

Suggestions as to the expediency of erecting a public asylum for the insane, belonging to the counties of Cumberland & Westmorland : in a series of letters to Edward Williams Hasell, esq., chairman of the Quarter Sessions / by Richard Oliver.

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SUGGESTIONS

AS TO THE

EXPEDIENCY OF ERECTING

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PUBLIC ASYLUM FOR THE INSANE,

BELONGING TO THE

COUNTIES OF CUMBERLAND & WESTMORLAND,

IN A

LETTER TO EDWARD WILLIAMS HASELL, Esq.

Chairman of the Quarter Sessions.

By RICHARD OLIVER, M.D.

CARLISLE:

PRINTED AT THE JOURNAL OFFICE, BY JAMES STEEL.

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FROM 1776 TO 1876
BY CHARLES A. BEAMAN

NEW YORK: G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
1876

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

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TO

EDWARD WILLIAMS HASELL, Esq.,

CHAIRMAN OF THE QUARTER SESSIONS FOR THE COUNTIES
OF CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORLAND.

SIR,—Being aware that you take a deep interest in every thing connected with the administration of public business in the respective counties wherein you occupy the important station of Chairman to the Bench of Justices, I would beg to submit to your notice, and to that of the other members of the magistracy, the following observations relative to a subject the importance of which may, perhaps, warrant me in suggesting it for your consideration.

In the local administration of the Poor Laws, the want of an efficient provision for the care of insane paupers is generally felt to be a serious inconvenience, although the public, and even the Poor Law Guardians themselves, I believe, are not commonly aware of its extent. The maintenance and safe custody of the unfortunate beings who are thus cast upon the public charge, are too often the only considerations bestowed upon them by their official protectors; and in the absence of sound information respecting the statistics of insanity, this is not, perhaps, a matter for particular remark. But the gradual adoption of more comprehensive and systematic views with regard to the management of lunatics, has shown that other advantages, besides those of mere safe-keeping, result from improved arrangements for their care; and without supposing for a moment that any party having the power to provide means for such a purpose would be indifferent to its fair consideration, I am anxious to lay before you a brief summary of the general results which have been elsewhere obtained with respect to the treatment of the insane, and to point out the probable advantages to be derived from the establishment of an asylum which might be destined for the reception of lunatics belonging to the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland.

Although, under the most favourable circumstances, a large proportion of the insane become permanent sufferers from their malady; yet the probabilities of their eventual restoration to health correspond in so many instances with the degree of care bestowed upon their treatment, and upon the accommodations provided for facilitating the same, that no doubt can now be entertained respecting the expediency of establishing *proper* receptacles for this unfortunate portion of the community, wherever their number is so great as to render such a measure reasonably practicable.

In attempting to exhibit the grounds of comparison between the various data from which conclusions have been drawn respecting the circumstances which tend, on the one hand, to promote the chances of recovery, or to render the affection permanent or hopeless, on the other, I shall first set down the average annual mortality from all causes for England and Wales. I shall next state the proportional mortality among the insane who are placed in circumstances which are considered most conducive to their successful treatment; and shall then point out the difference, in this respect, between these and the class to which I more particularly beg to direct your attention.

According to the 2nd Annual Report of the Registrar-General, the annual rate of mortality for England and Wales at all ages is 2.20 per cent. of the whole population; but as the mean age of lunatics in asylums is about 35-40, the comparison will be more justly made between their mortality and that of the general population at the same period of life. In the aggregate the deaths at this age are not more than 1.3 per cent.; but in cities it is found to be about 2 per cent.—Assuming this last, then, as the most equitable standard of comparison, we shall find that the mortality of lunatics, *even under the most favourable circumstances*, is at least three times greater than the mortality of this part of the general population at the same age.

In contravention of the belief which has been entertained upon this point, and notwithstanding that some lunatics live to an advanced age, it is quite clear that, upon the whole, this affection is associated with circumstances which materially tend to abridge the duration of life.*

In the asylum at Gloucester, where the diet of the Patients is generous and nutritious, where they live as much as

* In an action (*Fisher v. Beaumont*) brought at the York Assizes in 1835, to recover the sum of £2000 insured upon the life of a Lunatic, the Jury found for the Plaintiff, on the ground that Insanity had no tendency to shorten life.

possible in the open air, and where the treatment is more than usually successful, the annual mortality of all classes is 7 per cent.

In the thirty four licensed, or private, houses within the jurisdiction of the metropolitan commission, the average number of deaths among the higher class of patients, whose necessities are of course better provided for than those of the pauper inmates, amounts annually to 11 per cent.; and in some of them the rate for this class is even as low as that of the institution at Gloucester.

Taking 7 per cent., as the proportional mortality which is fairly ascribable to insanity, we shall be fully warranted in imputing all above this to defects in the arrangements provided for the case of the insane.

In the majority of private institutions the accommodation for pauper lunatics is very inadequate to the end here proposed; and however well adapted to their purpose in some respects, as several of them unquestionably are in the departments assigned for the reception of patients of a higher class, there can be no doubt that the higher mortality among their pauper inmates is owing "to the diseases generated by the limited space in which these unhappy lunatics are confined; to the collection of large numbers under the same roof; the impurity of the atmosphere; the want of exercise and warmth; the poor unvaried diet; and the deficiency of medical attendance."* We find accordingly that the annual mortality of paupers in the licensed asylums here spoken of, is 21 per cent.—nearly double that of the rich patients in the same institutions, and just three times higher than that of the asylum at Gloucester.

Although the rate of mortality does not in every case inversely indicate the chances of recovery with precision, yet the circumstances which tend to promote the general bodily health of such patients being intimately connected with those which contribute to their mental improvement, it may be fairly assumed, I believe, as a proper criterion of the care which is bestowed upon their treatment; particularly as we find that in those institutions where the rate of mortality is lowest, the proportion of recoveries appears to be correspondingly high. It is only, however, from a consideration of the sex and age of patients, from the form and stage of the disease, and from other *internal* causes which influence the tendency to recovery or death, that any exact comparison can be drawn between the eventual prospects of cases which may

* Report on the mortality of Lunatics by William Farr, Esq., (the eminent author of various statistical works, and the writer of the admirable explanatory letters in the Reports of the Registrar General,) read before the Statistical Society of London, March 15, 1841.

be placed in *external* circumstances precisely similar. In the early stage of the malady, for instance, both the rate of mortality and the chances of recovery are very high; and it is in this stage most especially that the advantages of proper management are found to be peculiarly available. As the disease advances, the danger to life, after an indefinite period, becomes less imminent, whilst the chances of recovery gradually decline.

Having thus endeavoured to give a slight sketch of some of the more important circumstances connected with the general statistics of insanity, I must beg your attention to those which appertain more particularly to this subject in the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland,—*a district within the precincts of which there is not a single institution of any description for the exclusive reception of the insane.*

In the year 1836 returns were made of the *pauper* lunatics within their respective districts by the overseers of the various parishes in England and Wales; when it appeared that there were 13,667 of these unfortunate creatures chargeable to their parishes,—or about 1 to every 1000 of the entire population. Out of this number 4,271 were confined in asylums; viz., 2,780 in those built under the provisions of the 9th George IV., chapter 40, and 1,491 in private institutions. The remaining 9,396 were “under the care of parish officers as in-door or out-door paupers.”

The proportion of the two classes, and their distribution under the respective divisions which I have mentioned, will be most readily perceived by the following table:—

Lunatics in County Asylums.	Lunatics in Private Asylums.	Lunatics under the care of Parish Officers.	Total of Lunatics.	Idiots in County Asylums.	Idiots in Private Asylums.	Idiots under the care of Parish Officers.	Total of Idiots.	Total of Insane Paupers.
2610	1403	2389	6402	170	88	7007	7265	13,667

Stating the rate per cent. of insane poor on the entire population of England and Wales as .10, we shall find the proportion of those who were under the care of parish officers at the time in question to be indicated by .07, and of those confined in Asylums by .03.

In Cumberland, whilst the aggregate return per cent. was considerably below the average; in Westmorland it was higher; being not less, indeed, than double that of the former county; and however striking at first sight such a circum-

stance may seem to be, it is well known to correspond with the general results of this investigation. "A most remarkable difference is found in the proportional number of lunatics in agricultural and in manufacturing districts. Previous to inquiry, we should conjecture that the causes of insanity would have more influence, and the disease be more prevalent, in a manufacturing than in an agricultural population; but the contrary is the fact."*

I shall present a comparison of the returns from these two counties at the period above-mentioned, in a tabular form; and without particularly adverting to the lamentable inefficiency of the provision at that time existing for the purpose here referred to, I shall point out the inadequacy of the means, as compared with the intended object, which are now resorted to in compliance with the 45th section of the Poor Laws Amendment Act; for without calling upon public authorities to do more than the law renders compulsory, it may not be unreasonable to say that, for such a purpose, at all events, that which they are thus required to do, ought to be done as effectually as possible.

CUMBERLAND.

Population in 1831.	Lunatics in Asylums.	Lunatics under the care of Parish Officers.	Idiots under the care of Parish Officers.	Total of Insane Paupers.	Per Cent. on the Population.	Proportion of Insane in Asylums.	Proportion of Insane under the care of Parish Officers.
169,681	19	26	50	95	.06	1	4

WESTMORLAND.

