

## **Volume of publications and tracts on York Lunatic Asylum**

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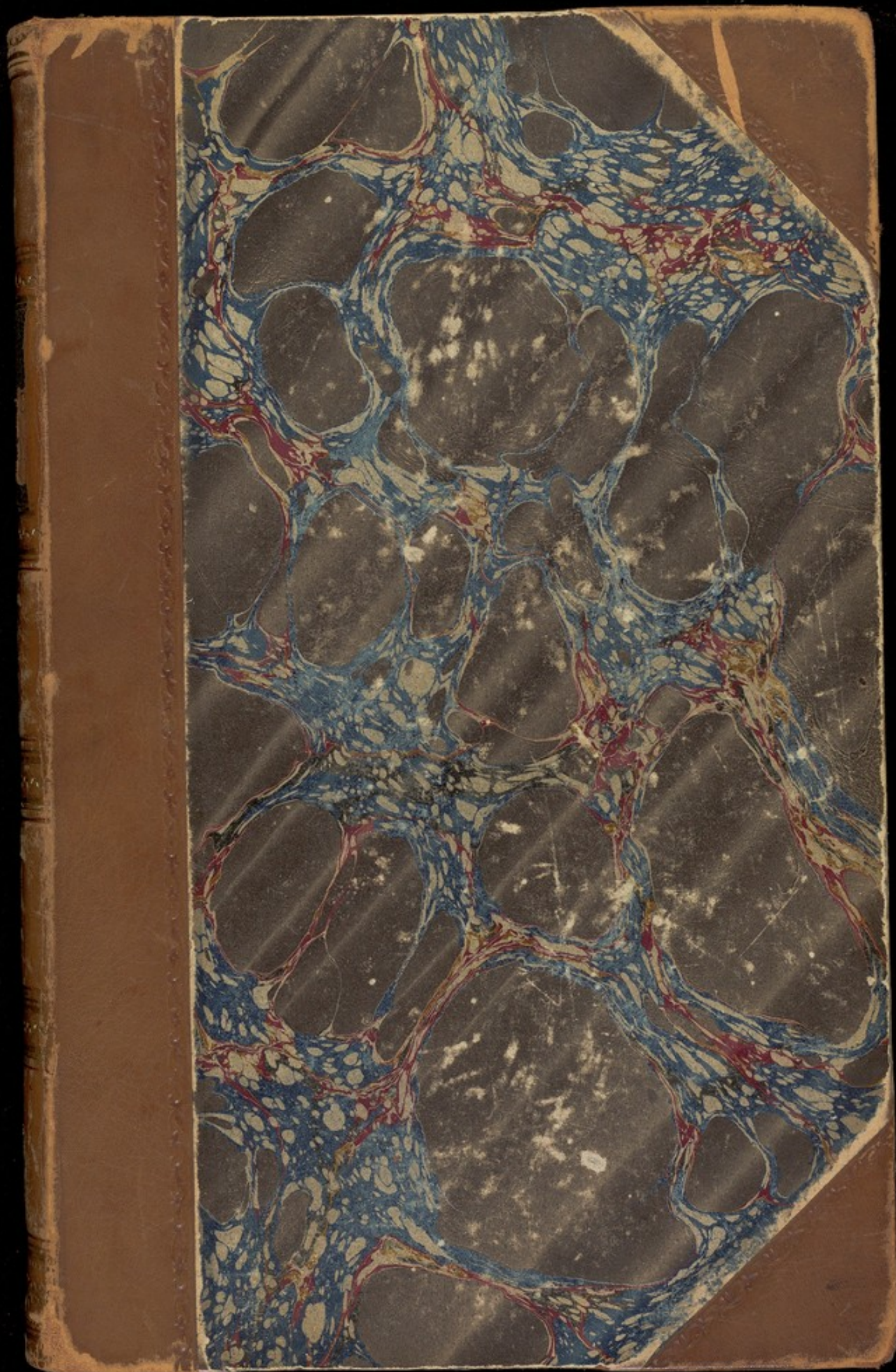
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