

Memoir of Mr. Thomas Bakewell, keeper of Spring Vale Asylum, near Stone, Staffordshire.

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OR, COMPENDIUM OF

RELIGIOUS, MORAL, & PHILOSOPHICAL KNOWLEDGE.

MAY.]

"THE TORCH OF LITERATURE ILLUMINATES THE PATHS OF WISDOM."

[1826.]

MEMOIR OF MR. THOMAS BAKEWELL,
KEEPER OF SPRING VALE ASYLUM,
NEAR STONE, STAFFORDSHIRE.

(With a Portrait.)

THE biography of an individual who has rendered himself conspicuous in any department of life, is always interesting; and when talents of a superior order have been employed in the cause of humanity and virtue, the history of their application becomes instructive, by inciting to imitation. The records of fame will indeed be rendered more or less extensive, in proportion to the dimensions of the circles in which such characters move, but genuine worth is not to be estimated by circumstances that are purely adventitious.

The leaders of fleets and armies awaken public attention by the reports of the cannon they discharge; the divine gains the plaudits of his congregation by the eloquence of his discourses; and the public prints are ever ready to emblazon the mental energies which display their lustre in the senate and at the bar. But it is not to exalted station that the friends of humanity are confined. To many who fill more local spheres, private suffering is indebted for its alleviation, and he who wipes the tear of sorrow from the eye of distress, is a greater friend to his species than those whose names are inscribed on the pedestals of immortality in characters written with blood.

Among the miseries that afflict our common nature, though bodily pain may be severe, mental anguish is still more acute; and hence—

"Could human courts take vengeance on the mind,

Axes might rust, and racks and gibbets fall."

The unhappy maniac, terrified with the phantoms of his own imagination, endures the agonies of woe in all their accumulations of dreadful reality; and he that can administer relief, or even mitigate his pangs, deserves to be

placed among the friends and benefactors of mankind.

It is melancholy to reflect, that in such cases of deep affliction, interest should wish to perpetuate agonies that humanity would relieve. But this we fear is too frequently the case. The death or the insanity of one individual transfers his property to another, who, from pecuniary motives, privately aims to prevent a cure which he publicly professes to effect. Of this dishonourable and detestable feature in the human character, the following memoir will furnish many deplorable instances. The facts are derived from personal observation; and to the interested baseness of the human heart, some of our lunatic asylums are indebted for no small proportion of their permanent inmates. But these reflections must now give place to narrative.

Mr. THOMAS BAKEWELL was born at Kingstone, a village near Uttoxeter, Staffordshire, June the 1st, 1761. A considerable part of his infancy was spent in the moorlands of the same county, at the house of Mr. Chadwick, of Grindon, who was his grandfather by the mother's side, and who kept a private asylum for the insane. The only school education he received was under Mr. Richards, of Ashbourn, Derbyshire, to which place his grandfather had removed his establishment. But as Mr. Bakewell conceives that such portions of his life as do not relate to the disease of insanity, are in themselves unimportant, and unworthy the notice of the public, we shall confine our observations to these branches, and take the liberty of quoting the introduction to his lecture on the nature, causes, and cure of mental diseases, as delivered by him some years since at Liverpool. We shall resort to this expedient without reluctance, as it contains a narrative of the causes which led him to study the nature of this most dreadful of all human maladies, together with his

views of the disease, of the manner of treatment, and the means of cure.

"There is no earthly concern (he observes) of equal importance to that upon which I am going to address you; for great as is the blessing of bodily health, it bears no comparison with the value of mental health.

"That I may bespeak your kind attention, and your confidence, I beg leave to state, in as few words as possible, how I became possessed of that knowledge, and those feelings, which I now wish to impart to others.

"My grandfather, by the mother's side, was left at an early age with the charge of a beloved sister in a state of mental derangement. No pains or expenses were spared for her recovery. She was for twelve months at a madhouse in England, and afterwards at a celebrated madhouse in Scotland for another year, without any abatement of her disease. About this time my grandfather heard of an itinerant doctor, who professed to cure madness, and who, it is said, recovered all whose cause he undertook. He was a reputed conjuror, for as lunatics in those days were all thought to be demoniacs, it was believed they could only be cured by demoniacal agency. My grandfather, however, found him to be a very learned, and, as he thought, a very good man. Upon being introduced to his sister, he pronounced it a bad case, from the length of time the disease had been in the habit, but from the health of body, and youth of the patient, for she was then under nineteen years of age, not altogether hopeless. He was constant in his attendance, for full twelve months, before there was any material change. She, however, perfectly recovered; was afterwards married to the man of her early choice; lived thirty-six years in the married state, and many years a widow, and never had a relapse.