Population in 1831.	Lunatics in Asylums.	Lunatics under the care of Parish Officers.	Idiots under the care of Parish Officers.	Total of Insane Paupers.	Per Cent. on the Population.	Proportion of Insane in Asylums.	Proportion of Insane under the care of Parish Officers.
55,041	4	18	46	68	.12	1	17

Even taking the aggregate of both counties in 1836, when the returns were made, it will be perceived from the foregoing

* Prichard on Insanity, page 334.

data that not more than 1 in 7 of the insane paupers were lodged in institutions expressly designed for their treatment and accommodation; and although somewhat more than .6 of the whole number were idiots, whose habits and propensities in some instances might possibly be neither mischievous nor dangerous, and granting even that a few of them might as humanely, as well as safely, have been left at liberty, it would still appear, on comparing the returns from this district with the average of England and Wales, that not more than one-half of the ordinary proportion were placed under appropriate superintendence,—a fact which, tending as it does to reflect discredit on the parochial authorities of the time, may be more justly attributed, perhaps, to their ignorance of these matters, rather than to any want, on their part, of humane consideration for the necessities of the afflicted poor.

I am not acquainted with any means of exactly determining the comparative mortality of such patients as may have been generally thus situated; or of otherwise ascertaining with precision the results of such an imperfect arrangement; but when it is considered that the great foundation of all curative proceedings with regard to this malady, is only to be obtained by “removing patients from the influence of external circumstances which may have produced their disorder, and may be likely to protract it,”* and that the chances of recovery, at least in all recent cases, mainly depend upon a certain requisite attention to their physical comforts, and upon the application of appropriate moral and medical remedies, the utter worthlessness of such a system, to mark it by no deeper stigma, must at once be apparent, and, but for the prevailing ignorance on this subject, excite surprise that it should ever have been tolerated so long.

Since the legislature, however, has now to a great extent deprived the local authorities of any discretion in such matters, the consideration of a right provision for the insane poor has not become less important. The 45th section of the Poor Laws Amendment Act, by making it penal to detain any “*dangerous* lunatic, insane person, or idiot” in a common workhouse, necessarily implies either that an increased amount of accommodation must have been provided for such persons elsewhere; or that a larger number are now accumulated in institutions which were at all events not more than sufficient for the previous number of their inmates. Belonging to the different unions in Cumberland, for instance, I have

* Esquirol.

ascertained that no fewer than 61 were lodged in asylums at the beginning of the present year (the number in 1836, it will be remembered, having been only 19); viz., for Alston 2, Bootle 0, Brampton 4, Carlisle 19, Cockermouth 7, Longtown 3, Penrith 4, Whitehaven 13, Wigton 9. From Westmorland I have learned that 15 are in asylums at the present time.

How far the increase of accommodation may have kept pace with the demand for it thus generally created, I am not prepared to say; but in a large district of the country like that in question, which mainly depends for this object on the resource of distant private institutions, it might not be amiss to suggest it as a proper subject for inquiry, did not a still more important consideration present itself respecting the expediency of establishing a good public asylum of its own. I am not aware, indeed, of any cause for imputing blame to the proprietors of licensed asylums for their treatment of insane paupers,—that treatment, doubtless, being generally *as good as circumstances will allow*; but when we take into account the comparatively limited scale of these establishments, their imperfect means of classification and of moral discipline, and the various other inconveniencies and defects before alluded to, it is obvious that they can afford but a very inadequate provision for the proper accommodation of their poorer inmates. In fact *for any class of patients* it is only in institutions of a considerable size that the greatest advantages would appear to be most readily available. “There is an advantage not less peculiarly attached to public institutions, by which they excel all smaller private ones exactly in proportion to their superior magnitude, as the same difficulties in reference to such a complete arrangement as shall fully correspond with the various requirements, have to be encountered in a greater or less degree in the latter, as in the patients’ own dwellings.”*

What may be the exact proportion of the insane poor of these counties at present under confinement, as compared with the number of those who are not placed under any appropriate control, I am not able to determine; but the question would seem to be not whether any portion of them should be deprived of the advantages which result from a proper system of seclusion, and from the prompt employment of such remedial means

* On the construction and management of Hospitals for the Insane, by Dr. Maximilian Jacobi, page 11. This distinguished writer is the Director and first Physician of the establishment at Siegburg, for the Prussian Provinces on the Rhine.

It would be impossible within the present limits to present a full view of the contrast between the plan of simple seclusion, in which the patients are merely prevented from doing injury to themselves and others; and that system of treatment upon which, by various modes of occupation and amusement, every means are employed to rouse the

as are thereby rendered most available; but *in what manner the most efficient provision can be made for diminishing the evil consequences which flow from the prevalence of insanity.* That these consequences have never been sufficiently estimated there can be no doubt; else would there have been provided long ere this, I apprehend, some adequate special arrangements for averting them, or at all events for effecting their comparative mitigation. Unable to procure an independent subsistence, the insane of the class to which I have particularly alluded, are not merely entitled to protection and support; but deprived of liberty for the safety of others, they have a further claim to the consideration of society with respect to the means which are *best* calculated for their restoration to sanity. Nor is it only on account of the insane themselves that this consideration is due. In a considerable number of cases the maintenance and welfare of families depend on the alternative, and no doubt many of these who would otherwise be supported by independent industry, are cast upon the public charge through the neglect of the provision here referred to.

torpid faculties, to repress the outbreaks of disordered thought, to alter the habitual bent of the perverted moral feelings, and to fix the attention as much as possible on circumstances unconnected with particular subjects of hallucination. As affording some idea of the latter principle of management, I am tempted, however, to take the following passage from the last Annual Report of the VISITING COMMITTEE of the County Lunatic Asylum near Gloucester. After stating that "*all the patients are as securely managed, and are governed with much less difficulty and disturbance WITHOUT than WITH mechanical assistance,*" the Committee proceed to say:—

"From the causes above-named, and perhaps from others not at once cognizable, the asylum has during the past year exhibited a vast increase of good order and comfort. The exercising grounds, formerly scenes of occasional riot and confusion, with indications of mischief and destruction scattered on all sides, are now laid out as vegetable and flower gardens, and planted with fruit trees. To these, all the patients of each class and sex respectively, have constant access, and yet the productions of each are permitted to flourish, and their fruits to attain maturity. With the simple arrangement on the part of the Superintendent, that whatever the patients will cultivate and protect, shall be their own, and be shared amongst them,—and that those who irregularly or furtively misappropriate any portion shall be deprived of their share at the time of distribution, nearly the whole produce of each garden was this year brought to maturity, and partaken at the tables of the patients who had raised them.

"Balls and other amusements, occurring in lunatic asylums, have been of late publicly mentioned as matter of admiration and astonishment. In this asylum, large parties for dancing have always been promoted; as well as dinner and evening parties, when proper, and pleasurable excursions, for many hours, in the country. Musical entertainments within the walls, and attendance on public amusements, are of so frequent occurrence, that they constitute the practice rather than form the occasional source of astonishment in this asylum. Indeed, to so great an extent does our superintendent endeavour to make his patients feel that they belong to the great community of mankind, and are only temporarily separated for their health's sake, that he encourages a great proportion to attend their religious duties on Sundays, in the places of worship in the city and neighbourhood; and induces all who can or will separate themselves from the asylum, to take their exercise in the surrounding country: whilst, to give encouragement to those who are inclined to be industrious, he employs all he can, *without* the walls, in various ways, and cultivates nearly twenty acres with the spade in the fields adjoining and belonging to the asylum, with scarcely any other check upon their escape beyond the good feeling subsisting between himself and them."

Intended as the following observations are by their author to point out the necessity for still further legislative regulations with regard to the general management of lunatics, they may also serve to evince the great local advantages which would accrue from the establishment of a well-appointed public institution in which individuals of *every class* might find an appropriate place of refuge when suffering from this most miserable of all human calamities. Clearly exemplifying the defective nature of existing arrangements for the care of the insane, and bearing closely upon some of the points which I have attempted to elucidate, I shall make no apology for here presenting them to your attention.

"NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A PHYSICIAN TO A COUNTY
LUNATIC ASYLUM."

"Great and fundamental are the errors respecting the care and charge of insane persons in this country."

"All lunatics ought to be under the special care and protection of the government, and for this end every department of the country should be provided with suitable accommodation for the reception of insane persons, to which place alone ought lunatics to be consigned, where, from circumstances, proper provision cannot be afforded by their own immediate friends. The impropriety and inhumanity of committing such parties to the care of the parochial authorities is but too evident. According to the existing poor-law little or no responsibility unfortunately attaches to the guardians of the poor, and the weak-minded pauper (under the plea of not being dangerous, and for a miserable economy,) is frequently consigned to the lunatic ward of an Union Workhouse, or farmed out to some needy neighbour at a few shillings per week. Generally speaking, all pauper lunatics have undergone their first *medicinal* treatment in a poor house, and are only forwarded to the county asylum (where there is one) after protracted courses of blistering, bleeding, purging, and cruel mechanical coercion have failed in their desired effects. Many of the reports issued by medical men attached to county asylums loudly complain of this system, and the amount of mortality in these establishments is materially increased by the deaths which frequently ensue among such patients shortly after admission.

"The law provides that lunatics and idiots who *are not dangerous* shall be fit inmates of a workhouse, but it does not define how the harmlessness of the patient is to be ascertained, or who shall be empowered to certify that he is *not dangerous*. Thousands are ready to bear witness that the village idiot is a very harmless creature, but stand aghast when he brandishes a fork, or hurls a stone among a crowd of children who have been subjecting him to every species of school-boy annoyance. Would this poor creature meet with more humane treatment at the hands of the ignorant inmates of a parish workhouse? Does not the very deprivation of reason, where the animal powers are vigorous, render all such parties more or less dangerous? Who, then, shall say that any insane or idiotic person, not absolutely fatuous or paralytic, is not dangerous?"