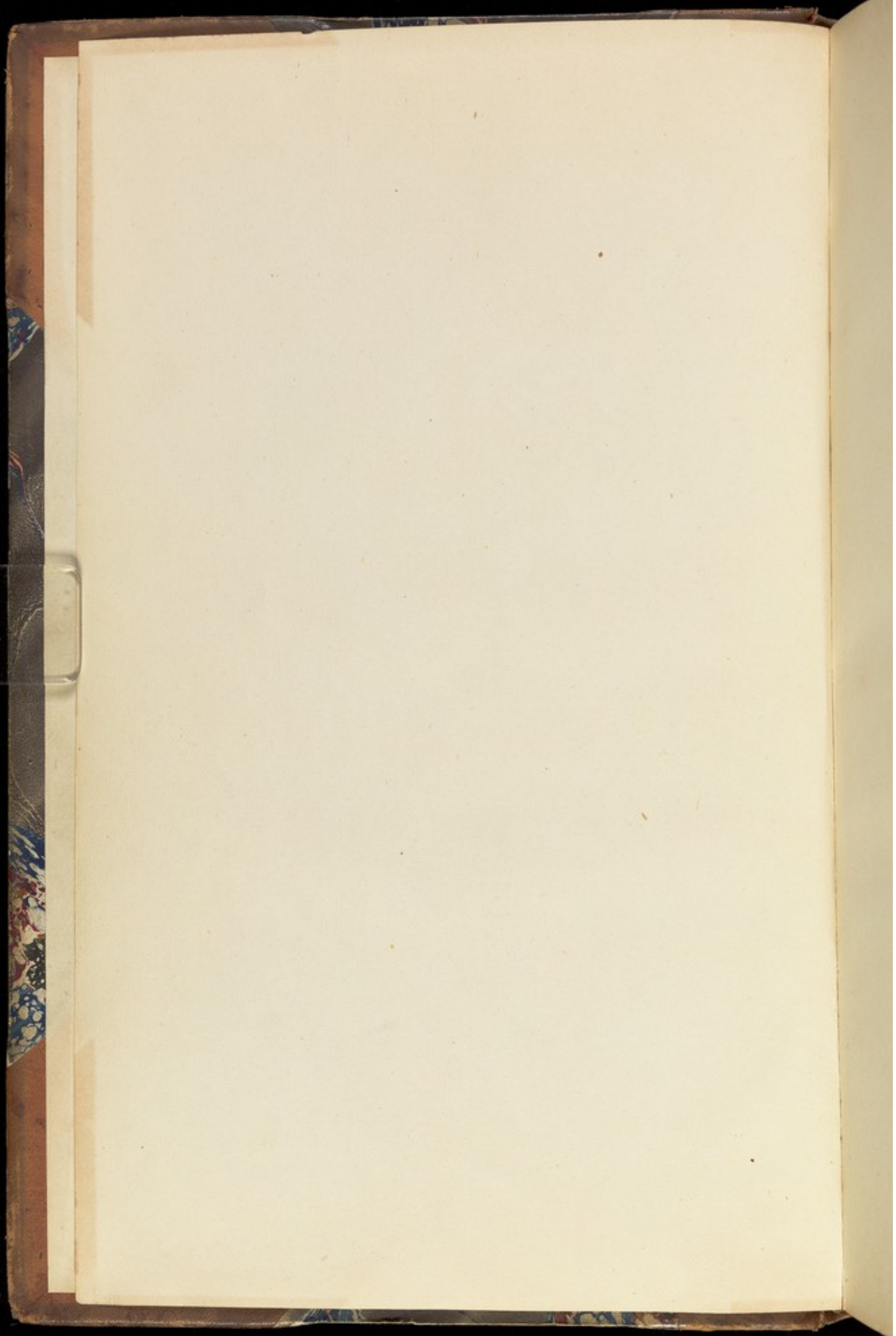
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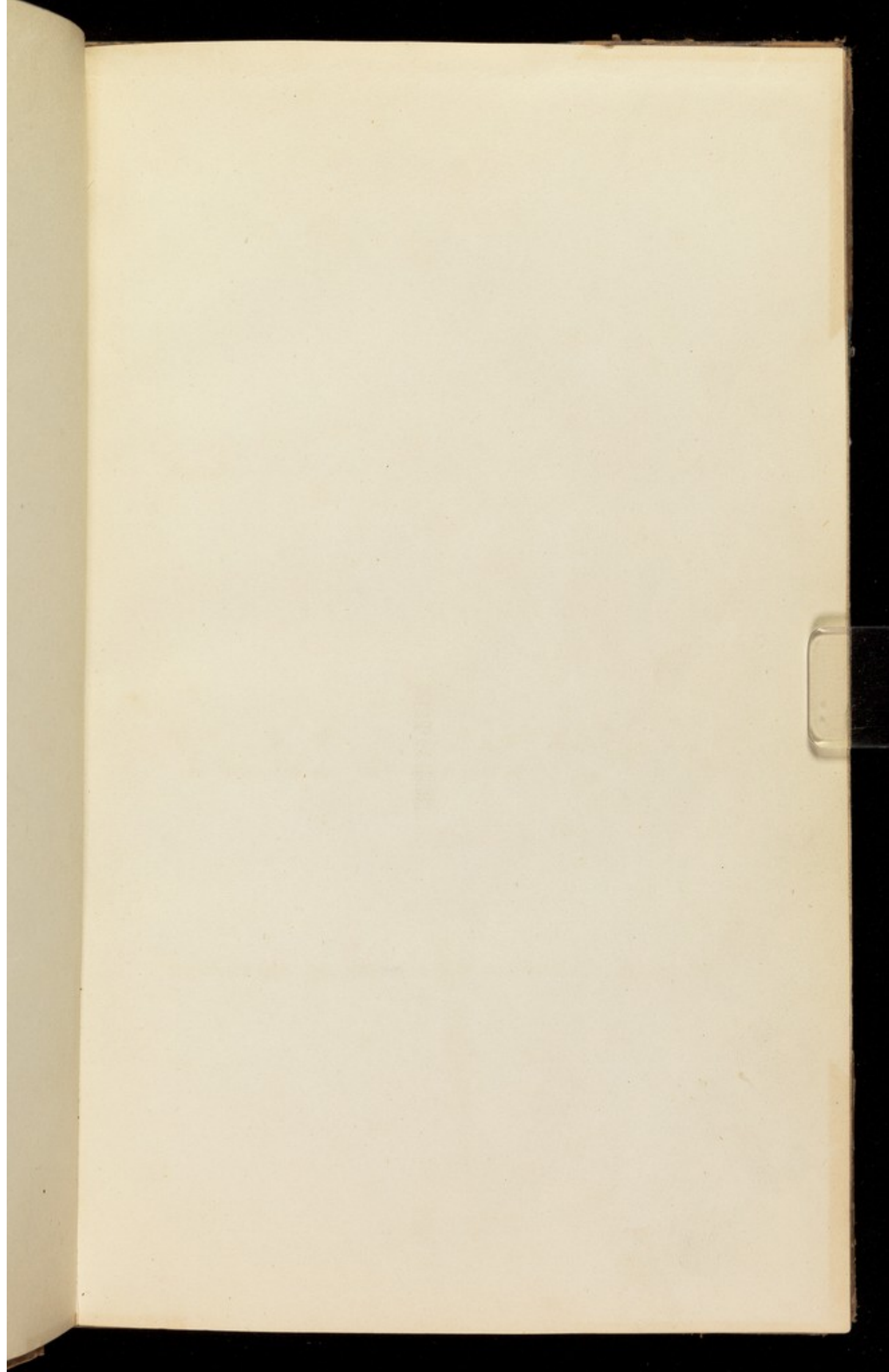
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*John D. Lee*

