses in

my parish, put to live in the same house, each came to complain of the other, as being afraid that something was amiss with her. People can see whatever they expect to see. If I go into a jail, of course the man I see in a cell *must* have done something, or why should he be there? It is just the same with cases of Lunacy. I have heard a story of an old friend of mine who was sent down by the Court of Chancery to hold a Commission of Lunacy. A jury were summoned, and it was understood that the alleged Lunatic would be brought before them. While assembling, a door opened and a rather singular looking little man shuffled in, went up to the table, took up some papers, and disappeared. They looked at one another, "Ah, there is no doubt about the case." Again the door opens and the same figure sits down at the top of the table. "Now gentlemen, if you will take your chairs we will proceed with this case." They had been only mistaking the Commissioner for the patient, who was soon brought in, a pitiable object.

Of course nobody could possibly get into an Asylum without some cause. The Commissioners ought to have heard the story of the first Lord Camden sitting down, when walking with an absent-minded friend, and wishing to see what the village stocks were like. His friend closed them and walked away home. Children came to see their new neighbour. At last a farmer appeared. "Will you be so kind as to lift up this plank?" "No, no, old gentleman, you are not there for nothing. Them as put you there must let you out." Such seemed in effect the Commissioners' reply to all my communications with them.

I hope that the gentler sex will not be offended if I say that women in general are perfectly incapable of judging the powers of men's minds or the constitution of their bodies. My wife's judgment of my case was, and is, that I had overworked myself, and was wasting away. My own description of myself was that I went into what in a horse would be called hard condition. I lost just three pounds instead of the thirty I obtained credit for. My pulse, which was said by our Village Doctor to be running at 140, but which he never felt, never rose to 75. As to overwork, I am ashamed

to say I never studied in my life. I read all sorts of books, but never continue with one which I cannot at first perusal understand. No metaphysics for me. "Pray, Mr. —," said my College Tutor sarcastically, as I was blundering over a proposition of Euclid, "begin either at the beginning or the end, either which you choose, but not in the middle;" and I am sure that my good Bishop, who examined me for my degree, must have been very lenient, or I should never have gained my TESTAMUR. I was constantly changing my occupation, teaching in my Schools, visiting sick people, training three young dogs, then with a workman making my apparatus. I always walked, and do now, at about the rate of five miles an hour, and very possibly then I walked a little faster, but I could stop and talk to my parishioners on any subject, could come back, sit down, and go to sleep in a minute. Of course I had a pleasurable excitement, if it could be so-called, in the various results which disclosed themselves in my new discovery. It proved a perfect ventilating apparatus, pouring in volumes of fresh, warm air from my cellar into the dining-room above. It also proved a perfect smoke consumer, not a particle being seen to issue from the chimney, the whole of the soot being caught and deposited in the pipes, and therefore a perfect security against fire. I have had a fresh apparatus made and exhibited at the Smoke Prevention Exhibition, but *there* I was anxious to show the wonderful Economy of Fuel and not what its heating powers were—and in the Report I obtained Honourable Mention for these two results. Another singular result was that while the stove was cold the room was perceptibly warm. The mode of consuming fuel is nothing, but the chimney is everything. There are two ways of consuming fuel. Dr. Arnot's was the SLOW one, mine was the RAPID, but if anyone attempts this in a common fire grate with an upright chimney, by means of a blower, he will find what I experimentally discovered, that he could boil his kettle on the chimney-pot, getting no warmth in the room. I may describe mine as only a NEW APPLICATION of an OLD WELL-KNOWN PRINCIPLE, the heating air instead of water, with this remarkable difference, that whereas the smoke from a steam boiler

must necessarily leave at more than boiling point, very possibly at nearly 400, the heated fumes may, if used to heat the air, be perfectly utilised and condensed when exhausted. It is always supposed that five-sixths of the duty of all coal consumed under a boiler is lost, yet what is obtained from a single pound is able to just move an Ironclad of 10,000 tons four yards. There must be the same power in coal consumed in a common grate, but it is every instant silently creeping up the chimney and escapes into the air, leaving only a little soot to mark its pathway. The many returns in the flue pipe also seemed to increase the heat by checking the rapid escape which takes place in a straight tube, and there was the power of constantly sweeping out the chimney and keeping every portion clean.