"In consequence of this event, a mutual feeling of friendship took place betwixt my grandfather and the old gentleman who had been the happy means of his sister's restoration. He became an inmate occasionally at my grandfather's during the remainder of his life; my grandfather became his pupil, and he took great pains to instruct him. The account he gave of himself was, that in his younger days he had been in regular practice as a

physician; that he had been visited by insanity, and upon his recovery had determined to make that disease his sole study and practice; that he had resolved to travel in search of patients; and that he had followed this course upwards of *fifty years*. Upon his death my grandfather opened his house for the reception of insane patients. Some of my most happy infant days were spent in this house, and in the company of the patients; and the earliest impressions that my memory retains, were occasioned by what I saw and heard there. I recollect cases of insanity as perfectly, to my thinking, as if they were but yesterday, although it is at least fifty-six years since.

"Mental diseases have been very interesting to me during the whole of my life; for when a youth I was about three years an assistant to my uncle, who had succeeded to his father in the profession of curing insanity. About thirty years ago, the same uncle sent for me, he being then on his death-bed, and made an earnest request that I would take charge of the few patients which a long sickness had left him, and that I would devote the remainder of my days entirely to the care and the cure of the insane, he of course giving me all the instruction in his power. He also exhorted me at the same time, in the most feeling manner, to adhere strictly to the path of honour and humanity, in all my conduct towards my patients; representing to me how much good I might live to do. Since that period I have never been without insane patients; and for about fourteen years I have kept a regular licensed asylum; and during that time, I have almost constantly, from morning till night, and not unfrequently from night till morning, been in the company of the insane. In some hundreds of cases I have attended to every shade, of every variety, of this disorder, with the most anxious wish to investigate its nature, and the best means of its cure. I have read, and thought, and written a great deal upon the subject, and what I have published has met with very respectable commendations.

"If the world had received the impressions I have received, it would not be thought wonderful that I should be zealous and confident in my pretensions as a reformer in the treat-

ment of insanity; for with my conviction, I could be no less. But it may be said, that if I have written and published upon the subject, why not be content with what is before the world? In answer to this I ask, who reads books upon insanity? No book could have been more strongly recommended by the reviewers than my "*Domestic Guide in cases of Insanity*" was, published fifteen years ago, and yet I will venture to assert, that not one in ten thousand of the good people of this land have ever read that book, or any book of the kind, so very repulsive is the subject. It is very different going in company to hear a lecture, and I have no doubt that more respectable people have heard my lecture in the course of a few weeks, than have read any of my publications in as many years."

It does not appear that at the time Mr. Bakewell wrote his first publication upon insanity, he had any thoughts of keeping an asylum. So far from it, he evidently wrote the book with a view of enabling families to manage and recover their own patients, without reference to any asylums; for these he considered as very badly regulated and conducted; and it was only from a conviction occasioned by experience, as he has often been heard to say, that it was impossible to do justice to the curative means whilst patients remained in their own families, and the necessity not only of removal from home, but of experienced treatment, that he undertook to establish an asylum himself; which he determined upon, in opposition to the wishes and advice of his best friends, as also quite in opposition to his own views of pecuniary interest. But the admonitions of his dying relative, and the idea that he could be of use to suffering humanity, prevailed over every other consideration, and he was not only determined upon establishing an asylum, but upon doing it in the best manner, as it regards the purposes of cure, both in situation and convenience of building, and in both he could not have been more happy. For the difficulties, vexations, and irritations he had to encounter, let him speak for himself.—

"Truly in my attempt to establish an hospital for the cure of insanity, I met with some hard rubs and mortifications. Had I only set up an insti-

tution for the keeping of the insane, they would no doubt have been less formidable; but firm principles and honest intentions may do much. I fancy that I have beheld an especial providence in favour of my determined principle of doing all in my power to cure insanity, even in the disappointments and mortifications I met with. Had my path been more easy, my exertions would no doubt have been less; but under all my drawbacks and vexations, I have been able to establish an institution for the best purposes of cure, and the best comforts of my inmates, such as my judgment and feelings fully approve.

"My pecuniary means being very unequal to my projects, a kind gentleman and his lady each gave me a hundred pounds, and I had afterwards another hundred from the same quarter, and a gentleman of the same family accommodated me with a still larger sum; but these, with what I could myself muster, were far short of my wants. I then took a partner, who represented himself as able to supply the necessary funds without inconvenience, and stated that his only object was to serve me. But I soon found that our feelings were not at all congenial. The first patient I had at Spring Vale recovered, and was discharged before I got a second. All parties were pleased at this, except my partner. He betrayed great anger upon the occasion, and was heard to say, 'Where the d—l in h—ll are the profits of keeping a madhouse to come from, if a madman is to be cured and sent away in six weeks?' In a very angry letter upon another subject, he offered to give up his partnership; this offer I most gladly accepted, and soon after entered into another partnership, one of the conditions of which were, 'As long as ye both shall live.' My new partner brought me the necessary funds, and was honest and humane; and was in a little time so well read in the treatment of mental diseases, that I could leave home under an assurance that, during my absence, the comforts and means of cure of the patients would be well attended to.