"Scanty and meagre as is the care taken of the insane in workhouses, yet it is far preferable to the system of farming out such patients. Under such a system atrocities of the blackest character are frequently committed, and the daily papers furnish innumerable instances of the remorseless cruelties to which they are not unfrequently subjected. Take, for example, a case reported in the *Times*, about twelve or fifteen months ago, of a pauper lunatic found strangled in a strait waistcoat, who had been farmed out at five shillings per week.

“ Besides the class of pauper lunatics, there are a vast number of insane persons in this county either with small incomes of their own, or who are just beyond the proscribed limits of pauperism, and whose friends are barely able to provide them with the necessaries of life. It is among these that in all probability the greatest amount of misery exists, and towards these the greatest cruelties are practised. The lunatic, with a small income of his own, is in the first instance, perhaps, readily taken charge of by some near relative, every show of humanity and kindness is exercised towards him, the family doctor is consulted, but in spite of ‘all that science can suggest,’ the patient exhibits no sign of improvement. Time wears on, and the doctor is dismissed. Physic is satisfactorily proved to be worthless, but not so the strait waistcoat; the muffs, straps, and leg locks, they are found to be valuable auxiliaries, and cannot be dispensed with. The patient now becomes a troublesome and irksome inmate of the house; he disturbs the whole family by his incessant noise; the noisome effluvia from his room pervades the dwelling throughout; grumbling and discontent are the order of the day; the ties of natural affection rapidly weaken; the madman becomes an object of disgust, and is, after many a device, consigned to an obscure corner of the cellar, there to amuse himself with the discordant music of his chains, and the wild chimeras of his disordered brain. He is now less and less visited by his natural protectors. He is abandoned to the tender mercies of a menial; his food becomes coarser as his treatment becomes harsher; his litter of straw is renewed once or twice a week; his body becomes diseased and covered with vermin; the sphacelations on his back are unattended to; the sores on his ancles and wrists, produced by the constant irritation of his manacles, are deep and extensive, not to allude to the contusions on his body occasionally produced by the barbarities of his attendant, and thus neglected and forgotten, his unmitigated sufferings are only relieved by death. It may be said that this is a very highly-drawn picture, but not more highly-drawn than true, as the statistics of perhaps every asylum in the kingdom can show. It not unfrequently happens that persons in the situation above described, when their funds are exhausted, have been removed to an asylum as paupers, and then it is such cruelties are brought to light.

“ How much more strongly do the above remarks apply to the insane who is wholly dependent on his friends,—who for a while, it may be during the life time of his Parents, is cared for with all decency and respect, but who afterwards must submit to the whim and caprice of those in authority over him. But presume the insanity not to be of a very violent or prominent character, even here the case is not materially improved. It is true, such an one may be fed and clothed at the expense of his friends; he may be permitted to go abroad at his pleasure, but there is no companion to accompany him, no hand to direct and teach him, and no attempt made to cultivate or improve his mind. He is exposed to all the provoking ribaldry of mischievous persons; he is not unfrequently brutalised by intoxication, at the instance of the designing and wicked; and in many instances, while instinct may prompt him to return at stated periods for his food, the Cow-shed or the woods are his only shelter for months in succession.

“ There is another class of insane persons, placed far beyond the reach of want, who in the absence of any commission “*de lunatico inquirendo*,” are permitted not only to exercise a full control over their own affairs, but without let or hindrance are allowed to go at large. Among these many are *most dangerous*, as witness the frightful disasters that are almost daily occurring; yet until some mischief actually does occur, the law takes no cognisance of such parties. Many a valuable life has thus fallen a sacrifice, and many more we may expect to record if some remedy be not speedily applied.”—*From the Lancet of April 16, 1842.*

The rest of the paper from which I have taken the foregoing somewhat lengthy extract, is chiefly taken up by suggestions as to the best methods for obviating the still existing imperfection in the arrangements for the care of the insane, and

among these I need, perhaps, scarcely mention that the writer strongly insists upon the universal establishment of County Asylums. Distinguished, I believe, alike for his talents and his enlightened and persevering efforts to ameliorate the condition of the insane in this country, he has thought it necessary to deprecate the mistrust of those who, unacquainted with such circumstances, may be apt to suppose that his description of the condition of many insane persons, when placed under the care of their own relatives, is over-charged; for widely scattered among the general population as such patients are, few persons, but those whose duties are connected with an enquiry of this nature, can have any opportunity of becoming acquainted with particular facts of the kind alluded to,—far less have any idea of the extent of the evils described. At the conclusion of the paper, the writer states that

“The licensed asylums throughout the kingdom are, upon the whole, very inferior establishments to county asylums. Although under a magisterial surveillance, it is often a painful and irksome duty to a high-minded man to spy into the management of a private house; and hence the duty is seldom performed excepting at stated periods, of which due notice is given, and of course every thing is then found in such admirable order, that there appears little room to find fault.”

Reverting for a moment to the facts stated at the beginning of this letter, with respect to the comparative mortality of the insane under different circumstances of management, and then turning altogether from that part of the subject which relates to the personal advantage of the patients, it will be necessary, I am aware, to devote some consideration to the means whereby such a provision as that which we are here contemplating may be carried into effect.

Empowered by the 9th George IV., chapter 40, to assess a special county rate for defraying the necessary cost of erecting and upholding such an edifice as may be deemed suitable for the purpose in question, the magistrates of any county are likewise authorised by the same act not only to treat with any one or more adjacent counties, with the view of obtaining their co-operation in this object; but, still further to facilitate the same, to borrow money upon mortgage of the rates, under conditions specified in the 13th, 14th, and 16th sections of the act in question.* With the magistrates, then, would appear to rest the question as to whether or not it may be expedient to carry a design of this kind into execution; and if the great

* Assigning to Cumberland two-thirds and to Westmorland one-third of the expense required, on a sufficiently liberal calculation, for the purchase of ground, and for the complete establishment and fitting up of an institution adapted for the reception of between 150 and 200 patients, the whole of the debt incurred would be liquidated by quarterly assessments of a *farthing* in the pound, in eight years, that is, in six years less than the time limited by the act.

and obvious advantages which would result from its establishment, are sacrificed in the mean time to some *supposed* difficulty with respect to the requisite amount of capital, or other unascertained circumstance, I trust, sir, that you and your colleagues on the bench within these counties, will not deem it inconsistent with your duty to inquire as to the precise extent of this impediment, if such should be found to exist.

I have had the pleasure of receiving communications from gentlemen whose experience in the treatment of insanity, and in every circumstance connected with the organisation of hospitals for the insane, entitles their observations on this subject to peculiar deference; and from these I am persuaded that any apprehensions on the score of expenditure are apt to be very much exaggerated, whilst the benefits which I have adverted to are entirely overlooked. At the time when this subject began first seriously to engage the attention of the legislature, the wants of the insane were comparatively little understood, and in many cases much needless expense was incurred in making what was supposed to be a requisite provision for them. At present, however, notwithstanding the great improvements which have taken place in the principles and method of treatment, I believe I may very safely assert that the cost for erecting a simple and substantial edifice suitable for the purpose in question, along with that of furnishing it with all the needful appliances, would not exceed, for any given number of patients, one half the sum that has been expended in some instances for a similar purpose. In reference to this part of the subject Mr. Tuke* informs me that "the cost of buildings for the insane has been exceedingly various, and the extravagant expense of some of them has, I believe," he says, "materially operated to deter some counties from the making of a suitable provision;" and from Dr. Hitch, of the Gloucester Asylum, I have also received information to the same effect.

With respect to the precise scale of such an establishment as would be required for the accommodation of the insane in these counties, I am not prepared to offer an opinion; but I think there can be no doubt that it would be conveniently available to even a greater number of lunatics belonging to the other classes of society, than that of the paupers who are already known to require such a provision. Mr. Tuke remarks—

* Author of the "Description of the Retreat near York."

"The union of Westmorland with Cumberland in the proposed establishment appears to me a judicious proposal, and I have no doubt that these counties would be found to supply such a number of patients as would allow of the best arrangements in regard to classification, and also of the greatest economy in the annual expenditure on account of them."

Alluding to pauper lunatics, he says—

"In regard to the cost of maintaining these patients, including clothing, medicine, and all kinds of attendance, I believe, from the experience of several establishments whose circumstances are not more favourable than yours would be, that you may fairly calculate the weekly expense, per head, at not more than 7s. 6d., perhaps less. In the well-conducted Scotch asylums the cost is materially less, owing, I apprehend, to the kind of food in use among the poor in general in Scotland, and therefore adopted at the asylums. The magistrates in making the provision for the pauper insane in England, which they are authorised to do, are also authorised to provide at the same time for those of a higher class. I infer from thy letter that this union appears to thee desirable, and I believe you would do a real service to the community, and benefit the parochial funds by taking in such as can just raise the cost price and had rather not be pauperized, and also a higher class who could afford from 12s. to 21s. per week. The Scotch asylums have derived great pecuniary advantage from this system. I refer to those of Glasgow, Dundee, Perth, and Aberdeen."