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A  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
York Lunatic Asylum.

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Price 4s.

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HISTORY  
OF THE  
York Lunatic Asylum:

WITH  
AN APPENDIX,  
CONTAINING  
MINUTES OF THE EVIDENCE ON THE CASES OF ABUSE LATELY  
INQUIRED INTO BY A COMMITTEE, &c.

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ADDRESSED TO  
WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, Esquire,  
*One of the Contributors to LUPTON's FUND.*

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York:

PRINTED BY W. HARGROVE AND CO., HERALD-OFFICE;  
FOR J. WOLSTENHOLME, YORK;  
AND SOLD BY BALDWIN, CRADOCK AND JOY, PATERNOSTER-ROW;  
AND J. HATCHARD, BOOKSELLER TO THE QUEEN,  
PICCADILLY, LONDON.

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1815.



HISTORY

OF THE

York Lunatic Asylum:

WITH

AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

MINUTES OF THE EVIDENCE OF THE CASES OF ABUSE TAKEN  
INQUIRED INTO BY A COMMITTEE, &c.

ADDRESSED TO

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One of the Commissioners in PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

FOR J. WILKINSON, YORK:

AND SOLD BY HARRISON, LONG, AND JOY, TAVENHURST-STREET,

AND A. HAYWARD, BOOKSELLERS TO THE QUEEN,

PICCADILLY, LONDON.

1845



*To William Wilberforce, Esq.*

Dear Sir,

*When I had the pleasure of seeing you last spring, you expressed considerable interest in the proceedings at the Asylum, of which you had heard rumours, and you were desirous of further information.*

*The Dean of Carlisle happened to be in this neighbourhood in the autumn of 1813, when a controversy respecting the Quaker's Retreat and the Asylum first appeared in the newspapers—he predicted that good would arise out of it—and has since been particular in his inquiries as to the result. It may be presumed that there are many other persons to whom a fuller account would be acceptable, than a conversation—a private letter—or detached newspaper paragraphs can afford.*

*Several pamphlets have, however, already appeared on the subject, which I ought to mention to you.*

*The first of these was, A Letter from Mr. Higgins to Earl Fitzwilliam, on the subject of the abuses in the Asylum.—To this letter there is subjoined a copious and very useful Appendix, containing the whole of the report of the Committee of Inquiry, into rules and management—the new rules of the institution—and every official document on the subject of the Asylum, which appeared from November, 1813, to September, 1814, the period at which Mr. Higgins published his letter.*

*The next publication was, A few free remarks on Mr. Higgins's publications—by Corrector.*

*To this succeeded—A Vindication of Mr. Higgins from the Charges of Corrector—by a New Governor of the Asylum.*

*And lastly—Retaliation—or Hints to some of the Governors of the Asylum—by Mr. Atkinson, the late Apothecary.*



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148  
DEDICATION.

You will naturally ask, why—after so much has been written on the subject, that the public is said to be weary of it—I should attempt to add more?—I answer, that each of these publications relates only to a limited part of the History of the institution.

Mr. Higgins was unacquainted with the Asylum, and its affairs, until the circumstance which brought it to his notice about fifteen months ago—His letter details chiefly those transactions in which he himself has taken a part.

Corrector has endeavoured to expose what he considers the errors of Mr. Higgins.

The writer in vindication of Mr. Higgins, has taken a more extended view of the subject—still, however, he was necessarily in a great measure confined by his professed object, to a further elucidation of those proceedings, in which Mr. Higgins had taken a share.

Mr. Atkinson's object, is to show the injustice with which he conceives that himself, as Apothecary, and his wife as Housekeeper, have been treated.

You will perceive, therefore, that to any person desirous of information respecting the History of the Asylum in general, a more comprehensive account was wanting, than can be obtained from any, or all of these pamphlets.—Some of them, however, contain interesting details and explanations; and I refer you to them generally—and particularly to Mr. Higgins's Appendix—for further information.

I am, Dear Sir,

with great respect and esteem,

Your most obedient Servant,

JONA: GRAY.

YORK, Feb. 3, 1815.



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# HISTORY

OF THE

## YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

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### CHAPTER I.

*History of the Asylum, during the Life of  
Dr. Hunter.*

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THIS charitable institution originated in a public advertisement, dated the 7th August, 1772, signed by the late Lord Archbishop Drummond, and twenty-four gentlemen of the county of York, including the late Dr. Hunter. Sensible of the deplorable situation of many *poor lunatics* IN THIS EXTENSIVE COUNTY, who have no other support but what a needy parent can bestow, or a thrifty parish officer provide, they recommended a subscription towards erecting a public edifice, for the reception of such unhappy people.

On the 27th August, 1772, a very respectable meeting was in consequence held at the Castle—the Archbishop in the chair; and his Grace, after explaining the nature of the meeting, proposed a subscription for the erecting a suitable building for the reception of lunatics, “*being either parish poor, or belonging to distressed and indigent families*”



This proposal was unanimously approved of; the sum of 2500*l.* was immediately subscribed, and a Committee appointed to further the view of the subscribers. An inquiry was shortly afterwards made, by the Committee, into the number of lunatics within the three Ridings of the county of York; and the returns made were "so numerous and alarming," that the Committee called a general meeting on the 30th of July, 1773, when it was resolved that the late Alderman Carr should be desired to give in a plan of a building, the body of *which might contain 54 patients*, with the power of extending two wings backward on any future occasion.

On the 25th August, 1773, Mr. Carr's plan was approved of, and agreed to be carried into execution; and an advertisement was directed to be published, calling for further subscriptions and benefactions; and "*signifying to the public that the surplus money already subscribed, and also all future subscriptions and benefactions, are intended to be placed out at interest, and the produce applied TOWARDS THE RELIEF of parishes and private persons in indigent circumstances sending patients; and that the principal will be applied in enlarging the building, for the reception of more patients, IF WANTED.*"

This is a quotation verbatim from the Order-book; but such pains have been taken to obliterate it, that there was great difficulty in decyphering the passage.

The obliteration will appear less extraordinary, on reference to Dr. Hunter's subsequent assertions, that the public fund was never considered to extend beyond the building of the house, and keeping it furnished and repaired, and that parishes were not to be relieved. (See his letter in the Appendix, p. 2.)