"In one thing she has been most excellent. Having heard me say that nothing contributed so much to the recovery of desponding cases as the society of young children, and that

my own usefulness in the case of a melancholy lady, had been much spoken of, before I could either walk or talk, she has provided me with plenty of young doctors and doctresses; and whether in music, dancing, or other school exercises, as well as in their infantile play, and even while requiring the help of the nurse, they have been always acceptable to numbers of the patients, and highly beneficial in their respective vocations. The last lady that was discharged, recovered, had been in a most deplorable state of maniacal despondency. She was several months in the house before she was seen to smile, and her first smiles were given to our infants; and I have no doubt of their having contributed to her recovery very much.

"The second patient gave promise of a longer residence at Spring Vale. He was an old gentleman in a confirmed state of the most elusive insanity. He was a person of landed property. His eldest son brought him, and in a very expressive manner said, 'Why, my poor father is never likely to recover.' I answered, that it certainly was not a hopeful case, but that it was a rule with me to use the best means in my power, in all cases, and leave the event to Providence. 'Well,' said he, 'I must make it a condition with you, that you write to me every fortnight, and inform me exactly how my poor father is.' To this I of course agreed. At the end of the first and second fortnights I wrote that he was much the same; at the end of the third I wrote that the nervous excitement had much abated, and with it the mental elusions had also subsided considerably, and that upon the whole he was better, and not unlikely to recover. Before I could have had a letter in answer, the young gentleman himself appeared with a chaise to take his father away, and place him in another asylum. Having occasion to write to me some time after, he informed me that he had placed his father in very experienced hands, and that he had been pronounced quite incurable; and no wonder that he should prove so, for I was afterwards informed that it was in a most wretched spot where he was placed, and where he ended his days after about ten years of close confinement and great suffering.

"My fourth patient was a case of delirium tremens, which, under judicious treatment, generally terminates in a few days. He was a sailor, who had been an outside passenger on a coach on his way from Portsmouth to Liverpool; the weather was extremely cold, with frost and snow, and a most piercing wind; he had drunk spirits, and had been two nights and days without sleep or rest. He was left by the coach near Stone, and found in a field, near the road, naked. On the third day he was able to give us his address in Liverpool, and on the fifth he went on his way rejoicing, in company with his wife; he gave me a pound note and his grateful thanks.

"As I have had three other coach cases, I will mention them here, though not in regular order. My second of this kind was also a Liverpool man. He was in a very deranged state. He returned recovered on the fourth day; but as he had lost all his money, he promised to send me a present, with many thanks for my kindness to him, and he actually sent me a fish worth about five shillings.

"My third coach case was a passenger on a Manchester coach. About four o'clock in the morning, in winter time, I was awoken by a loud knocking at the door, and going to the window, I saw a man upon his knees praying most devoutly. Convinced that he was insane, I went down and invited him into the house. As might be expected, he was calm and rational for a time, and he gave me the following account of himself:—'My name is ——. I live at Newport, in Shropshire. I have been at Macclesfield to attend my father in his last illness and death. We have had disputes in the family. I have drunk spirits, and my relations said that I was mad; but blessed be the Lord, I am now wise, which I never was before. I took the coach at Monksheath; but as I came along, a voice came to me and bid me go forth and preach the Gospel of Jesus; so I got off, to pray for the souls of the poor people in the village below.' Who, I asked, directed you up hither? 'Why, the Lord Jesus to be sure,' was his answer. What, do you profess to be a methodist, I said? 'No,' he replied, 'I never heard a methodist sermon in my life; I am not even acquainted with a methodist;

but I mean to join that holy people this very day,—I shall find some of the preachers at Stone. By the power of the Lord Jesus assisting me, I can do any thing; I can strike my arm through that fire, and I can strike my arm through your body.' In about two minutes after this, his arms were properly secured in a strait waistcoat, he offering no resistance to its being put on, assuring us that the Lord Jesus would at any time break his bonds asunder. Finding himself, however, fast, he again became calm, and on the fourth day was quite recovered; but with his recovery he lost all notions of religion, and even of common honesty; for, though he had plenty of money in his pocket, he refused to pay me any thing; and I was afterwards told that I might think myself well off that he did not bring an action against me for false imprisonment.

"The other case was a passenger left at Newcastle. For several days he rambled about in the neighbourhood, most of the time followed by an unfeeling rabble, who stole his money, tore his clothes to pieces, threw him into the water, and abused him most shamefully. He was at last rescued by the humane Mr. Preston, overseer of Stoke parish, who put him under my care. He was in a most shocking state, and it was five months before we could obtain from him any knowledge of who he was, or where he came from. He, however, recovered perfectly, and was a polite well educated gentleman. He was on his way from Dublin to London when attacked; and, on application, he recovered his trunk, and got plenty of money from his friends; but in this instance I did not receive a sixpence from my patient, or any acknowledgment from his friends. I was paid fourteen shillings per week by the county, and it was the last I received from that quarter, the County Asylum Law providing that all vagrant lunatics shall be sent to the County Asylum, as well as all pauper lunatics. Before this institution came into use, I cured numbers of paupers, by whom I lost money, my expenses in wear and tear, and food, and medicine, being more than the amount of my bill. I recovered fifty pauper lunatics for something under six hundred pounds, which is less than twelve pounds each,

on the average, for cure, and keeping while under process of cure. These things would not be worth the recital, but to shew what keepers of private asylums may expect who do their best to cure the disease.