In the foregoing extract from Mr. Tuke's letter, the still higher rate of payment which might be afforded by the more opulent patients is not taken into account. In some institutions the charge for this class ranges from £2 2s. to £6 6s. per week; and after deducting their actual cost to the establishment, which, under a most liberal treatment, does not amount to more than 25s.,—the remainder, under the name of a "surplus payment," or "profit," is given to the fund for assisting the class who cannot pay, or can *only* pay, their expenses.

In his introduction, however, to the recent translation of Dr. Maximilian Jacobi's work, "*on the Construction and Management of Hospitals for the Insane*," Mr. Tuke says—

"I wish to call particular attention to the consideration, whether in the erection of County Asylums, the provision ought to embrace the Insane of all classes in regard to wealth, or those only who are chargeable to Parishes.

"As a question of strict political *duty*, the provision for those Patients who are dependent upon Parishes for their support, may be all that is actually required; but if a more extensive provision can be made without any pecuniary detriment to the district, and if the extension would confer a great benefit on other than insane Paupers, it deserves the serious consideration of Magistrates whether, though not bound by official duty, they are not called upon by considerations of humanity and the general good of society, to extend their beneficial guardianship to other classes of the Insane; and if it can be shown that such a proceeding would be attended with pecuniary benefit to the establishment, a strong argument would be afforded in support of it upon the ground of expediency, since the cost of the insane Poor is found a very heavy burden upon most Parishes.

"Certainly all that we have said against the provision for the Pauper insane in private Houses, applies to those who, though paid for by their friends, are yet placed on the lowest class. These are objects of the greatest commiseration; often do we see a family in what are termed respectable circumstances, reduced to all but Pauperism by the mental alienation of its head;

and it will hardly be doubted, that such an individual placed in a private institution, is, in general, in a far more deplorable situation, and is less likely to obtain suitable curative treatment, than he would be, if, as a Pauper, he were the object of a County Asylum. I do not speak with reference to the mismanagement of private Asylums, but of their imperfect adaptation to the wants of those who cannot pay pretty largely for board and attendance; indeed, the outlay required for the proper provision of this class, and the loss which would be sustained if the buildings ceased to be wanted for their original purpose, renders it improbable that private speculation will ever properly meet the wants of the public in this respect. Observation in the York Asylum, in which Patients of various classes in regard to property are received, convinces me that such an union of provision in one institution is in many respects advantageous. As there is no County Asylum for the North and East Ridings of Yorkshire, many of the Paupers in these districts are placed in this establishment; but I believe its service to the public has not been less, in having provided on moderate terms, and in a manner adapted to their condition, for the treatment of many Patients of a class above Paupers. The higher classes of Patients who can afford to pay from 12s. to 21s. per week, are of course a source of profit to the institution, and there have generally been so many in the house of this and a still higher class, as to cause the income from the Patients to exceed the expenditure on their account, notwithstanding the much larger number which has been constantly admitted at less than 8s. per week."

* * * * *

"Several of the County Asylums in England have made provision for the more wealthy, as well as for the Pauper class; and in the Asylums at Glasgow, Perth, Dundee, and Aberdeen, this plan has been adopted with great advantage to their funds, and also, I cannot doubt, with much benefit to the class of insane persons who can pay from 15s. to two or three Pounds a week for their care in these institutions."

In having thus endeavoured to point out the advantages which would result from the establishment of a well-appointed public asylum for the insane in this district, I trust I have said enough to obtain for the subject the attention which I conceive it merits; and I shall be amply gratified if the foregoing observations should tend in any manner to promote the accomplishment of so important a design.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Very faithfully,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD OLIVER.

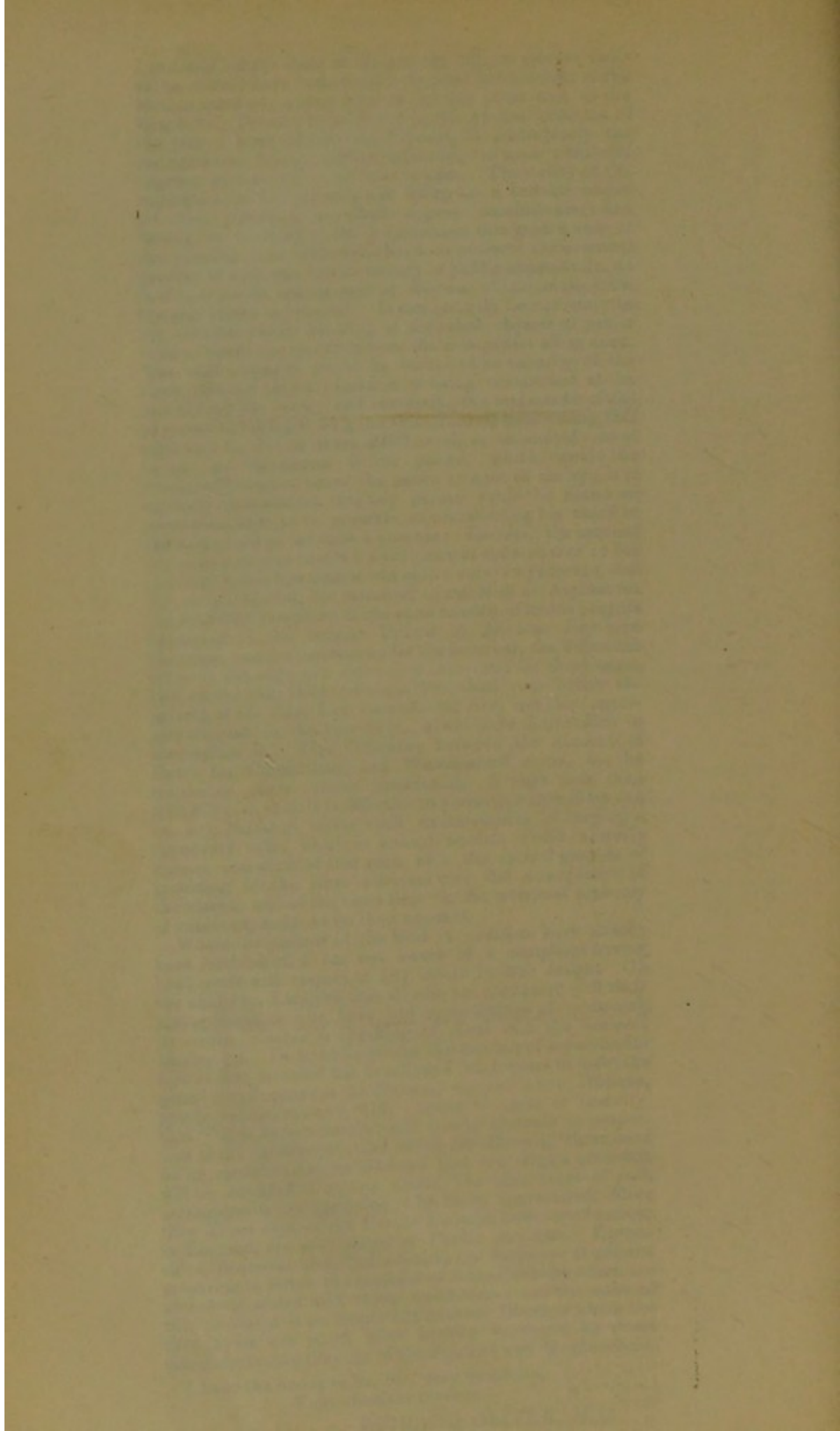
Carlisle, May 9, 1842.

TO EDWARD WILLIAMS HASELL, ESQ.,
*Chairman of the Quarter Sessions of Cumberland and
Westmoreland.*

SIR,—As the observations which I have had the honor of addressing to you, on the subject of a public provision for the Insane belonging to the Counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland, have been fully borne out by the facts to which I have had occasion to refer, the necessity for such a provision can no longer, I apprehend, be a matter of uncertainty; and having proceeded so far with the discussion of this subject, I shall avail myself of the present opportunity to examine what would appear to be the only conceivable ground upon which an objection to the measure which I have thus taken leave to suggest can possibly be founded.

I cannot of course pretend to foreshow what the decision of the magistrates may be when they shall have deliberately considered the facts which I have laid before them; and however strongly impressed with a conviction as to the great advantages which would accrue from the establishment of such an institution, and as to the facility with which this might be accomplished, I would particularly beg to deprecate the slightest intention of obtruding my own views upon this subject *in opposition* to any other conclusion which may possibly be arrived at by the Bench. I merely presume to draw the only inference which the facts of the case would appear to me to justify; and warranted by your own remark as to “the subject being a most proper one to be submitted to the consideration of the magistrates,” I trust that I am not now overstepping the limits of propriety in requesting the magistrates to consider it. Whilst the County Asylum Act reposes in their hands the *power* of erecting a suitable edifice for the reception and proper treatment of this most unfortunate class of sufferers, wherever such a provision is practicable, and its necessity can be clearly shown to exist, it would certainly appear to imply at the same time either a corresponding *duty* on the part of those who are thus authorised, or the existence of some most cogent reason for its pretermission. In presuming to make this observation, I must also request that you will not impute to me the slightest intention of expressing more than is perfectly consistent with a proper respect for the station and character of the Magistrates. Having power to regulate the County expenditure, and prudently directing its application to purposes of public utility alone, it is not to be supposed that a numerous body of gentlemen can long allow any *false* principle of economy to interfere with the exercise of so important a trust; and although comparatively little has hitherto been generally known with respect to the necessity for a *public* provision on account of the poorer class of insane persons, there can now be very little doubt that the recent acquisition of correct statistical information on this subject, by manifesting the impolicy of consigning this class to receptacles which are opened with the primary object of profiting by their infirmities, will speedily lead to its *general* establishment.