Some doubts may be started as to the genuineness of the obliterated passage, and whether it might not have been erased by order, before the meeting separated. It is

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therefore necessary to quote the advertisement which appeared in pursuance of the obliterated resolution, and in which, though the framer of the advertisement has altered \*the resolution of the meeting, there is a sufficient recognition of the obliterated passage. The advertisement runs thus:—

“The overplus of the money now subscribed, and all future subscriptions, will be applied in enlarging the building, if requisite; and in the mean-time will be placed out at interest; and the produce applied towards the relief of parishes, and private persons in indigent circumstances, by whom patients shall be sent in.”

In another advertisement, dated 25th August, 1772, it is stated, “The surplus-money arising from this subscription, after defraying the expenses of the necessary buildings, &c. will be applied towards constituting a fund for the maintenance of the patients.”

And in a subsequent advertisement, dated April 24, 1777, “Should the subscriptions fortunately exceed the charge of the necessary buildings and furniture, in that case the overplus-money will be converted into a fund for lessening the weekly payments of the patients.”

On the 11th March, 1774, Drs. Hunter, Withers, Swainston, and Wallis, reported as follows:—

“Upon the supposition that 54 patients will constantly be in the house, we are of opinion, that † *one head keeper, one matron, three men servants, and three women servants,* with the assistance of such patients as are quiet and governable, will be sufficient for all the necessary business

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\* In the original resolution, a fund for the poor is the *prominent* object; and buildings are *secondary*. In the *advertisement* the order is reversed.

† The number of attendants in 1813, was precisely the same for 200 patients as the four Physicians in 1774 had thought necessary for 54.



of the house. As much depends upon the care and abilities of the *House Apothecary*, we recommend to the Committee to procure a person for that office, who has been brought up at Bedlam, or St. Luke's."

In April, 1777, an advertisement appeared in the newspapers, stating, that the expense of the main building, and of the necessary offices, had so far exceeded the estimate, that they could not be finished and furnished in the plainest manner, nor could the bills already brought in be fully discharged, without an additional sum of money.

In the same month, an "Earnest Application" was addressed to the public, concerning the state of the Asylum, soliciting donations. It is here stated, "That no attending Physician or Surgeon will receive either fee or reward, as long as the Hospital continues to receive only paupers, or persons in low and indigent circumstances, agreeable to the original design of the charity."

On the 20th of September, 1777, apartments were opened for the reception of ten patients, at 8s. per week each: and the following salutary rule was adopted at the meeting that day:—"No keeper or hired servant of the Asylum to accept any money or other gratuity for his or her own use, on the behalf of any patient, on any pretence whatever."

On the 21st of September, (the day after the Asylum was opened,) a meeting of the Committee took place;—present—Dr. Hunter, Mr. Johnson, Re. Mr. Preston, two Messrs. Jubb, and Dr. Wallis. On this occasion, the following resolution was passed:—

"It is the sense of this Committee, that it is most proper to have one Physician only, for the Asylum, and Dr. Hunter being desired to attend as such, he *consented thereto*."

In this resolution, as in a former one, there are some



erasures; and the clause "*until the next general meeting*"<sup>12</sup> seems to have formerly concluded the sentence:—"though there is considerable difficulty in ascertaining precisely what the words have been.—In point of fact, however, Dr. Hunter's appointment by this Committee, although never confirmed, must have been acquiesced in by the Governors at large.

The whole of the donations having been exhausted in the buildings, there remained no fund for the maintenance of the patients: and hence the indigent were virtually excluded.—A jealousy began to exist in the minds of the public, that as the additional sums from time to time subscribed, continued to be expended in buildings, the intention of the foundation would be wholly frustrated. Lady Gower and other benevolent ladies, therefore, about the year 1778, contributed liberal donations to the charity, under this express condition, that the money should be applied "*for the relief of patients only*;" (i. e. not laid out in buildings.) By means of these donations, there was established in the year 1778, a fund called the "*Reduction Fund*;" the principal of which was vested in the public funds; and the dividends were to be applied in reducing the weekly payments of those patients, in low circumstances, who pay for themselves, and have no parish relief.

Still, however, the assistance afforded by this fund was extremely inadequate to the purpose; the weekly charges were higher than persons in distressed circumstances could afford to pay; and many parishes would not be at the expense of maintaining their paupers in the Asylum. Hence the number of patients continued to be small.—This state of the institution led to an important change of system. It was determined at the August meeting, 1784\*, that

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\* 1784 is the date of some useful directions for the subordinate officers and servants.



a limited number of patients of a "*superior*" or "*opulent*" class, or as they are sometimes described, patients "*in easy circumstances,*" or "*of a better condition,*"—should be admitted at a suitable rate of payment;—in order "*to create the means of relieving the necessitous.*"

This plan, though unexceptionable in itself, was liable to abuses, and required extreme vigilance in its execution. A resolution was at the same meeting passed, that a Committee of 7 should be appointed, *the Physician to be one*; and that any two of this Committee should have the power of fixing the payments of the patients. Till this period, Dr. Hunter had been Physician *gratis*; and had he continued so, the vigilance of the Committee might have been a sufficient guard against abuses. But after opulent patients had gained admission, it was soon discovered that it would be highly unreasonable to expect from the Physician a gratuitous attendance on these, who, as it is observed, "*would in another place have been his own private patients.*"

Dr. Hunter was therefore *requested* by the Governors at the August meeting 1785, "*to do justice to his own interest by receiving from the friends of such patients the reasonable emoluments of his profession:*" and by one of the rules it was ordered "*that such patients shall pay reasonable fees to the Physician for his attendance.*"

From this period, the influence of the Physician upon the Committee must have been injurious; and after three or four years we cease to hear of any Committee.

To what number the opulent class was originally restricted does not appear; it certainly was limited; but a blot of ink has obliterated the word in the Order-book: No doubt the Physician would be inclined to admit as many opulent patients as possible.