"When I had got about five patients, a carriage, one day, drawn by four gay horses, drove up to the house, and out of it came a young gentleman, and, as it appeared, his medical friend. They told me they had with them a gentleman whom they wished to put under my care; that they should pay liberally, and something was said of the improbability of recovery. In this instance I was foolish enough to say that I always used the best means of recovery in my power. Immediately the two were engaged in a long whispering, and at the end of it they told me they had changed their minds, and they drove away furiously. I have been since informed, that the lunatic, if he were one, was placed in a house that is celebrated for the high charges made, and for very safe, that is, very close confinement in it.

"Soon after this, I was called up betwixt three and four o'clock in the morning, to go a few miles to a person that was said to be violently mad. I found him bound hands and feet with strong cart ropes; from these I immediately released him, had him shaved and washed, and clean linen put on; after which we took a long walk, to see his farm and his stock upon it, and his grand schemes of improvement upon which he had been busy. On our return we breakfasted comfortably with the family. His brother was delighted, hoped I would take charge of him till quite well, and the terms fixed upon were, one guinea entrance and two guineas per week. Of his recovery there could be no doubt; for I could refer them to a neighbour, who, though much worse, had a short time before returned from Spring Vale perfectly recovered.—Scarcely had these arrangements been made, when, behold, a gentleman arrived, who appeared to take full command of the whole family, and who it was said managed all their money affairs. He objected to my having the patient, saying, that being so near, it would occasion great notoriety. He afterwards applied to the keeper of an asylum more distant, who, upon

hearing the case, ridiculed the idea of recovery, said that there was a real mental aberration, that all which could be expected in such a case, was, to make the patient comfortable, and keep him from doing injury to himself or others; his charge was five guineas entrance, and three guineas per week. He of course got the patient.

"I had a young gentleman of considerable property under my care, very likely for perfect recovery, but that recovery was evidently retarded by the frequent visits of his brothers, though I repeatedly told them that these interviews irritated him, made him a great deal worse—nay, absolutely would, I thought, prevent his recovery, if persisted in. After some time I heard that the brothers had got a large part of my patient's property in their possession; indeed, he told me so himself, and requested my friendship. Upon this I wrote to the brothers, and informed them there could be no doubt of his recovery, if proper treatment were continued. The very day my letter would have reached them, one of these worthy brothers appeared, late in the evening, with a chaise to take him away. He said the family were not satisfied with his remaining with me, but that they wished to put him under a person of much longer experience than mine. My patient would not go unless I ordered him away, which I refused to do; and after a great deal of persuasion and cavilling, he was obliged to leave him. Application was then made to the visiting magistrates, to obtain an order for me to send him away. This they had no authority to do, and they strongly advised that the patient should remain where he was till recovered. After this they made an attempt at intimidation. The two brothers came with two chaises, and four other men, one of them a magistrate. I gave them full permission to use the arts of persuasion with my patient, told him he was at full liberty to go, but that I would neither bid him go, nor would I suffer him to be dragged away by force. After about two hours spent in alternately trying to prevail upon him to go, and to frighten me into their measures, they had to go without him, I having too made the magistrate my friend. After this they applied to a great law character who could consistently with

his profession receive his fee, and as a magistrate had the first power in the county. He sent me word by the magistrate I had made my friend, that if I did not send my patient away, he would ruin both me and my family; and the magistrate kindly brought the message himself, that he might prevail upon me not to resist. His arguments were, 'You have a large family; these wicked people will go any lengths; and they have, by your account, ten thousand pounds in their possession of your unfortunate patient's; but send him away, and have done with it; the guilt rest upon their heads; you will be ruined if you do not send him away.' This I did most reluctantly. My patient was all but recovered; another month, and he would have been quite well. Indeed I thought, the day before he left, I might have taken a safe oath that he was sufficiently recovered to take upon him the management of his own affairs; but then I well knew the irritation he would meet with would cause him to relapse, and therefore it would not serve him if I did. Most unfortunately I had said in a conversation with one of these brothers, 'Such is the state of your brother's mind and body, that, put him under some low vulgar fellow as a keeper, and give him a little strong ale every day, and he will never recover; the one will irritate his pride, and the other his nervous system, and the two causes united will for ever prevent recovery.' It is hardly necessary to say that he has ever since been kept in this state, being about ten years, with all the success expected.