I can scarcely suppose it necessary to revert to any part of my former statements respecting such points of the subject as would appear to have the strongest claim upon the attention of the Magistrates; and knowing that the plain facts which I have endeavoured to present to their notice must have more weight with men of sound practical judgment, who are not insensible to the social wants of the district in which their intelligence no less than their station entitles them to influence and respect, I would carefully abstain from everything like an appeal to their feelings of commiseration. To induce them to adopt the suggestion which I have presumed to offer, I conceive that nothing more can be requisite than their serious consideration of the circumstances which I have attempted to lay before them; and if it had been possible to form an estimate of the indirect and less visible benefits which necessarily result from the establishment of such institutions, as much as it is easy to appreciate their direct and evident advantages,



TO EDWARD WILLIAMS HASELL, ESQ.,
*Chairman of the Quarter Sessions for Cumberland and
Westmorland.*

Sir—In returning you my best thanks for your polite attention to the suggestions which I have taken leave to offer, in reference to the expediency of establishing a Public Asylum for the Insane belonging to the Counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, I must avail myself of the opportunity of recapitulating a few of the more important points of the subject, in order that the supplementary observations I have here to make may be more readily understood, and that the necessity of forming a provision of the kind in question may be more correctly appreciated.

The result of inquiries into the condition of the Insane having shown that a great difference exists between the consequences which respectively ensue from various modes of management; that the average annual mortality, for instance, in certain private Asylums is 21 per cent., whilst in several Public Asylums it is not more than 7 per cent., and that the chances of recovery, moreover, bear something like an inverse relation to the rate of mortality; that the proportion of insane persons chargeable to their respective Parishes is about 1 in every 1000 of the entire population; that private or licensed Asylums afford a very inadequate provision for the reception and proper treatment of *poor* Lunatics; that in the absence of any public provision for the proper accommodation of such Patients, neglect and ill-treatment are much more common than is generally supposed, and occur in numerous instances where parties are far above the necessity of applying for parochial relief; it rests with the Magistrates, having the power to assess a Special County Rate for erecting a suitable edifice for the purpose in question, to decide, after obtaining every necessary information on the subject, whether the advantages which would result from the establishment of such an institution, can be fairly set off against the requisite amount of outlay.

The floating average of *Pauper* Lunatics in the different districts of the country, has been already pretty well ascertained; although that is presumed to be considerably understated. But with regard to the proportion of the Insane belonging to the other classes of society, there never have been, and probably never may be, any means of exactly determining the amount. Including Paupers, however, the aggregate of *all classes* has been estimated, with every appearance of probability, at 1 in 500 of the entire population. For the two Counties in question, this computation would give a gross return of 449, and taking this even at one half, we should still have a number considerably exceeding that which is considered to be most suitable in every respect for a single institution. Bearing in mind the circumstances which concur to prevent parties from sending their afflicted relatives to distant Asylums, and the inevitable ill-consequences of their detention either at home or in any other situation which is equally unprovided with the means of proper treatment, it would be difficult, in a district of this extent, to over-estimate the amount of misery which might be averted, by the establishment of an institution in which the wants of such patients would be properly provided for, and where every available means for their recovery would be constantly at hand. I do not think I can better illustrate this point, or more distinctly show the benefits which accrue from a prompt attention to cases of the kind in question, than by giving the following extracts from the last Report of the Pauper Lunatic Asylum at Wakefield:—

“An influential tradesman, in one of the large towns of the West Riding, met with embarrassments and losses in business, which induced a severe attack of Typhus fever, and subsequent insanity; he was placed in a private asylum, and speedily recovered. Previously, however, to his restoration, his wife, from excessive grief, became the subject of the same disease; his affairs in confusion, his large and helpless family without means of support, nothing remained but her being immediately sent by the parish officers to the asylum at Wakefield. For some time she continued under treatment, with every prospect of success, when her daughter, of the age of 18, was conveyed in a state of high maniacal excitement, brought on by “*excessive fretting*,” to be under the same roof with her unhappy mother. Disease in the daughter quickly yielded to the treatment adopted, and in a few months she returned home perfectly cured; but this accumulation of

and returned home to his family, but leaving his wife still in the Asylum. Shortly after, the eldest son, a fine young man, of the age of 21, who had been the prop of the family, borne down by a succession of domestic afflictions almost without parallel, wandered from home in a state of insanity, and after long search was found almost perished from cold and hunger in a stone quarry. In this deplorable state he was brought to the asylum, and continued for some months in a condition affording little hope of recovery; at length the means employed produced the desired effect, and it was not until near the time of his discharge, that his mother was made acquainted with his circumstances. She was herself shortly afterwards discharged cured, and years have now passed without any return of the malady; she speaks of the asylum as her second home, and though now a widow, she is surrounded by an affectionate and grateful family, who have been more fortunate than their unhappy parents, and who with her, afford an example even where strong hereditary tendency exists, and under circumstances the most unfavourable, of the benefit arising from speedy recourse to suitable treatment.

"A table inserted at the 24th page of this Report, will shew the impolicy of neglect, even taking the subject on the low point of mere pecuniary consideration; it is a table comparing the results of treatment in twenty recent cases, and twenty cases of long standing before admission into the asylum. It will at once be seen, that an early removal to this place, is an advantage not to be despised by those who have the care of parochial purses, without their incurring a just charge of dereliction of public duty. In twenty recent cases, (ten of each sex,) admitted within three months from the commencement of their disease, *the whole number were cured*, at an average cost, for each male, £7 16s. 9d.; for each female, £9 14s. 6d. In twenty *neglected* cases, (ten of each sex,) or those in whom the disease had existed for twelve months and upwards, *twelve died; two were cured*, and dismissed in the enjoyment of good health; *the other six remain in the asylum*. The average cost for the six males who died, (including the funeral expenses) was £31 7s. 11d.; for the one cured, £5 14s.; for the three still remaining a charge to their respective parishes, £105 12s. 4d. each. For the six females who died, the average cost was £32 17s. 2d., including funeral expenses; for the one cured, £14 6s.; for the three still remaining in the asylum, the parish officers have already paid on an average for each, no less a sum than £103 18s. 4d.! Reference may be made to the table alluded to, for the date of admission, &c., in these forty cases. There can be only one conclusion drawn from this statement. Humanity here teaches the overseers their duty, and, failing in that, the pecuniary consideration will perhaps prevail, the difference in the costs of the cases cited being so glaring as not to be misunderstood. An earnest appeal is once more made to the respective overseers for the exercise of their judgment, and diligent attention to this most important part of their duty. If even the matter of money be not a consideration with them, let them view seriously the results of treatment in these forty cases, and avail themselves of the great advantages to be derived from an early application, for the admission of their pauper lunatics into the asylum."

I would not, of course, presume to offer an opinion contrary to the matured convictions of those whose business it may be to determine any question that may be raised respecting the expediency of joining the two counties in a work of the kind referred to; but as the circumstances of their proximity, extent, population, and the presumable amount of their insane, would appear to favour the idea that they would jointly supply such a number of patients as might amply suffice to insure the attainment of every advantage in the way of proper classification and economical management, whilst there possibly might be some doubt that either of them could separately accomplish the same objects, I have thought it better to speak of their union for this purpose, than to propose any plan that might be liable to objection on a point so material.

With respect to the unsuitableness of private institutions for any but the higher class of patients, I believe that the observations contained in my former letter will be fully borne out by all who are in any degree conversant with this subject; and to afford you what may be fairly considered impartial testimony on this point, it may be sufficient, perhaps, to adduce the recommendation given by the VISITING COMMITTEE of the Gloucester Asylum in their last annual report, which I have previously had occasion to refer to:—

"The visitors, being powerfully impressed with the conviction, that the sole objects of this establishment are the *cure* of the patients, and the *kind treatment* of those who are incurable; and with the palpable fact ever before them, that the interests of the officers consist alone in these, whereby their responsibilities are diminished, their benevolent feelings and

more the taking this step in the *early stage*, when the disease has not been tampered with by inexperience, nor rendered hopeless by delay—for it is amongst the few regrets which the retrospect of past years affords, that the most painful cases have ever been those in which one or other of these misfortunes has befallen. *Whilst it is an acknowledged fact, that of those who are sent within two or three weeks of the commencement of the malady, nine-tenths are cured.*"

On this subject it would be an easy matter to adduce other evidence of not inferior importance, and not less so to bring forward proofs of the insufficiency of such accommodation as is provided for the poorer class of lunatics belonging to the district in question in the establishments to which they are usually consigned. In fact nothing can be more obvious than the impropriety of placing such patients in institutions which are necessarily unprovided with the most essential means for their proper management; and when I call your attention to the fact that, in the adjacent counties of Northumberland and Durham, the only accommodation to be met with is in licensed, or private Asylums, you will readily perceive that in these establishments, whatever may be the nature of their arrangements for the reception of affluent patients, it is next to impossible that there can be any thing like a suitable provision for the poor.

Even were there no other objection to the system of placing such patients in private houses, the very number of these houses (for there are five or six, I believe, in the neighbourhood of Newcastle) must preclude the possibility of their respectively affording the requisite completeness of arrangement, which is only attainable in institutions of a considerable size.