The salutary regulation against the taking of presents



by the servants was presently repealed. It had been ordered that a board should be put up in the Hall to prohibit any money being given; but on the 7th July, 1785, it was resolved that this Order, "and the proceedings therein had been rescinded."

There is a resolution soon after this period of rather a curious nature.

"The Committee having taken into their consideration the present improved state of this Asylum, and the present stock of the County Hospital at York, are of opinion, that the Annual Sermon \* which has for many years been preached by some benevolent clergyman, may after this year be discontinued; and that it would be desirable that the same favour be for the future desired for the benefit of the County Hospital."

Dr. Hunter had not enjoyed for more than two years the privilege of taking fees, when he requested the Governors to allow him as an experiment, a salary of 200 *l.* for one year, in lieu of fees. The Doctor's letter on this occasion deserves attention, and is inserted in the Appendix, page 1.

This proposition appears to have originated in upright as well as prudential motives. Though the patients of the highest class have been termed "*affluent*," the amount of their payments has doubtless been exaggerated by report; and the amount probably never averaged more than a guinea and a half per week for each patient.

It is not uncommon for patients possessing an income of from 300 *l.* to 500 *l.* per annum, to be placed in such establishments at a payment of a guinea or a guinea and a half per week: deprived of those comforts to which

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\* The Sermon always produced from 80 *l.* to 120 *l.*:—but probably the friends of opulent patients might revolt at the mention of a Charity Sermon.



they have been accustomed. It is not probable that those who from mercenary motives place their friends in such establishments as the Asylum, at a payment of less than 100l. per annum, for board, lodging, and medicines, would be liberal in their fees to the Physician. Dr. Hunter would find a difficulty in obtaining even those "moderate and reasonable" fees which the Governors had sanctioned. "Hitherto," (observes the Doctor, in a long explanatory letter, dated 5th January, 1788) "these fees have been moderate indeed." Unless, therefore, the Physician were to violate the rules of the Institution, and abuse the confidence of the Governors, by appropriating to himself a portion of the payments to the Charity, there was no alternative but the proposition of a fixed salary. Dr. Hunter hints broadly at the temptations thrown in his way by the existing plan. "Taking fees at the discretion of the attending Physician from patients of better condition, may at a future period be attended with *bad consequences*." And again, in his letter of the 5th January, 1788, speaking of fees.—"*I do not approve of a discretionary power of that nature being in the hands of any man.*" In return for the abolition of fees, the Doctor advised, that the payments of the affluent patients should be increased, for the benefit of the general fund; and that from this fund an equitable and determinate sum should be given to the Physician, in the room of fees.

This proposal of Dr. Hunter was adopted for a year; at the end of which, probably the income of the Institution was found inadequate to meet the salary. It is also well known, that Earl Fitzwilliam and others of the old Governors, objected against a salary to the Physician from the funds, conceiving that the attendance on the poorer classes ought to be gratis. On one or both of these grounds, probably—the Governors on the 23d August, 1788, requested the

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Physician, "*henceforth to receive such moderate and reasonable FEES from the class of AFFLUENT patients, AS HE WAS ACCUSTOMED TO RECEIVE HERETOFORE.*"

It was about this period that the late Rev. Mr. Mason, (Precentor of York) Dr. Burgh, Mr. Withers, and other respectable individuals, were alarmed at the growing influence of the Physician over the proceedings of the Governors. They contended that as parish paupers were originally objects of the charity, the system of charging for the paupers the full amount of their actual maintenance, and of reducing the payments of those indigent patients only who did not receive parish relief, was contrary to the design of the original donors, and was in effect to exclude parish paupers from the Asylum. On the other hand, Dr. Hunter, and the Governors speaking his language, with some reason maintained, that it was more in the true spirit of charity to relieve necessitous individuals, than to ease and accommodate the opulent proprietors and inhabitants of a parish. The Doctor had also a further objection, which with him had doubtless considerable weight, after he had begun to study the accommodation of affluent patients. "I am convinced, (he says) that at no time the payments from the parish poor should be reduced; as under such an alteration, the house would be immediately filled *with the lowest and meanest of the poor*, to the exclusion of those of a middling rank and in low circumstances, for whom the Asylum was originally constructed."

In the admission of the opulent patients, and their emoluments to the Physician, Mr. Mason and his friends imagined they saw the Asylum converted from a public charity, into an hotel, for the reception of persons of condition only. —It appeared to them that the promised advantages did not arise from this change in the constitution; and that the sum appropriated from the surpluses of the affluent to the



relief of the poor, bore no due proportion to the income arising from the former—hence, they suspected that Dr. Hunter did not content himself with fees, but applied a part of the income of the charity to his own use.—The Doctor however had the address to persuade the Governors that these objections arose not from pure or charitable motives, but from personal hostility. The Governors had no suspicion of Dr. Hunter's integrity; they disregarded the remonstrances of Mr. Mason and Dr. Burgh; and the effect produced was only to confirm the power and influence of Dr. Hunter.

It was in 1788 that Mr. Mason published his "Animadversions on the present Government of the York Lunatic Asylum."

At the Annual meeting in August 1788 it was resolved, "that the thanks of this Court be given to Dr. Hunter, the Physician, for his great attention to all the interests of this institution, especially for his assiduous care and successful treatment of the patients; and, *particularly at this time*, for the disinterestedness of his whole conduct from the first establishment of the Asylum to the present day."

Resolved "That the Governors present rely upon the candour of the Subscribers to give credit to their assurances, that no sinister motives ever have influenced or ever can influence their conduct. They trust that all the regulations they have established, and the whole œconomy of the institution, have merited the approbation of every Subscriber; and they hope that all will agree with them in opinion, that such Governors as profess themselves friends to the Asylum, would express their good-will to it much better by attending in their places at the times of meeting, and there giving their advice for the regulation and improvement of the institution, than by prejudicing the minds of the public by their misrepresentations."

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Dr. Hunter shortly afterwards published an anonymous answer to Mr. Mason, in a "letter to the Governors."