"The stoutest contest I ever had in my profession was about a female who bore the title of lady. She was put under my care after a paroxysm of extreme violence. I found her bound hands and feet with strong ropes. Though I never had occasion to use coercive measures, yet I found her in a deplorable state of mental disease; and judging from the symptoms, and the history of the case which I received, I concluded that there was a great degree of mental imbecility, and that she must always have been little better than an idiot; and while I gave this as my opinion, I was treated as every thing that was respectable and good by her previous guardians. But my opinion changed;

a strict medical and moral treatment produced a wonderful improvement. The lady appeared before us a well-bred female, capable of rational and pleasing conversation. I announced the change with the greatest pleasure, but in answer I received the most abusive insulting letter I ever received in the whole course of my life. I was astonished beyond measure; I thought the party must be mad; but I soon found that it was not madness, but wickedness, which dictated the answer. I appealed to the lady's nearest relation, a brother, and by him was made fully acquainted with the treatment his truly virtuous, amiable, and highly accomplished sister had met with, before being put under my care. It was soon determined to remove her from Spring Vale, and place her in a receptacle for incurable female lunatics. Her brother opposed it; the lady herself opposed it. A party came for her, but were obliged to return without her. Letters of abuse and gross falsehood were written upon the occasion, sufficient to fill a moderate sized volume; and I was for a time under a great temptation to publish them, by way of exposure. But at last, as might be expected, the party opposed to me and her ladyship prevailed by mere dint of falsehood, and she was taken away. Never can I forget her last words to me; they were, 'May the Almighty for ever bless you, and all your family; I shall always remember your kindness to me with feelings of gratitude, and never forget you in my prayers.' She was put into a situation the most calculated to produce a relapse, and she did relapse; and after a few years of dreadful mental perturbation, death came to her relief, while in the prime of life.

"The two last cases made me too notorious to be troubled with any more inmates whose friends did not wish for recovery, and on this score I have been at rest ever since. Previously I had a number of them, and of cases where the recovery, not being expected, was the cause of the most malignant feelings in those who were expected to rejoice at the event. I have been insulted by a mother on the recovery of her son from a most deplorable state of mental disorder; she having placed him under my care to quiet the clamours of her neigh-

bours, who threatened her with personal violence if she did not procure some means of recovery for him, she being known to have got his property in her possession by unfair means. I have been grossly insulted by a wife for having cured her husband, a thing she did not calculate upon. But these cases are no longer brought to me. I have, however, had plenty of other causes of vexation from the want of proper feeling in the nearest relatives, those feelings having sometimes been caused or aggravated by the temper and habits of the patients previous to the mental disease being visible. I have been severely censured by a father for not treating his son with more severity, repeatedly telling me that if I would give him a right good beating, often, he was sure it would do him more good than any thing else. I have had the same urged upon me by a husband in the treatment of his wife; and because I would not degrade myself by this practice, I have lost patients that I had no doubt would have recovered under kind treatment, had they been permitted to remain long enough, and who never did recover under any other. I have been insulted and abused for not curing a patient in a month, whose case at least required six; but then it was said that I had cured one in a month, and if I cured one in a month, I might cure another; and not only the impatience and want of confidence, but the relations or pretended friends of the patients teasing them with frequent visits, and talking on family affairs, have caused fresh irritation, and even prevented, I am confident, recovery, in several instances; and yet to all this I must submit, as well as to the being suspected of keeping those who were not insane. It is now the case with a patient as unfit for liberty as any at Spring Vale, and few cases of mental derangement have acquired so much notoriety as her's did previous to being brought hither; but she tells the people that she is not insane, and never was insane, and she obtains credit with some who are ignorant as to what insanity is, and no doubt they tell it to others.

"My feelings were the most wounded, and my pity the most excited, by a lady being taken away by force from Spring Vale, to be put upon a charity, by which eleven shillings per

week were saved to a relation, who possessed a clear income of at least eleven pounds per week, without any family but his wife. The lady, for such she was in manners and education, was extremely visionary; but she had taken a great fancy to Spring Vale, said she was a princess, and that it was her favourite palace; that my children were her grandchildren, the swans which she fed daily were a king and queen in disguise, &c. When the people came to take her away, she was in a dreadful state of agitation, and declared most vehemently that nothing on earth should force her away; and in stating her objection, she discovered a strange mixture of sanity and insanity, repeating, 'If I am not well enough to return to my own family, where I wish to go, let me stop where I am happy amongst my own people, and my dear little princes and princesses.' I really durst not force her into the chaise, which waited a long time for her, while I did all in my power to persuade her to go. I therefore requested that she might remain a few days longer, and I promised to do all in my power to reconcile her to leaving. But the next day the same party came at full drive, and with it the relation before alluded to. He treated me with most insulting language, and finding that it would be impossible longer to keep down my rising anger, I contented myself with giving him permission to break open the door of the room, where the poor creature had locked herself in, and left the house. On my return, she was gone, and the females were all weeping most bitterly. They declared that her entreaties and prayers upon her knees, and after those, her execrations upon them if they forced her away, were more terrific than any thing they had ever heard before; and the female keeper who came for her said, 'Well, I have been a keeper these sixteen years, and I never was witness to such a heart-cutting scene before.' The gentleman had the assurance to leave a threat that he would complain of my conduct to the visiting magistrates. Had this been a case likely for recovery, I would have made an offer to have kept her for nothing, for a trial of cure; but of that I had no hopes, and had some time before expressed a wish that she might be

taken home, under the impression that I could not remove her mental complaint; and I did expect that she would in a little time be reconciled to her new situation; but I was informed she never was, that she led a life of great misery for some time, and died *suddenly*. I think it a little singular, that though this transaction took place many years ago, yet I have never seen the gentleman alluded to since.