Whilst a very small proportion of the lunatic paupers belonging to Cumberland or Westmorland are placed in the admirable public asylum at Lancaster,—to say nothing of its inconvenient distance from the greater portion of the district in question, I am well assured that that institution has no room for more than its present number of inmates. And at Dumfries, where the previously existing accommodation was insufficient for the wants of that part of the country, and even where an almost unparalleled act of *private* munificence holds out a noble example of benevolent consideration for the necessities of the insane, it is not probable that any considerable number of poor patients can be received from distant places, whilst the extent of room for that class in the Crichton Institution is adapted for no more than 45; and whilst a preference is given to those from the counties of Dumfries and Wigtown, and from the stewartry of Kirkcudbright.

In estimating the necessity of making a public provision for the care and treatment of the insane, I believe that too much stress can scarcely be laid on the ignorance which prevails with regard to the nature of insanity, and on the cruel expedients which are resorted to, from this cause, in cases where patients are *separately* taken charge of either by their own relatives or others. The allusion to such cases, in my former letter, does not imply the mere incidental *possibility* of cruelty or neglect; but distinctly signifies the absolute *impossibility* of any other result, in all cases of maniacal disorder, where circumstances of the kind referred to, preclude the employment of any method that is not necessarily associated with the rudest physical restraint. Although it may be difficult to ascertain the number of these cases in any given district; yet that their occurrence is much more frequent than is generally imagined, and more especially in those parts of the country which are unprovided with proper institutions for their reception, the number of insane as compared with that of the general population, can scarcely leave room for a doubt. An example or two may furnish some notion of the grievous necessity that exists for establishing an institution, which, by inducing the public to confide in the excellence of its arrangements, might be the means of obviating a large but unsuspected amount of misery.

Many years ago, a respectable yeoman in this county became the subject of this melancholy affliction. Various means were had recourse to at home, under the mistaken notion, no doubt, of providing in the most humane and effectual manner for his proper treatment. Becoming offensive in his habits, he was no longer permitted

under the same roof with the rest of the family. I have heard that at one time he was placed in a private asylum; but for what reason he was removed from thence, I have not been able to ascertain. He is yet living, I understand, and still labouring under his malady, although I am not aware of the manner in which he is at present taken care of.

The subject of another case is the son of a farmer in one of the northern parishes of this county. He was lodged for some time in a private institution near Newcastle; but, owing to the limited circumstances of his friends, who were unable to maintain him longer there at their own expense, he was taken home. Being unfit to go at large, a shed which had been previously used for young cattle, and which was situated at the end of the dwelling house, was walled up on its open side, and connected with the house by a door broken from within. In this apartment, which is quite dark, and unprovided with any means of direct ventilation, he has been confined for many years.

Before concluding this Letter, I would beg to call your attention to the following passage from an important "Instructional Letter" recently addressed by the Poor Law Commissioners to Boards of Guardians:—

"From the express prohibition of the detention of dangerous persons of unsound mind in a workhouse, contained in the 45th section of the Poor Laws Amendment Act, coupled with the prevalent practice of keeping insane persons in workhouses, before the passing of the said Act, it may be inferred that persons of unsound mind, not being dangerous, may be legally kept in a workhouse. It must, however, be remembered, that with lunatics the first object ought to be their cure, by means of proper medical treatment. This can only be obtained in a well-regulated asylum; and therefore the detention of any curable lunatic in a workhouse is highly objectionable on the score both of humanity and economy. The commissioners, indeed, believe that most of the persons of unsound mind detained in workhouses, are incurable harmless idiots. But although the detention of persons of this description in a workhouse, does not appear to be liable to objection on the ground of illegality, or of defective medical treatment, they nevertheless think that the practice is often attended with serious inconveniences, and they are desirous of impressing upon the guardians the necessity of the utmost caution and vigilance in the management of any persons of this class who may be in the workhouse. At the same time the commissioners are aware that the imperfect manner in which the provisions of the County Asylum Act have been carried into effect, as well as the present state of the law in other respects, produces great difficulties in the treatment of the insane poor by the guardians."

That more vigilance is often required in the management of insane persons, when detained in Workhouses, than is usually bestowed upon them, there can be little doubt. As an example of this I may here refer to the case of a female belonging to the Wigton Union. She is not considered "dangerous," and is therefore regarded as a fit inmate of the Workhouse. Her mother resides in Carlisle, and has frequently had occasion to bring her before the Carlisle Board of Guardians, after she has escaped from the Workhouse, and found her way here. Each time she has been sent back to Wigton, and only last week she returned to Carlisle,—many days having elapsed from the period of her leaving the Workhouse, whilst she was rambling about the country in the mean time, lost to all sense of female decency, exposing herself, as I am informed by one of the Relieving Officers, to the lewd approaches of any brutal stranger she might fall in with, and passing the nights in woods and outhouses. Another poor creature, belonging, however, I believe, to some place in Scotland, may be daily seen wandering ragged and dirty in the streets of Carlisle, and who has borne at least one bastard since she became insane.

From the circumstances I have now mentioned, as well as from the facts referred to in my former Letter, I trust that the Magistrates of these Counties will deem this subject worthy of their serious consideration; and after forming a comprehensive estimate of its importance, that they will not be disposed to appreciate lightly the manifold benefits which the community would derive from such an institution, nor deem that a *perpetual* provision thus made for the wants of the most pitiable and helpless, would not be cheaply and conveniently purchased by the means which the Legislature has placed at their disposal.

TO EDWARD WILLIAMS HASELL, ESQ.,
*Chairman of the Quarter Sessions for the Counties of
 Cumberland and Westmoreland.*

Sir,—Having been indebted to the politeness of the Clerk of the Peace for permission to examine the Lunatic Returns ordered by the Magistrates at the last Quarter Sessions for Cumberland, I have taken the liberty to draw up a summary of the same, and to submit to your notice, and to that of the other Gentlemen in the Commission of the Peace within these Counties, the subjoined observations on this subject.

The Returns shew that at the present time there are 159 Insane Persons in the County of Cumberland chargeable to their respective Parishes; and that, exclusive of the costs of Removal and other incidental expenses, the sum requisite for their annual maintenance is £1,922 6s. 5d.

The following tabular view of their distribution, and of the cost incurred on account of them, under various forms of management, may possibly be found useful with regard to this part of the subject:—

UNIONS.	In Asylums.		In Workhouses.		Boarded with Friends.		Boarded out.		Totals.	
	No.	Ann. Cost £ s. d.	No.	Ann. Cost £ s. d.	No.	Ann. Cost £ s. d.	No.	Ann. Cost £ s. d.	No.	Ann. Cost £ s. d.
ALSTON	2	41 12 0	0	0 0 0	0	0 0 0	0	0 0 0	2	41 12 0
BOOTLE	1	19 10 0	7	31 17 0	0	0 0 0	0	0 0 0	8	51 7 0
BRAMPTON.....	3	65 0 0	8	41 12 0	2	10 8 0	0	0 0 0	13	117 0 0
CARLISLE	19	395 4 0	7	32 12 2	5	25 0 6	0	0 0 0	31	452 16 8
COCKERMOUTH.	8	153 8 0	7	50 1 0	4	29 18 0	0	0 0 0	19	233 7 0
LONGTOWN.....	2	41 12 0	0	0 0 0	4	20 16 0	0	0 0 0	6	62 8 0
PENRITH	4	83 4 0	9	51 3 9	8	71 10 0	5	102 1 0	26	307 18 9
WHITEHAVEN..	14	296 8 0	16	78 0 0	3	23 8 0	1	5 4 0	34	403 0 0
WIGTON	9	187 4 0	7	40 19 0	4	24 14 0	0	0 0 0	20	252 17 0
TOTALS ...	62	£1283 2 0	61	£326 4 11	30	£205 14 6	6	£107 5 0	159	£1922 6 5

The average weekly cost of maintenance is as follows:—
 In Asylums..... 8s. 0d. | With Friends..... 2s. 6d.
 In Workhouses..... 2s. 1d. | Boarded out..... 4s. 11d.

So far as appears from the returns, the average age of the whole number is about 40 years and six weeks.

	Years.	Months.	Weeks.
Of those boarded out.....	47	0	0
Boarded with friends.....	35	8	0
In Workhouses	39	0	6
In Asylums	38	9	0

With respect to the duration of their malady, about 60

under the disease for periods varying from 30 years to a few months.

The average length of time which those confined in Asylums have been affected is somewhat more than eight years, whilst the average period of their seclusion scarcely amounts to three years; and only five out of the 62 are returned as having been insane from birth.

As forcibly exemplifying one of the principal errors which were formerly attributable to the parochial management of the insane, I would particularly beg to direct your attention to this last statement. It will be unnecessary for me either to repeat what is universally admitted respecting the advantages derivable from an *early* recourse to suitable treatment in cases of insanity, or to insist, as a part of that treatment, upon the indispensable necessity of appropriate seclusion. The impolicy of delay, even in a pecuniary point of view, must be sufficiently evident when we look at the lost chances of recovery which are the almost inevitable consequences of such a system. The conversion of cases, which by a few months or weeks of proper care at the outset might in all probability be cured, into cases of irremediable insanity, and a permanent burden upon the parochial funds, is a circumstance of sufficient weight, I apprehend, when fully established by evidence of this nature, to claim the serious consideration of those who have the power to obviate, in a great measure, an evil of so much magnitude.