To Mr. Mason, however, and his friends, the public and the supporters of the charity are indebted for the fund called Lupton's fund, which promises to be of essential service.

The late Rev. Dudley Rockett, (a friend of Mr. Mason) was executor of Mr. Lupton, who left a considerable sum, at the disposal of his executor, to charitable uses. Mr. Mason, on the 1st October, 1789, introduced Mr. Rockett to the Governors as an intended donor to the charity. Mr. Rockett as executor of Lupton, gave a benefaction of 400l. : and Mr. Mason himself 100l.—"to be appropriated **SOLELY** for the maintenance of **LUNATIC PARISH PAUPERS, AND OTHER INDIGENT LUNATICS** within the City, Ainsty, and County of York." \* The dividends were directed to

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\* These are the words of the original entry in the Order-book ; but after a period of 6 years, Dr. Hunter prevailed on the Governors to erase and alter a part of the clause. Mr. Mason, though a poet and a genius, was, it seems, slovenly and obscure in his use of adverbs ; and the Court of Governors is found after an interval of 6 years, sitting in critical judgment on Mr. Mason's style, and shifting the adverb to the end of the sentence.

It now stands thus—"to be appropriated for the maintenance of Lunatic Parish Paupers, and other indigent Lunatics *within the City, Ainsty, and County of York ONLY.*" A Memorandum appears in the margin that the alteration was made in consequence of a verbal order of a General Court, August, 28, 1795. The accurate reader will consider how far the declared intention of Lupton's executor is varied by this alteration. His favourite object certainly was—either—*solely* the MAINTENANCE of lunatics—in opposition to expenses of *buildings and furniture* ; or *solely* the maintenance of PARISH PAUPERS AND OTHER INDIGENT LUNATICS—in opposition to that of *the affluent*. But as the sentence now stands, it might in future be supposed to be the particular and pointed object of Lupton's fund to confine its benefits to the "*City, Ainsty, and County of York only.*" This though one of its objects, was comparatively subordinate.



accumulate until the Archbishop of York for the time being should think the fund so considerable that the dividends might be applied to the intended purpose. Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Henry Thornton, Dr. Burgh, and others, shortly afterwards contributed to the same fund,—(See Appendix p. 52.)

The creation of a fund like this, solely for the benefit of the poor, and to be brought into operation, not at the will of the donors, but at some future and indefinite period, at the discretion of the Archbishop of York, can scarcely be attributable to any other than pure and benevolent motives. It was not calculated to affect the system of Dr. Hunter, till long after Hunter himself would probably be no more.

Yet a jealousy was entertained of the fund—In 1791 a rule was passed, excluding future contributors to Lupton's fund and the Reduction fund, from the privileges of Governors, on the alleged ground, that these funds are "intended for partial and not for general purposes." The objects of these funds, however, are precisely those of the original foundation of the charity.—Lupton's fund soon ceased to be noticed in any advertisements, or reports, relating to the charity; nor were the names of contributors to it made public.

In August 1794 a motion, "that a statement of Lupton's fund, from its commencement to the time being, be annually published, together with the general state of the Asylum," was rejected as "FULL OF IMPROPRIETIES!" Under all these discouragements, the fund is gradually though silently accumulating, and it now consists of 7450l. 3 per cents consolidated.

In the year 1790, Dr. Hunter advertised in the newspaper a "House of Retirement, for persons of condition only," although he had lately declared in a letter to the Governors, that the Physician's establishing a house of



his own "would evidently counteract the design of the original foundation of the Asylum."

This measure was effected without any notice on the part of the Governors; except a proposal by Mr. Mason in October 1790 that the assertion (which still continued to be made in the quarterly advertisements)—that "*this institution is intended to lessen the number of private mad-houses* \*,"—should in future be omitted. Mr. Mason's motion was negatived!

A circumstance, apparently of a trivial nature, was about this period remarkable for the event to which it led. In the year 1791, a female of the Society of Friends was placed in the Asylum; and her family residing at a considerable distance, requested some of their acquaintance to visit her. The visits of these friends were refused, on the ground of the patient not being in a suitable state to be seen by strangers—and, in a few weeks after her admission, death put a period to her sufferings. This circumstance, related by Mr. Samuel Tuke, in his "*Description of the Retreat*,"

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\* Two public, and numerous private mad-houses, in York and the vicinity have been established—all of them apparently owing their existence to the York Asylum. The following is a list for 1815.

The Quaker's Retreat—(in the East Riding.)

The Appendage to ditto—(in the Suburbs of York.)

Hunter's House of Retirement—(now Dr. Best's.)

House on Barker Hill—(Dr. Best.)

House at Clifton—(Dr. Belcombe and Mr. Mather.)

Barker's, in the Groves—(Ditto.)

Midgeley's House, on Lord Mayor's Walk.

House at Upper Helmsley—(Mr. Beal.)

House in Gillygate—(Mr. Backhouse.)

House at Acomb—(Mr. Taylor.)

House at Osbaldwick—(Mr. Hornby.)

House at Heslington—(Mr. C. Atkinson.)

House at Acomb—(Mr. Skipwith.)



is stated to have first suggested to the Quakers, the propriety of attempting an establishment for persons of their society—which it was shortly afterwards determined to institute.

Mr. Mason and his friends for some time continued their endeavours, to procure some improvement in the management of the Asylum; but their efforts were ineffectual. A specimen or two may suffice.

At the August meeting 1793, Mr. Withers moved that an annual subscription of one guinea and upwards be admitted, for the benefit of the Asylum. This was negatived.

At the August meeting, 1794, Dr. Burgh moved “that a Committee be appointed, to inquire into the state of the charity, with respect to its *constitution*, its *management*, its *receipts* and *disbursements*, from its commencement, and that they be required to report the same at the next general annual court.” This was also negatived.