If I am asked how I could propose to attack the evil of prostitution, I answer that I think there are now sufficient Christian gentlemen in Parliament, or would be elected by the new constituencies, of whatever political views, who could pass an Act making Seduction a Criminal offence; that I would give the offender the choice of making the reparation which the Law of God commands, that is, *marriage*, and that upon refusal I would deprive him of the power of ruining some other poor victim by confining him as a first-class misdemeanant (in an Asylum if he preferred it), and that he should obtain his liberty only by the request of the woman, for whose maintenance he should provide; and that if she elected to lead an immoral life she should also be punished. This is the way that God, who provided in His Law for the protection of the weak against the strong, has commanded as a remedy against this form of evil in the world. "Thou shalt not suffer a whore among the daughters of thy people." If these offenders could be removed, and so the supply cut off, I imagine that many who now find an easy way of gratifying their passions, would choose one of the thousands of their own rank who are pure and virtuous, and become respectable members of society, with nothing to conceal from the world, and happy fathers of a family. I am quite aware that all such notions will be ridiculed as *visionary*,\* but I fully believe

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\* See Joel ii., 28; Acts ii., 17.

that the time will come when this mountain of iniquity will be removed, or at least broken in pieces. "How does the Devil," I was once asked, "walk about seeking whom he may devour?" It set me thinking, and there rose in my memory one of the handsomest men I had ever seen, whose daily life was to watch for victims among the poor and vain, and whose boast was that he had seduced no less than forty innocent girls, many of whom were then on the streets. Surely the Devil's work was then being carried on in human form. To return to my own case. My Patent may possibly have been invalid, but if it was not, the prospect of realising a fortune seemed to open to me. By God's grace I refused it. I had enough for my very modest wants, and if the contents of a palace were offered me I would not be burdened with them. It might be pleasant to have more to give away, and so do some good in the world. If anything was to be gained, let others obtain the benefit. It would be inconsistent in me to be telling others to be "content" with "food and raiment," and to be trying to amass money. Again, for me to suggest the possibility of combating his favourite engine for ruining bodies and souls, seems in some extraordinary way, "for we are not ignorant of his devices," to have roused Satan against me. How? I will make his relations and friends think him deranged, and so stop his work. My friends will say that I am comparing myself to the Saviour when I only say that their conduct was exactly similar to that of His relatives, who, when He attacked Satan, "went out to lay hands on Him, for they said—He is beside himself," and it must be the Devil who, by some wonderful power, could prevent those for two years who would have given any money, as they said, to see me restored to health, coming and judging by their own senses whether there was the slightest thing the matter with me, but trusted entirely to the reports of interested men, who professed to be the sole judges of Mental disorders. I can never believe it possible that God should suddenly take away the senses and give over to Delusions, one who was doing His work in striving to benefit his fellow-creatures, and whose bodily health for those two years, was as perfect as ever it has been since. I have in these

pages (rodomontade, one of the Doctors would call them) given no names, though I have outlived five-sixths of those, both Patients and Doctors, with whom I made acquaintance. I printed a somewhat similar account upon being discharged some twenty-five years ago, mentioning all the medical men by name. The Printer was frightened by being told that he was subject to prosecution, and the several copies which I sent to various papers received no notice. If indeed a libel is defined as a thing which will expose a man to hatred, contempt, or *ridicule*, then I was subject to an action, which I should have been too ready to meet. On the other hand, I was told by a lawyer that I could not sue in *formâ pauperis*, and state my own case, but that he would require £1,200, to be paid in advance, before he could take up my cause. I wanted no damages, but only to expose a system of which the great mass of men live in perfect ignorance. The extraordinary cure and recovery of an *imbecile* and *idiotic* man ought certainly to have appeared in the Reports of the Lunacy Board, and in the Medical Journals. I am sure that the rush of Patients to such an establishment would have compelled the proprietors—with whom, I may say, I formed a life-long friendship, and proposed to become a partner in the fees obtained for Medical opinions—to have increased their Asylum to the size of the largest Hotel in the Kingdom.

“What place is that?” I said one day to the driver of an omnibus, pointing to a large domed building near which we were passing. He looked at me and said, “I hope, Sir, you will never get there.” “Why?” I replied. “That is Bedlam.” If I had gone and told the Doctor that I wanted admission for some Mental disorder I expect he would have turned me out, or had I been taken in would have conveyed me to the Police Office on the charge of getting lodging and food on false pretences.

If I had been carried over to my County Asylum instead of a Private one, and paid for by my Union or Parish, I feel confident that I should have been discharged within a month. Unhappily sufficient means, even by loans, not to speak of reduction of home