As it is impossible to ascertain their number, I shall not here advert to the amount of benefit which would accrue to patients of a higher situation in life from the establishment of a public Asylum in this part of the country. But after having examined the subject carefully, I cannot forbear expressing my conviction, that, both as regards the convenience of private individuals, and the economy of public expenditure on account of the insane, the establishment of such an institution would be productive of advantages which, either directly or indirectly, would amply repay its cost.

Whilst writing I have just been shown a pamphlet written by Mr. Wilkinson, the Proprietor of the Dunstan Lodge Asylum, entitled "A Reply to the Statements" contained in my former publications on this subject, in which he endeavours to vindicate his own establishment from what he is pleased to term the obloquy thrown upon licensed houses throughout the kingdom, and to call in question the authenticity of my assertions in reference to these institutions. I have had nothing whatever to urge against any private individual. My observations have been directed solely against the vicious principle of providing for the INSANE POOR in private institutions, when the Legislature has authorised another, and most certainly a less objectionable, mode of provision for them. I have insinuated nothing, but have stated every circumstance fairly and broadly, and have been scrupulously accurate in laying before you the facts which I have had occasion to refer to. As to the question of the expense requisite for the construction of an Asylum suitable for the reception of the Insane belonging to these two Counties, I have merely suggested the expediency of an inquiry. The *needless* cost that has been incurred on this account in any other place having nothing whatever to do with the matter, excepting inasmuch as it may serve as an example to be avoided. It is indeed on this very ground of a prudent but adequate outlay for building and equipment that the superior benefits resulting from public institutions for the reception of the poorer class of insane persons is founded. But lest any remarks of mine should give offence to parties interested in the management of private establishments for the reception of the insane, I shall take the liberty of laying before you the observations of a gentleman, whose cautious accuracy of expression, and whose opinions upon this, or perhaps any other point connected with the management of the insane, will scarcely be controverted even by Mr. Wilkinson. I allude to Mr. Tuke.

"Parliamentary inquiries," he says, "appear to have determined that, at least for the insane poor, a public provision, in every district of the country, is highly desirable. Still, however, a large portion of our pauper Lunatics are confined in private houses, where they are, of course, exposed to

that such an expenditure in proper buildings, in the enclosure of grounds for exercise, and in the provision of a sufficient number of competent attendants, should be made, as the circumstances of the disease render of the utmost importance. If all these things were provided in the manner most calculated to promote the recovery of the patients, it would not, I believe, be found that eight shillings a week, which is not the lowest price at which lunatic paupers are contracted for, would, *to say nothing of medical attention, cover the charges of board, bedding, and clothing, in addition to rent and wages. It must be remembered that the cost of Patients, as stated in the reports of four County Asylums, does not include the items of Rent and interest of Capital.*"

Alluding to the desirableness of an improved system of visitation for these institutions, the same writer observes— "If then the County and charitable hospitals for the insane require some additional check and stimulus, no one will plead for the exemption of private asylums. The state of these, especially as regards the provision in them for the really poor and less opulent classes, requires the closest attention. The appointment of visitors at the Quarter Sessions, to these places may afford a *little* check against abuse, and some facility for the investigation of complaints; but I do not hesitate to say, that it is a most imperfect and unsatisfactory system of visitation, and so I know it is felt and acknowledged to be, by some who act under the appointment." * * * "It may be said that a great improvement has taken place, during the last twenty years, in the treatment of the insane, and in the character of their asylums; and that, therefore, new legal provisions for them are not required. It must be remembered, however, that this gratifying improvement has taken place under very peculiar circumstances. The dreadful facts which were brought to light, in regard to the condition of many persons labouring under mental disorders, powerfully affected the public mind. Those who had the charge of the insane awoke as from a dream; a new life was infused into their establishments, and an altered standard of treatment came to be generally adopted." * * * "We have no doubt that a permanent advance has been made in the management of our asylums, but the old tendencies remain; the public interest has its ebbings as well as flowings, and the degree in which either public or legal vigilance is exerted at present, by no means supersedes the necessity of further supervision. With all the improvement that has taken place, there is still much to regret in the condition of many of our establishments for the insane. Although the dreadful doings of former times may not be going on, an idle, harsh, and selfish system is still far from being universally abandoned, and there are still places in which this unhappy class is confined, which do not afford the suitable means of recovery from their distressing malady."

Even more distinctly in another place he expresses his belief that private institutions "will never provide efficiently for the lower and middle classes;" whilst Dr. Jacobi affirms in yet stronger terms that public institutions are preferable in every point of view, *even for the rich*. Before complaining of the severity of my observations, it would have been as well if Mr. Wilkinson had perused those of the distinguished writer I here refer to.

"Does there exist," he says, "in private establishments a greater degree of humanity, mildness, cleanliness, and order? Is there a stricter surveillance exercised over the patients, or are they treated with a greater degree of individual attention. Do they enjoy more freedom, and are the results of treatment more favourable, &c.? Let the answer to all these questions be taken from the reports on private establishments, made to the official inquiry on this subject in England,—for in Germany, France, and other continental countries no such inquiry has hitherto been made,—and it will be found anything but satisfactory. But let the general constitution of human nature furnish an answer to the query, whether the advantages referred to, will more probably be found in establishments, where motives of self-interest have full scope for their indulgence, or in those where the utmost is done to control and restrict their operation."

statement as to the comparative per centage of Recoveries which have taken place in his establishment, (for "comparisons of this kind have been sometimes made, without due consideration of the peculiar circumstances of the institutions compared; and in a manner which has appeared to convey at least an indirect reflection where none was deserved."—Tuke)—or stopping to take up the double-edged argument which he has ventured to handle in reference to the alleged superiority of institutions remote from the homes of the insane; or correcting a misstatement which he has made, no doubt inadvertently, respecting the weekly charge for paupers in the Asylum at Gloucester; or imputing to him any wilfulness in his misconstruction of my former statements; or adverting further in any other way to a subject, the discussion of which appears to be so disagreeable to him, notwithstanding that he has been enabled thereby to put forth so favourable an account of his own flourishing establishment, which even in spite of his thrasonical style, I really believe to be one of the most respectable *of its class*; I would merely put the case *generally*, as a question of arithmetical proportion, and, assuming Mr. Tuke's estimate to be correct, would enquire—

If the means essentially necessary for the proper treatment of Pauper Lunatics, exclusive of the interest of sunk capital and of the profits derivable therefrom, require the weekly sum of 8s. per head; how much more *ought* they to require when these important items are taken into account?

I apprehend the answer must be—exactly the amount of those items divided by the average number of individuals under treatment.

I must not omit to mention the institutions among which the insane paupers belonging to this County are distributed, and the respective charges made for their maintenance. They are as follows:—

Dunston Lodge	8s. per week ...	42
Gatehelmsley	8s.	9
Newcastle... ..	9s.	3
Gateshead Fell	7s. 6d....	2
Bensham... ..	8s.	2
West Auckland	6s.	1
Dumfries (Crichton)	8s.	1
Lancaster	10s. 8d....	1
York	7s. 6d....	1

Besides the Returns from the different Unions in Cumberland, I have been favoured, through the kindness of Gentlemen connected with the administration of the Poor Law Unions in Westmorland, with information relative to the insane paupers belonging to that County. The whole number of these, it appears, is 59. 14 are confined in asylums, at an annual expense of £385 12s. 8d. £150 16s. 0d. is paid for the yearly maintenance of 23 who are kept in workhouses. £120 5s. 0d. is paid for 17 who are placed under the care of their own relatives. Three are living under the charge of strangers, at an annual cost of £18 8s. 4d.; and two are reported to be at large with the yearly allowance of £11 1s. 0d.;—altogether the sum paid for their maintenance being £686 3s. 0d.

For the two Counties, the total annual expenditure on account of the insane, (exclusive of the charges of removal and an item for clothing charged for nine patients confined in the asylum at Gate Helmsley) is £2,608 9s. 5d., and of this sum £1,668 14s. 8d. is paid for the maintenance of those confined in asylums. The number of these (62 and 14—76) exactly corresponds, you will perceive, with that which I formerly stated.

The length of this communication unavoidably precludes the possibility of adding what I had intended to say on the detailed arrangements requisite for effecting such a provision for the insane belonging to these Counties as we have been contemplating; and I am compelled to reserve my observations on this subject till a future period.

I am, Sir, with great respect,

Your obedient Servant.

RICHARD OLIVER, M.D

4th Letter.

TO EDWARD WILLIAMS HASELL, ESQ.,

*Chairman of the Quarter Sessions for the Counties of
Cumberland and Westmorland.*

Sir,—In again presuming to call your attention to the subject of a public provision for the care of the insane belonging to these Counties, I would at present prefer to abstain from offering any observations on the detailed arrangements requisite for carrying the purpose in question into execution; as the time for such observations will be more appropriate *after* that purpose shall have been finally settled.