From this period, the opponents seem to have abandoned the matter as hopeless. From Lupton’s Fund they might indeed expect some advantage at a future and remote period. “Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days”—might afford them some consolation; yet what assurance had they that this fund, being connected with the Asylum, would not be perverted from its intention, and brought under the sole controul of the Physician? It cannot be doubted, therefore, that Mason, and Burgh, and Withers, quitted the world under an impression that their labours in this benevolent cause had been worse than useless, having been repaid only by obloquy and misrepresentation.

1794 is the latest period in which we hear of any opposition to the plans of Dr. Hunter; it is also the latest period in which we hear of visitors. From 1782 to 1794, visitors had been occasionally appointed; *Dr. Hunter being*



*however, usually one.* From the period that the Governors of the Asylum ceased to be watched, the very name of visitation appears to have been unheard of.

About the year 1795, an extensive wing was added to the building—In 1797 Mr. Surr was elected Steward, and Mr. Atkinson, Apothecary: those offices having before been united in one person—In 1798, Dr. Hunter was induced to wish for an assistant in the superintendence of the Asylum, and of his various private places of confinement for lunatics. On the 14th of October, 1798, Dr. Hunter communicated to the court his intention to instruct a medical gentleman in the practice of the Asylum, and “*to communicate to HIM ONLY, the forms of the medicines prepared by himself.*” The Doctor stated that he judged this proceeding necessary to obviate *any inconvenience that might arise from his death or retirement.* The court recommended the proceeding to the consideration of the Annual meeting, being of opinion that *the proposed communication would contribute to the general good of such persons, as might at a future time become the objects of the charity.*

The August meeting 1799, permitted the Doctor to take a pupil or pupils.

From 1797 to 1804, there was a gradual diminution in the number of Governors; the average number of new contributors being only two in a year—From 1805 to 1809, in prospect probably of the election of a Physician, there was a considerable annual influx.

In December, 1804, Dr. Best was introduced into the Asylum, as pupil to Dr. Hunter, with the approbation of the Governors, and on this occasion, Dr. Hunter wrote the letter to Mr. C. Atkinson, which is inserted in the Appendix, p. 3. This letter the Governors directed to be inserted in their order-book, and that all the directions contained in it should be observed.



Speaking of Dr. Best, Dr. Hunter says, "to assist his studies in this *obscure branch of medicine*, I mean freely to disclose to him the manner of preparing the different medicines, so successfully made use of at the Asylum; and of which the composition is unknown to every person but myself."

Do the Governors and the public then really believe that Dr. Hunter communicated to his successor the secret of some extraordinary nostrum, for the cure of insanity? — That he could

— "Minister to a mind diseased;  
Raze out the written troubles of the brain;  
And with some sweet *oblivious antidote*  
Cleanse the foul bosom of that perilous stuff,  
Which weighs upon the heart?"—

Surely it were better to "throw physic to the dogs," than thus impose upon the credulous.

*Number of patients in the Asylum, at different periods, during the life of Dr. Hunter:*

1777 ———	10	1793 ———	74
1778 ———	23	1794 ———	80
1779 ———	23	1795 ———	83
1780 ———	28	1796 ———	83
1781 ———	41	1797 ———	85
1782 ———	32	1798 ———	96
1783 ———	39	1799 ———	99
1784 ———	37	1800 ———	112
1785 ———	43	1801 ———	127
1786 ———	47	1802 ———	127
1787 ———	55	1803 ———	130
1788 ———	68	1804 ———	141
1789 ———	72	1805 ———	142
1790 ———	75	1806 ———	150
1791 ———	70	1807 ———	166
1792 ———	74	1808 ———	188



## CHAPTER II.

*The History continued.—From the accession of Dr. Best, until the decision of the Governors upon the case of Vicars.*

WE have seen Dr. Hunter introducing Dr. Best as his pupil ; in other words, as his intended successor.—In consequence of Dr. Best's precarious state of health, he was induced, in the autumn of 1808, to remove to Lisbon ; and Dr. Hunter became apprehensive that, in the event of his own death, the election might be in favour of Dr. Belcombe, the Physician to the Retreat, against whom he had uniformly avowed an antipathy. He therefore, on the 23d of March, 1809, (a short time before his death,) addressed a paper to the Governors, "respecting the medical regulations of the Asylum ;" which was ordered to be taken into consideration at the Annual meeting in August. In this paper, (*which cannot now be found*) he is understood to have recommended the appointment of three Physicians, with fixed salaries, in lieu of fees ; and that they should be graduates of one of the English Universities, or of Edinburgh, Glasgow, or Dublin. This proposal, if adopted, would have excluded Dr. Belcombe, who graduated at an University on the Continent.

A few weeks afterwards Dr. Best, unexpectedly, returned to England—Dr. Hunter died—and on the 19th of July, 1809, Dr. Best was elected sole Physician. These circumstances help to explain what would otherwise appear



very extraordinary—the inattention of the Governors to the last recommendation of their deceased Physician on the subject of medical regulations. The Annual court in August, 1809, resolved, that “IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE DEATH OF DR. HUNTER, it is not necessary to take into consideration the paper presented by him at the Quarterly court on the 23d of March last;—and which was then directed to be produced at the Annual meeting.”

To guard against such dangerous proposals as that of Dr. Hunter for increasing the number of Physicians, the same meeting also resolved, “that no proposition for increasing the number of officers of this institution shall be made, except at the General Annual meeting, nor taken into consideration but at a Special court then to be appointed, and to be holden within three months from the said General Annual meeting, and of which Special court, notice shall be given in the York papers.”

At this meeting a proposition was submitted by the Magistrates of the County, for uniting with the Asylum an establishment under the provisions of the 48th of George the 3d. c. 96. This proposition was rejected, “as inconsistent with the nature and character of this institution”—and the Magistrates of the North and West Ridings have since determined on the erection of buildings for the reception of their pauper lunatics.

It is observable that the reception of parish paupers was a part of the original design, both of the Asylum and of Lupton's fund.—The Asylum, therefore, must always continue open to parish paupers; or otherwise the excluded paupers may justly claim a portion of its funds, as having been created for their benefit.