expenses, were to be found to pay the greedy charges of those who by "this craft" had their wealth. The subject of Lunacy is always an unpleasant subject to deal with, and I do not believe that one person in a thousand would own and boast that he had been inside a Lunatic Asylum for two years and so had learnt all the secrets. How Medical Commissioners who have themselves been engaged in some way in trying to mystify the world in conjunction with the Asylum owners as to what Lunacy really is, must with grave faces, like the Augurs of old, have secretly laughed at being able to keep up the farce so long. The whole system needs exposure, and especially the power which some claim of alone being able to recognise by their special education the various forms of Mental Disorders, and curing each of them by some method peculiar to themselves. I am told of cases where the Patient is always perfectly well in health, can do everything that sane people do, can sit at table among strangers without being suspected, can take his or her part in whatever topic may be introduced, behave perfectly well, and yet upon one single word being accidentally mentioned will at once start up and show all the symptoms of a disordered mind. I can only say that I do not believe a word of such a tale, and never will till I see such a Patient with my own eyes, and test him with my own methods. I am asked whether there are not persons perfectly well in bodily health and yet deficient in sense, and therefore that health of body and mind have no connection. I answer, Yes; for when the mind is gone and the Patient is imbecile the bodily functions continue mechanically; but whether such would be called "perfect health" I am unable to say. No doubt there are some who live long, but generally there is a deterioration more or less rapid which ends in total idiotcy and death. My own opinion, formed from observing more than sixty cases is, that there are only two phases of illness, either excitement or depression, or various forms of idiotcy often the one followed by the other. In the one case the eye is restless, the movements are nervous and involuntary, and the symptoms are unmistakable: in the other there is deep melancholy and an utter incapability to engage in any subject or to

take part in any amusement. My relations, I suppose, will justify their conduct by saying that I *thought* differently to them on two subjects, and therefore must be kept away from the world until I came to a right state of mind. Most of my companions in durance were there because they could not *think* at all. If all who *think* differently to their friends are to be immured in secret places, the whole land must be turned into an Asylum. I have heard a story of a Patient being asked by a visitor how he happened to be there, and his reply was, "I said that the world was mad, and the world said that I was mad, but as they were the strongest they caught me and put me here." As to delusions, at least 2,000 of my parishioners, friends, and acquaintances were under the impression that I was passing through some extraordinary phases of Mental Disorder for which I was undergoing some peculiar course of treatment, from which I emerged with a "Perfect Cure;" whereas it was perfectly evident to every sensible companion, whether Patient, Attendant, Matron, Superintendent, not to speak of hundreds who saw me walking about with my beautiful, faithful dog, that there was nothing the matter with me whatever. Did I know where he is buried, I might adopt Byron's lines on his four-footed friend, and say on his monument that, for two years—

"I had but one  
And here he lies."

I now learnt by experience the value of all worldly friendships. "A favourite (read L) has no friends." I lately buried a poor idiot who had died in the County Asylum, and am ashamed for my parishioners and relations when I think how that poor creature's mother would work for money to be able to go and see a child who never asked for her or recognised her, while dozens of my anxious asking friends, in spite of my requesting them to come and see me, would seem to reply, as the little boy did, "Mother, you more you call, the more I won't come." It only shows the extraordinary ignorance on the subject of Lunacy. What, when some were within a mile of me, and I could see their trains passing within a quarter of a mile, could possibly keep them away but gross ignorance? I

suppose there was some fear of exciting me, and the advice seemed to be—write to him upon every possible subject, tell him all parish news, but only avoid those two subjects upon which he is deranged in mind. That is to be cured by Medical Treatment. “Another of my blisters” said the old gentlemen whom one of my companions called a spiteful old rascal, “will do you good.” I had already had one for bribing a servant to post, at a cost of £4, a letter secretly written (for Lunatics are always cunning) to Mr. Spencer Walpole, then Chairman of a Select Committee in Parliament, asking him to send for me, and let me give evidence upon the subject, and when a kind answer came saying that I was applying in the wrong quarter, and that letter was delivered to me open, and I would not tell him how I had sent it, and laughed at him, he took this mode of showing his displeasure. All these blisters were, I suppose the Commissioners considered, “judicious treatment.” How the idea got abroad in the world I can only attribute to letters coming to my relatives saying that I *must* have something wrong, or as they would express it, be out of my mind. Then, of course, I *was* so; then my RICHER neighbours began to look suspiciously at me; then came advice to see medical men; then everything I said was contradicted. I am naturally, thank God, of a very calm nature, but I may have exhibited some symptoms of irritability in finding every word I said put down as only my own fancies. That I may have been mistaken in some things and lost gloves and other articles as I now do, I will willingly allow, but I might well reason, if there is a thief, and that thief cannot use what he purloins, then there must be a receiver. The man would never dare to take consumable articles home to his wife, and who could make use of corn and straw but someone near at hand. The man whom I suspected has been dead many years, and I should be glad to think that my suspicions were unfounded, but I cannot think them so.