"I once had a scene as cruel in the intention as the above, by two sons against their father; but in that instance I did lose my temper, made the sons glad to quit the spot, and kept my patient till he recovered. Hence, if I have had in my practice many vexations, and met with many disappointments, I have also had my pleasures and consolations. I have often seen the tears of gratitude flow, and heard the blessings and prayers for me and mine, of those who have perfectly recovered at Spring Vale from a sore malady.

(To be concluded in our next.)

APHORISMS FROM THE WRITINGS OF
THE REV. ROBERT HALL.

(Continued from col. 396.)

117. THE advocate of necessity and the champion of liberty will, in the same state of moral proficiency, act precisely the same part in similar circumstances.

118. He who consults impartially the dictates of conscience, confirmed and enlightened by revelation, will seldom feel himself embarrassed with respect either to the nature or the order of his duties.

119. As it is seldom safe for an accountable creature in his most elevated moments to lose sight of those motives which are founded on eternal prospects and interests; so least of all can they be dispensed with in the season of successful temptation.

120. The sense of an ever-present Ruler, of an avenging Judge, is of the most awful and indispensable necessity; as it is that alone which impresses on all crimes the character of *folly*, and shews that duty and interest in every instance coincide.

121. Rewards and punishments, awarded by omnipotent power, afford a palpable and pressing motive, which can never be neglected without re-

MEMOIR OF MR. THOMAS BAKEWELL.

(Concluded from col. 416.)

"ON first being established at Spring Vale, I was well assured that the pauper lunatics were grossly neglected by their respective parishes, and as there was then no law to enforce better treatment but by a reference to the County Asylum Law, and knowing that Mr. Proud, of Bilston, and myself, had accommodations for all the purposes of curing all cases that might be deemed curable, a person waited upon the chief magistrate, to make a proposal that these two private asylums should be adopted by the magistrates as county asylums. The answer was short,—'the magistrates will have an asylum of their own.' If the proposal had been acceded to, I calculated that seven hundred pounds a year would have covered all the expenses of providing the best means of cure for all the curable cases, and under which the evil of insanity must, as I believed, have very much decreased in the county. Since that time, more than seven *thousand* pounds a year have been expended upon the insane, and the evil of insanity has very much increased in the county. The purity of the motives of the magistrates could not be doubted, but the plain fact was, they undertook a thing they did not understand, and ignorance is often the parent of confidence; they did not suppose they wanted any instructions. When I heard for certain that a County Asylum was determined on, and that the magistrates had only to fix upon the situation and plan of the building, matters of no little importance, I felt a desire to give my opinion upon them, and went to Stafford for the purpose. The answer I received was, that the magistrates had made up their minds, and had no opinion to ask; and it may be fairly concluded that no opinion on either was asked, for a worse situation for the purpose could not have been found, or a worse plan of a building been fixed upon.

"Some time after this, I was examined by a 'Select Committee of the House of Commons, on Mad-houses.' Questions were put to me upon the intended County Asylum at Stafford, and I gave my free opinion. Soon after, the magistrate before alluded to questioned me upon my

examination. I repeated what I had said, and my reasons for it; he turned away in anger, and no change was made, though it was not then too late for any alteration that might have been thought proper. Some two years or more after this, being in company with the same magistrate, he turned to me, and said, 'Well, Mr. Bakewell, our institution is nearly ready for the reception of patients, and we feel ourselves out at sea; we expect you to take the superintendence of it.' 'Indeed,' I answered, 'I will not. I will have nothing at all to do with it. You have managed it your own way hitherto, and you shall manage it your own way on, for me.' He turned from me in great anger, and never spoke to me after. But in a few days I had a request made to me, in the names of two lords and their ladies, and a magistrate whom I highly respected, that I would take upon me the superintendence of the County Asylum, and they should feel themselves obliged by my doing so. Out of great respect to the party, I then gave in a proposal in writing, and I was informed that my proposal met their entire approbation, but that the power of accepting it did not rest with them. My proposal was, that the interests of Spring Vale and the County Asylum should be united; that the former should be the receiving house for all cases of insanity considered as curable; that none should be kept there deemed as incurable; that they should be kept at the County Asylum, which should be regulated upon the least possible expense that could be consistent with the comforts of the inmates. In this proposal I certainly did not consult my own pecuniary interests. I only considered what might produce the greatest possible good in a matter highly important to suffering humanity. Had it been accepted, a largesum of money might have been saved to the county, and the number of incurable lunatics chargeable upon their respective parishes within the county would, no doubt, have been less by at least one hundred and twenty, a matter of great consequence to the present as well as to succeeding generations; for in no case are the evils of hereditary disease so great as in those of insanity.