I have hitherto endeavoured to point out the circumstances which would appear to render the establishment of such a provision necessary; and I need perhaps scarcely say that I have carefully refrained from giving any undue colour to the facts which I have submitted to your consideration. It is of course for yourself, and the other gentlemen in the Commission of the Peace within these counties, to determine whether these facts are of such a nature as to justify the design which I have taken leave to suggest; whilst it still remains for me to counteract or remove whatever erroneous impressions on this subject may have been made by the statements of another party. At all events I trust I am fairly entitled to request that you will suspend your decision upon this point, until the statements here alluded to shall be satisfactorily explained. You will do me the justice, too, to bear in mind, that my observations were not directed against any particular establishment; and that whatever offence the publication of my letters may have given to any individual interested in the management of a private receptacle for the insane poor, I can in no manner be held accountable for unwarrantably advancing the general charge of inefficiency against such establishments; as that charge had been fully substantiated by the result of investigations which I had previously referred to, and which Mr. Wilkinson himself has not attempted to call in question. It may be unnecessary to revert to this part of the subject; but the following extract from Dr. Conolly's *Work on Insanity*, is so much to the purpose, that I cannot forbear presenting it to your notice:—

“The care of Lunatics being generally lucrative, it has happily followed, that many respectable, well educated, and humane individuals have, in different parts of the country, devoted their time and their talents to their management. But there are many exceptions; the prospect of certain profit allures some capable of no feeling but a desire for wealth, and the most ignorant and uneducated men, or *women*, are, in some instances, the keepers of houses for the reception of Lunatics. The patients are transmitted, like stock in trade, from one member of a family to another, and from one generation to another; they come in youth to the father, they linger out their age with the son. An uniform system of restraint is enjoined, which saves all trouble; and a book of prescriptions is bequeathed as a substitute for the Physician or Apothecary.”

In vindicating his own establishment from the imputations supposed to be conveyed in my previous remarks, Mr. Wilkinson has chosen to appeal to a comparison between

the alleged results of treatment in his own Asylum, and those furnished by ten public institutions which he mentions. Were it possible to institute a just comparison between the experience of any one establishment, and that of others, with respect to the *successful* treatment of the Patients, without knowing their several proportions of curable to incurable cases admitted, as well as the various other circumstances which tend to disturb such a comparison of results: I mean such as the different rules by which they respectively regulate the admission or discharge of the Patients; the particular classes of persons for which they are severally provided; the different periods during which they have been in existence; their different practices in regard to the early or tardy discharge of Patients who have been successfully treated; and lastly, the variety which exists with respect to the application of terms;—were all these points of comparison fairly appreciable, I admit that nothing could be more fair than such a proceeding. But differing from each other in most of these essential circumstances, and particularly bearing in mind that public Asylums are for the most part devoted to the reception of pauper lunatics, whose previous treatment is more likely to have been detrimental to their general condition, and who are, or at least were, too frequently known to enter them in a state of emaciation and comparative exhaustion; the parallel between these institutions, and such as are intended also for the accommodation of a higher class of Patients, is certainly inadmissible. But setting these considerations aside for a moment, I shall take the ground which Mr. Wilkinson has chalked out, although certainly without pretending to understand the principle upon which he has arrived at a conclusion so satisfactory to himself.

He asserts that from the ten County Asylums above referred to, the returns made to Parliament in 1836, exhibit, during an average period nearly corresponding with that over which the statement of his own experience extends, an average annual per centage of 15.56 cures, and 9.06 deaths; and that any person taking the trouble of calculation will find this to be the case. He does not give us either the number or proportion of these cures and deaths in the several asylums, but he tells us that such is the average result. I have certainly not seen the parliamentary returns; but I know that Mr. Farr, in his statistics of insanity gives the particulars, and it there appears that the average proportion of cures to admissions was 40.2 per cent., and not 15.56, as Mr. Wilkinson alleges. Mr. Farr's calculation, it is true, includes some establishments which are not mentioned by Mr. Wilkinson, but these do not materially affect the average. Mr. Farr's statement, moreover, is perfectly intelligible and clear; and under such circumstances, it is for Mr. Wilkinson, and not for me, to account for a discrepancy so remarkable. But even the statement respecting the proportion of recoveries in Mr. Wilkinson's own asylum is hardly less extraordinary. He gives the annual per centage of these as 27.1, whilst the data he has furnished (175 cures out of 297 admissions) would unquestionably entitle him to state the proportion as 58.9. Now from any fair comparison of the figures, I believe it is totally impossible to deduce the result that he has arrived at; and after thus appearing to have alternately injured both sides of the comparison, I certainly think it is not an easy matter to repose much confidence in the accuracy of his computations.

But even granting, for the sake of argument, that the *proportions* have been fairly set down, we have still to enquire into a most material circumstance connected with

the principle upon which he has made out his tabular statement. In every other establishment of this nature, a considerable number of patients are removed by their friends, for various reasons, *not in a cured state*; but it would appear from Mr. Wilkinson's table, that every patient who has been removed from Dunston Lodge *alive*, since the period of its opening, eleven years ago, has been *actually cured*. I have no hesitation in saying that, if such be the fact, the experience of this Asylum is, in this respect, perfectly unexampled; and certainly ought not to have been passed over by Mr. Wilkinson without that special notice which its extreme singularity would unquestionably merit. As he has not thought proper, however, to assert positively that such is the case, we are fairly authorised, I apprehend, to inquire how far the gross amount of his recoveries may have been affected by the occurrence of such removals. The total number given under the head "Cured" is 175; under that of "Dead" 55;—and these two sums added together, and deducted from 297,—the total number admitted,—leave 67—which was probably the number in the Asylum at the end of the year 1841; for three months after this period, the Magistrates' Report states the number in the house to be 69. From these enumerations we are compelled to infer, then, either that no such removals as those above alluded to have taken place; or that the accuracy of the statement of recoveries has been vitiated by the omission of those deductions from their amount, which the occurrence of such removals must have rendered necessary.

Although Mr. Wilkinson has chosen to rest his case almost exclusively on the *supposed* practicability of a comparison between the proportion of Recoveries to admissions in his own establishment on the one hand, and in certain other institutions on the other, it is well known to all who are in the slightest degree familiar with the statistics of insanity, that any such estimate of the proportionate number of Recoveries in different institutions, is a most fallacious and uncertain criterion of their respective merits.

"The object which is sought in the comparison of statistical tables cannot be attained unless things similar are brought together; and this certainly is not done by the mere comparison of the aggregate results of various institutions, as regards the proportion of their recoveries to their admissions. We cannot, therefore, draw from such statements any fair conclusion in regard to the treatment."—Tuke.

The writer whom I have just quoted, and whose intimate knowledge of this subject, cannot possibly admit of dispute, further affirms that "*the statistics of mortality in our different institutions, admit of much more safe and certain comparison than that of the Recoveries, inasmuch as the event on which the comparison is founded is wholly unambiguous, and the peculiar circumstances affecting the general health of the Patients at the time of admission into the several establishments can be pretty easily ascertained*"—but he likewise states that "there can be no useful inference drawn from the mere comparison of their respective proportions of deaths, to the numbers *admitted* into them."
 * * * "The uncertainty which has hitherto so generally prevailed as to the actual rate of mortality in the insane, may be attributed partly to the calculation having nearly always been made upon this erroneous method;—that is, of a comparison between the number of deaths and the number of admissions. But "as is now well known, the mortality of any class of people is only correctly expressed by the

proportion of deaths out of a given population, or number living a given time: in other words, we have to ascertain the average mortality per cent. of those constantly living." —STATISTICS OF THE FRIENDS' RETREAT.

Now, upon which, or whether upon either, of these methods Mr. Wilkinson has proceeded, (and I am not aware of any other), it is really difficult to determine. He asserts that in his own Asylum there have been 297 admissions; and that out of these there have occurred 55 deaths; and he sets down the per centage of mortality as 9.2. If we assume the first mode,—that of comparing the number of deaths with the number of admissions—and inquire what number must be represented by 55 in the same proportion that 100 is represented by 297, we shall certainly find the answer to be at least double the amount set down by Mr. Wilkinson as the per centage of mortality in his own Asylum. If, on the other hand, we endeavour to form a probable estimate of the average number resident in his Asylum from the period of its commencement, (and although Mr. Wilkinson does not appear to have attempted this himself, yet there is a mode of effecting it which will give a close approximation to the truth,) and if we proceed upon this method as affording the only means of arriving at any thing like a fair ground of comparison with the average proportion of mortality in the public Asylums of this Country, we cannot make the mortality per cent. on the probable average number of Patients resident in Dunston Lodge, during the eleven years in question, to be less than 13.5. Now this per centage is above the Hanwell experience, but below that of Lancaster and the West Riding of York, and will, I believe, be very near that of the County Asylums in general during the eleven years to which the table in Mr. Wilkinson's pamphlet refers; and as Dunston Lodge is a mixed asylum,—that is, taking the middle and higher classes as well as the lower,—such a proportion of mortality can certainly afford no ground for asserting the *superiority* of its claims to confidence. In the Friends' Retreat the average annual mortality, as compared with the average number resident, during forty-four years, has been 4.70 per cent; in the Gloucester Asylum during nine and a half years, 7.19 per cent.; in the York Asylum for upwards of twenty-five years 7.35 per cent., and the Scotch Chartered Asylums also afford, upon the whole, very favourable grounds of comparison.

I am quite aware that the statements here made must appear exceedingly prolix and uninteresting to any but those who may take a special interest in the matter; but as the allegations brought forward by Mr. Wilkinson appear to me at least, to be totally incomprehensible without further explanation; I have thus ventured to trespass upon your attention, in order to point out those circumstances which may possibly tend to embarrass the fair consideration of the subject, and in the hope also of eliciting such information as may serve to dispel the obscurity in which that part of it which relates to Mr. Wilkinson's establishment is at present involved.

I have the honour to be, Sir, very faithfully,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD OLIVER, M.D.

Carlisle, December 29th, 1842.