Who would suppose that as my relations described my state to enquiring friends as residing with a very skilful man, Dr. ———, they would not picture me as living in a gentleman's house, dining with his family, enjoying the daily conversation of an intelligent man,

taking drives with him in the neighbourhood, introduced to his acquaintances, whereas I was only walking about among a set of madmen, and did not see the Doctor more than a minute a day, and his Senior Proprietor once a week. I verily believe that a nervous person, finding himself in such a place might have been driven out of his senses altogether, and become melancholy, if not excited. Thank God, nothing of the sort can excite me. I had nothing whatever to be excited about. I may say that at times I was rather amused at having got into such a place, and had the opportunity of studying a new subject, though paying dearly for the privilege. I was warned never to laugh at the Doctors, for that at once would be a proof of a weakened intellect; for were not three or four of my companions always laughing? I did not say to these gentlemen what I said to my new friends, with whom I became nearly as intimate as with a brother:—"Now, I have found you out, and you are all the greatest set of humbugs I ever knew." They were not offended—only laughed, but did not deny it. Of course, a man out of his mind is not answerable for his words. These gentlemen, however, did not profess to cure Mental Diseases. They owned a very comfortable Temperance Hotel, and kindly took care of those who could not take care of themselves; and if the terms were reduced to my estimate of the value of living there, I should not have any strong objections to repeating my visit there for a few days. Let anyone who thinks that his friends look alarmed about him, and are about to carry him into an Asylum, dismiss any fears of such a place. Perhaps he will find as I did, that friends are not necessary for happiness, and that a nice faithful dog is a better companion than many of his former ones.

Should any reader of these pages seek to learn the name of the writer, and will apply to the Publisher, he may be told that it is that which some years ago was well-known in a popular novel as that of a "Respectable Family."

## APPENDIX.

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THE work to which I refer on this subject was written by a good and very learned man above one hundred years ago, and in times when a revival of spiritual religion which had begun with Wesley and Whitfield was just beginning to influence the Church of England. It met, however, with very natural neglect by most to whom it particularly applied, and with ridicule and abuse by those to whom it seemed to contain strange doctrines, but who in reality did not understand it. It is dedicated to the various patrons of Hospitals for fallen women, whose miserable state had led them to institute these public charities. Its argument is that so long as the laws of man are not in accordance with the laws of God, prostitution will follow seduction, and be followed by child murder, horrible diseases, suicide by pregnant women, medicine taking to conceal guilt, whoredom, adultery, and lewdness which defile this earth, and must make it a place abhorred by a just and holy God. We can only know the will of God by what He has *revealed* in His written Word. He revealed the whole of His will to the Jews, and as He changes not and commands that we should not add to His Word nor diminish from it, and He intended that the same laws should be laws for His people to the end of the world, we are bound by those laws for ever.

God when he made man, and bade him *increase and multiply*, implanted strong animal passions for this purpose. At the same time, foreseeing how those passions would work in the gratification of lust, He ordained marriage as the remedy against sinful desires and actions, and knowing that the female sex being weaker would become the prey of men, He provided against this evil by ordering in His Word that every man who took possession of the person of a virgin, should "surely endow her to be his wife" (Exodus xxii., 16). And again in Deut. xxii., 29, the same law is repeated: "And because he hath humbled her he may not put her away all his days." Now

these are laws of which our Saviour said that not one jot or tittle (the very smallest of them) should fail till all were fulfilled, and that His words should never "pass away."

God's law then was ordained as a protection of the weak against the strong, but the laws of man's making entirely ignore the laws of God. Instead of punishing adulterers and adulteresses (and death was the punishment that God ordered against this worst crime, which He classes with murder), by man's law there is *no* punishment at all—not even a day's imprisonment; and instead of a man who seduces a woman being compelled to take her as his wife, he may cast her off when he pleases; take another, whether purchased by his money or persuaded by his deceitful promises, cast her off, and so on, one after another, till the end of his days—the parent of wretched children, who will most likely sow sin broadcast through the land. Surely the laws of man's making in this respect require to be conformed to those which Infinite wisdom has provided for the security, peace, preservation, and protection of the female sex. As most of the victims of seduction are taken from the ranks of those who have now the power of legislation put into their hands, it will not take much persuasion to induce them to elect only those who will unite in putting down this crying evil which now defiles the land; and if England, from which nearly all the blessings and comforts to humanity have taken their rise—Steam, Railroads, Electricity, and the Cheap Press—will set the example, we may hope that other nations where these dreadful sins are so prevalent will speedily follow, and so the Devil, the author of all sin, have one more and his most destructive engine for ruining the souls and bodies of God's creatures snatched by God's people from his hands.

If any of my Christian Brethren, whether Clerical or Lay, would take up this subject, if it at all strikes him in a new light, and publish an Epitome of this Book, which I do not feel myself at all competent to engage in, and he cannot find "Thelyphthora" in some public library, I will very gladly send him the three volumes if he will apply for my address through the publisher.