"I would by no means wish to cast any imputations upon the managers

or servants of the institution, of whom I know nothing that is at all censurable; the fault is in the law, and the system it has introduced, by which the number of incurables will be much larger in every county where it has been acted upon, than it was previously; that is, a less proportion have, no question, recovered, than would have recovered if no such law had ever been promulgated. The simple short law of Lord Eldon was, the law to do good without mixture of injury; that is, a law to compel overseers of parishes to procure means of recovery for all pauper lunatics, leaving it to the judgment of the magistrates as to where the patient should be sent for the best means of recovery, except in counties having a public asylum, these taking away the option; so that the County Asylum Law completely counteracts the good effects of Lord Eldon's Law, one object of which, no doubt, was, to create a competition in the cure of insanity; while the County Asylum Law puts down all competition as it refers to the most numerous classes of society, and as a monopoly it may be furnishing the very worst system of cure, in place of the very best. I have no cause for complaint against the County Asylum as it regards my pecuniary interests, I have certainly done better in that respect since its establishment than I ever did before, or ever should have done if it had not been established; for, if it had not, I should have made it a point of conscience to have taken paupers for the purposes of cure, and by them I could not expect to get money, while they would have been a continual bar to my having more profitable patients. But I have, as I believe, been prevented by it the curing at least a hundred of my fellow-creatures, who have not been cured elsewhere.

"I wish to state nothing of our County Asylum but what I gather from the published reports of that large institution. I will give full credit to the statement in the sixth annual report, that sixty-eight pauper lunatics have been 'removed from it by overseers, being harmless and incurable.' I will give full credit to the statement of sixty-seven patients having died in the Asylum; and I can give full credit to the statement of ninety-six remaining in the house

as incurable; but I cannot give credit to the statement that two hundred and thirty-seven have been dismissed recovered. I do not believe that one fourth of that number are now in a state of sanity, who have been inmates of that house. It is well known that great numbers have been admitted, and dismissed as recovered during the first lucid interval, readmitted in a short time, and now swell the lists of the dead or incurables. I knew thirteen, who, in the course of a few months, were 'dismissed as recovered,' and twelve of them were actually no better on their return home, but much worse as it regarded the chances of ultimate recovery, and the other relapsed in a short time, and is now in confinement. I have seen several who have been twice dismissed as recovered in the course of a few weeks, and were still insane. I had some time ago an application for a patient who had been three times 'dismissed recovered' in the course of a few months; and the applicants said that in all these instances he was found to be no better on his return home.

"As the marks of recovery are very deceptive, this must be the case in some degree in all asylums, but it is the very great number of these cases that I speak to, and fully accounting for the prodigious number of admissions stated, (five hundred and ninety-nine,) supposing only four hundred of these were pauper lunatics belonging to the county of Stafford, and that is less than the proportion, it would be twice the number that have really occurred as fresh cases, as I firmly believe. I would not state these things for the information of the county of Stafford, but for the better information of those counties which have not a public asylum, and have one in contemplation. As for Staffordshire, the die is cast, the county asylum, as a public measure, must be supported, and, in spite of all that any one can say or do, there is scarcely a magistrate or other leading person in the county but what would recommend it in preference to any private asylum in the kingdom.

"In the acrimonious and personal paper war which took place betwixt me and some of those attached to the County Asylum, I was not the first aggressor; and if I had the advan-

tage, which I must presume I had, it was simple truth and common sense which gave it to me. For is it not obvious, that a large prison, in which a large proportion of the inmates are incurable pauper lunatics, criminal lunatics, or dangerous idiots, cannot be eligible for the purposes of curing nervous or mental diseases? I would not set such an institution in competition with a well-regulated private asylum; I would only have it placed in competition with no asylum at all; and I firmly believe that if there were not an asylum in the whole kingdom, either public or private, that the insane would recover in a larger proportion than they do of pauper lunatics in counties that have public asylums."

So far as we have quoted the words of Mr. Bakewell, it may be supposed, that nothing has been said but what is certainly in his own favour. We are not however to presume that he has always been infallible in his reasonings, or immaculate in his resolutions; and admitting what he has from time to time advanced on the nature, cause, and cure of mental diseases to be quite correct and highly important, yet it may be questioned whether he has not injured his own cause by the confident manner he has frequently urged it; and if his system of treatment be of so much consequence, it might have been well if he had accepted the situation of superintendant to the County Asylum upon the terms of the other party; and have introduced those changes he wished for by degrees, and as he obtained the confidence of the highly respected managers of it. But it was his foible to be too tenacious of his resolution; and his pride in asserting that his resolutions, once made, are like the laws of the Medes and Persians, they change not. This may do very well for the keeper of a mad-house, but in the relative affairs of life it may lead to irreparable errors. It must be admitted that he has many times struck on this rock, though in his own house, and the management of his inmates, a steady firmness of mind may have been highly useful.

Mr. Bakewell has often been heard to say, that for years after he kept an asylum, he was fretful and uneasy, under the idea that he did not understand the theory of the disease he

undertook to cure, and that he could not obtain any satisfactory information from books upon the subject; but by analyzing the human mind in the most simple manner possible, he felt himself at once relieved. By making a distinction betwixt the involuntary action of thought, and the exercise of the acquired knowledge, the whole phenomena of the disease may be explained, the disease being in the involuntary thoughts or imaginations, while the reasoning powers are not diseased, or destroyed, or injured, but only suspended so long as the erroneous or visionary idea or mental feeling remains. But this he had explained himself, as it has often been said, very clearly.

