

Correspondence between D.H. Tuke, London and Clifton and John Kitching at the Retreat about Tuke's future career and interest in insanity

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Mr. Hitching

New Britain

York.







4 Lion Road
26/3/53.

Dear friend,
J. Kitching,

Thou will prob-
ably have heard of
my being here - and
the reason of it. I
have had almost ever
since I was last at
York a bad cough &
been generally out
of health. This was
an reason for cough-
ing, so unexpectedly,
my stay in London

Before leaving London
I had my chest ex^d by
Dr. Williams. and while
the result was satisfactory
inasmuch as he did not
think their condition worse
than 6 or 7 years ago, he
states (as he stated them)
that there is tubercular
disease in both apices.

Under these circumstances
I think it is my right
to communicate the
simple facts to them, and
ask their candid opinion
as to the very best future
course.

It has occurred to me

whether it would not
be better for me to try
to obtain some Asylum
pretty soon, for a year
in order that I might
put my health to the
test - for would it not
be very disappointing
to have undertaken the
Retreat, & then have
to leave it on account of ill
health?

The chief question
is - Is it necessary (I con-
clude that it is) for them
to decide either way for
a year? & again does
the uncertainty of my

plans under the desirous
of giving up our Engage-
ment & concluding ^{to stay}
at the Retreat? I need hardly
say that if such a thing
feeling I hope them well
do so.

From several circumstances
wh. have lately occurred I have
very little doubt about getting
an asylum when I wish for
one & having had several offers
lately.

The change to Chester has
done me a great deal
good & I am very I shall
continue looking as well
or better than usual. I have
also had liver oil. Still feel
far from strong.

I hope to hear from them
very soon. I hope them
and this letter every day

P.S. I have bought 'Anger's' 'Loggia' for them. The
water is out of print. I was told it is to come

4 Lion Row
Cheltenham
28/3/52.

My dear friend.
I/L.

A letter which
I have had from my
father today speaks
in such hopeful
terms of my soon
going to the Retreat
that I am afraid
the tone of my letter
to them, & a somewhat
similar one to him

will be very disap-
pointing: and on
further reflection
I think I wrote
rather too hastily
I took a needless
discouraging view
of my own health.
Still - assuming
the original plan
to be surfixed
does there not
think (as I have
asked G. J. the same

Question) it wd
be wise to have
if possible a year
at another asylum
for the sake first
of practical know-
ledge, secondly
of testing my
strength? What
I fear is that
there would not
be able to make
the engagements
subject to such

an Experiment.

I hope I have
expressed myself
more clearly than
I did yesterday
and remain
in touch

Yours very truly

Saml. H. Parker

3 Carlisle Street
Chertisho Square
27/V/52.

Dear Friend
Ino Hitching.

I have not lost sight of the subject on which we have several times conversed at the Retreat, and think it is due to thee that I should let thee know how I am feeling in regard to it.

I have now had more opportunity of judging how far the special study of Insanity is congenial to my tastes, having since my return, attended the Lectures & Practice at Hanwell, as well as Dr Conolly's lectures at the Royal Institution: and I think I may now say that I have decidedly made up my mind to pursue the subject of Insanity, as the primary, and

perhaps the exclusive branch of my profession. Having arrived at this conclusion I feel that whatever might be the course I pursued in future years, that ~~but~~ after I had obtained a Diploma, and had seen something more of Asylums, it would be much to my advantage to have the superintendency of an Asylum should such an opportunity occur -

This then brings me to the immediate subject of the Retreat. I am afraid to speak more definitely than the uncertainty of one's plans would authorize; for circumstances of course might occur which would materially alter my intentions & wishes, but so far ^{as} I can at the present time see, I should be

glad to be able to obtain the appointment
at the Retreat.

As to the time, I should rather look
to be in a position to take it in about
two years. This would leave a fair
time in which to be gaining know-
ledge on the subject, as well as com-
pleting my Medical Education -

Then as to facilitating my leaving
by diminishing the debt &c, I do not
know what amount had occurred
to thee - and perhaps this might be left
to future settlement. I had thought
of £150 or £200 -

While thus speaking more decidedly
than before, I should wish to be
understood as simply expressing

to them my present feelings on the subject, in order that they may be better able to fix their own plans, and not in any way concluding that they will necessarily leave the Retreat. I should wish this to be quite independent of me, except in so far as the time of my readiness to affect their plans. If these (their plans) were not to a great extent independent of mine, I should not like to be in any degree the means of their leaving their present post, because I fear the Retreat will be a great loser by the change, and because it would seem as if I (or my Father) thought I had a sort of right to be at the Retreat — an idea which I can truly say has never been entertained.

I do not forget that even should they resign their post, it does not follow

that I should be elected my successor,
and that therefore any understanding
which exists between us, must be so
far uncertain, and subject to the
ultimate decision of the Committee.

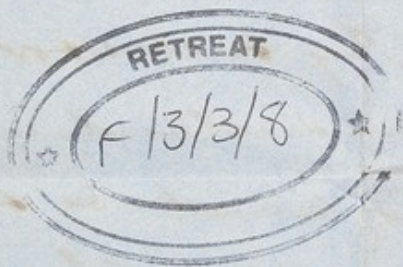
I hope I have expressed myself
clearly. What I wish to convey is,
that should they conclude to leave
the Retreat (independently of me) & should
this occur in about 2 years time, I
should be likely to wish to succeed
them, & should be willing to facilitate
the time of their leaving in the way
proposed.

Believe me to remain

Yours very truly

David H. Duke





W. A. A. A.
Bro. B. B. B.

My dear friend,

An apology is due from
me for allowing the letter to remain so
long unmentioned. Several reasons have con-
duced to this delay, but among them no change
in my feeling or views on the subject of the letter
claims any share. I remain in the same
condition as long with the Antislavery, for the
future as when we last conversed together.
Not finding from the non-votes that we suffer
by an arrangement between ourselves for
the practical accomplishment of each other's wishes,
it appears to be our duty, that there should
be no more standing as the main features
of the details. I cannot allow the chance of
election as being superior to the one as a can-
didate to have much weight. The Committee

could think take but one course, though, if I
wished, I must permit such a successor as the
Committee appointed to fill the post. I would
not, if I did not like upon this I should be
succeeded by a better man than myself, upon
at all. Taking it for granted that the
will be the best Superintendent I may state clearly
that the sooner the change can be made, the
more will it agree with my wish & convenience
I wish with myself, great attention the time, chiefly
a pecuniary question. I do not mean to
advocate any accurate stipulation at present.
I am that the most disserviceable part of the
however necessary for me as many others are
so intimately connected, I shall mention
that what has occurred to me was that a
sum of money equal to a year's Cash Salary
(as at present fixed) would not be unreason-
ably great. As I have however before stated
I do not mention this as a decided stipulation

I'm dealing with the other. I have full
confidence that the position of the parties would
be fairly taken into account. I cannot however
do just as I would, because I cannot start
upon a new line of occupation upon com-
petent reasons, on however much a scale.

When you have received this I should ^{like to} have
a letter from you confirming the price which
that we may consider the present bid. I mean
two years.



Ms. 6.8.4.5
Ms. 1832