Mr. Bakewell has been a writer upon various subjects, but has published very little. Numbers of letters upon domestic and political economy, have been published in newspapers, that have not been preserved, nor can they be referred to; those that can, are the "Domestic Guide in cases of Insanity," published in the year 1806; "A Letter addressed to the Chairman of the select committee of the House of Commons, on the nature, causes, and cure of Mental Derangements, published in the year 1815:" Letters on various subjects published in the Monthly Magazine; Sixteen Letters called "Useful Selections" inserted in a short-lived weekly publication at Stafford a few years ago, entitled the 'Book Worm.' Letters published in the Imperial Magazine, and a Pamphlet entitled "Remarks on a late publication by James Loch, Esq. on the improvements made upon the estates of the Marquis of Stafford in Sutherlandshire, Shropshire, and Staffordshire." This publication met with great local publicity, and excited much interest. But admitting that Mr. Loch's publication was injudicious at that particular time, yet it may be fairly urged, that Mr. Bakewell's "Remarks" were equally so, for he does not impute to Mr. Loch any sinister views or corrupt motives, and upon the merits or demerits of the improvements he could not be competent to speak; but conceiving that many had been injured by them, he had recourse to the weapons of ridicule and satire. These he wielded with such an unsparing hand, that a very candid reader has been heard to

say, "I was very much amused by Mr. Bakewell's pamphlet, but he was certainly too severe." It does however appear that those changes in the north of Scotland, which he so strongly reprobated, have entirely failed as to any advantages that were so confidently spoken of; and it is well known that the small tenants of the marquis have in general been more prosperous, and paid higher rents in proportion than the large ones.

Mr. Bakewell has made three trips to the temple of Hymen. His first wife brought him nine children, four of whom survived her, first, a daughter, married young to a Mr. Randle, and died, leaving three sons, one of them only now living; second, a daughter, who also married young, to a Mr. Astley, and is now living in London with her husband and eight daughters; third, a son, who has a wife and four children; he is following his father's profession with zeal equal to his; fourth, a daughter, who died young. By his second wife he had four children, one only surviving her, a son, who some years ago became a member of the church of the Rev. Robert Hall, Leicester, and a preacher; he is now a divinity student at the Baptist College Bristol, giving promise of being useful in his day and generation. By his present wife he has had eleven children, of whom five sons and five daughters are living, all young.

SERAPHIC OBSEQUIES.

(Concluded from col. 460.)

Theotimus. THEIR garment is of a different colour from that which Francis wore; nor did he ever use a cord of white hemp. When, therefore, they knock at the door, the answer will be, you have not the wedding garment—I know you not. *Philecons.* Have you told me all? *Th.* What you have heard is not half. In the fifth place he informed him, that those who should be evil-disposed to the Seraphic order—who, alas! are too many—should not live out half their days: they shall die a miserable and untimely death. *Ph.* Of this we have an illustration in the fate of the Cardinal Matthew Sedunensis, whose habit it was to think and speak all manner of evil of the barefooted friars. He died, if I recollect right, before he

had attained his fiftieth year. *Th.* What you say is true of him; but he was equally an enemy to the Cherubic order; four of whom he committed to the flames at Bern, notwithstanding that the bishop was disposed to have saved them. *Ph.* But it is reported that they were the authors of a deception of a very impious kind. They endeavoured, by means of feigned visions and miracles, to persuade the people, that the Virgin Mother was contaminated with original sin; and that St. Francis did not bear the true marks of the wounds of Christ, though St. Catherine of Siena truly had them. They made great promises to the lay brother whom they had bribed to act his part in this fraud; for the furtherance of which they profaned the Lord's body, and afterwards had recourse to blows and confinement. It is alleged that this imposture was not set on foot by one monastery, but was the work of the whole order. *Th.* However that may be, we should attend to the words of the Lord,—touch not mine anointed.

Ph. I wait to hear your further relation. *Th.* The sixth revelation is: the Lord swore to him that the favourers of the Seraphic order, however wickedly they may live, shall at last certainly obtain the mercy of God, and finish their course with a blessed end. *Ph.* Even if slain in acts of adultery? *Th.* What the Lord has promised will assuredly come to pass. *Ph.* But what is to be considered favour and good will? *Th.* That's easily answered. He that presents them with money and clothes, and furnishes their kitchen—he it is that loves them. *Ph.* Are not admonition and instruction proofs of love? *Th.* They have enough of these at home; and it is their custom to bestow, and not receive, such benevolence as that. *Ph.* The Lord, it seems, promised more to the disciples of Francis than to his own. He engaged to consider as done to himself whatever was performed for his sake to any Christian; but he never promised eternal life to those who had lived wickedly. *Th.* You need not wonder at that, my friend. The ultimate vigour of the gospel was reserved for this order. But listen now to the seventh and last revelation. *Ph.* I am all attention.

Th. The Lord swore to him, that