On the 28th of January, 1813, a rule was adopted on Dr. Best's proposition, “that no person shall be allowed to visit any of the patients without a special written order of

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admission, signed by the Physician." At this resolution, so worded as in effect to close the doors against the Governors themselves, some of them may be supposed to have taken umbrage. It is certain at least, that at the next meeting (February 8, 1813) it was determined to alter the resolution, and it was ordered to stand thus; "that no persons *unconnected with the Asylum* shall have the liberty of visiting any of the patients without a printed order of admission, signed by the Physician.

Dr. Best had now obtained an absolute dominion; every thing was under his sole controul. Official visitation had ceased, and all intrusive observation was shut out. The Governors had confidence in the Physician; and no persons, except Governors, could enter the Asylum without his permission. At no period had a change in the management of the institution seemed more hopeless.—During the vacancy after Dr. Hunter's death, there was a fair opening for some approximation to the original design of the institution; and an attempt was at that time made, by a surviving contributor to Lupton's fund, to recal the attention of the Governors to the subject\*. But this temperate and seasonable representation had been disregarded. There had then been an influx of new Governors; and the paramount consideration seemed to be, to invest Dr. Best with the situation and undiminished emoluments of sole Physician. No reference was made to the original design; no guards were placed against abuses.—Every avenue to reform, therefore, seemed now closed.

At this juncture, a controversy arose in the newspapers, which it appears proper to notice as connected with this history.—The growing celebrity of the Quaker's Retreat, (an institution of which the origin has been noticed) had

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\* See a Pamphlet, entitled "Observations on the present state of the York Lunatic Asylum." (1809.)



rendered it an object of general attention; its rules and modes of treatment were the frequent subject of inquiry. In 1813, Mr. Samuel Tuke published a "Description of the Retreat;" and recommended "*a more mild system of treatment than has been generally adopted.*" Dr. Best conceiving this to intend a reflection on his Asylum, attacked Mr. Tuke by a letter in the newspapers \*. Mr. Tuke, in reply, disclaimed all intention of alluding to the Asylum.—Some anonymous paragraphs, from different hands, afterwards appeared; intimating a suspicion that all was not right at the Asylum, and that under its present system, abuses must be the unavoidable result. It is not intended to swell these pages with the detail of the newspaper

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\* "TO THE EDITOR OF THE YORK HERALD.

Sir,

When a vessel or a fort becomes the subject of attack, it matters not whether hostilities be carried on by storming, boarding, grape or shells, or by sapping, mining, catamaran, or torpedo. The intended effect is the same, and the same necessity exists for active defence. In like manner, when an attempt is made to injure the reputation and interests of any public body, or private individual, it is of little moment to the assailed party, whether the measure be accomplished by open libel, or masked insinuation. If no means of defence are employed, the mischief may be equal from either method, and it is, therefore, equally incumbent on the object of either species of attack, to notice and repel it.

The following brief statement will illustrate these remarks:—

In an account of the Quakers' Retreat for Lunatics near York, published a short time ago, some highly indecorous and injurious insinuations were thrown out against other Establishments for the same purpose, the intended application of which no one could misunderstand, and which were as strikingly illiberal, as they were grossly unfounded. To this attack it was not thought necessary to reply; but a PRINTED HAND-BILL having been recently received, which informs its readers in terms characteristic of similar productions, that the PHYSICIAN to the Quakers' Retreat, has formed an establishment for the reception of persons afflicted with insanity "with a view to introduce, on a small scale, the mild methods of treatment in use at that Institution," it would be an act of culpable supineness, to allow it to pass by, without some degree of notice. It must be obvious to every one, that the words of this Advertisement



controversy; though a collection and republication of the different articles in their order, would form a curious episode to the History of the Asylum.—It seems, however, fair to observe, that the Retreat being a receptacle for *Quakers only*, its managers could derive no advantage by depreciating the character of the Asylum.—These were not rival institutions. The Physician of the Asylum, therefore, at the fountain head of Lunatic practice, might surely have permitted the quiet unoffending Quaker to partake of the stream at some distance below him—without preferring the accusation—"You disturb the water I am drinking."

In the month of October, 1813, (the period of this controversy) a parish pauper who had been sent by Mr. Higgins, a Magistrate of the West Riding, to the Asylum, returned in a state which indicated neglect. The man's relations complained to Mr. Higgins;

(which may be considered in the light of a *torpedo*) were intended to impose a belief on its readers, that methods of treatment of an *opposite* description, were employed at the other Establishments for insane persons in York and its Vicinity; an insinuation in itself as disingenuous, and as totally destitute of foundation, as the *manner* of making it is perfectly unprofessional, and palpably incorrect.

The object of this letter being merely to expose these proceedings, from a sense of duty to others, and of justice to the Writer's self, all feelings of personal animosity are utterly disclaimed; at the same time, should any one be desirous of ascertaining your Correspondent's name, which it is not thought necessary to obtrude upon the public, it may be easily known by inquiry at your office.

I am, Sir, &c.

EVIGILATOR."

YORK, Sept. 23, 1813.

As Evigilator seems conversant in military tactics, he might have learnt a lesson from the events which were at this time passing on the Continent. The Emperor of the French, in the zenith of his power, had made an unprovoked attack on Moscow.—He was now obliged to fight for his own Capital.



—and that gentleman stated the circumstances to Dr. Best—at the same time intimating his intention to lay the case before the public. Dr. Best deprecated the publication; assuring Mr. Higgins that the circumstances should be investigated by the next Quarterly court. The Doctor then published an advertisement, appointing the Quarterly court to be held on the 2d of December, (*six weeks earlier than the usual time*) and calling upon any persons whatsoever, having “any thing to allege against the management or treatment of the patients, to take that opportunity of bringing forward their charges.”—Dr. Best does not appear to have thought any sanction of the Governors necessary, previous to this step.

A few days before the Quarterly court, Mr. Higgins published the statement in the Appendix p. 6.—His object evidently was, not only to call the general attention of the Governors to the case, but to draw the eyes of the public upon their proceedings, and thus to induce them to act with the greater circumspection.

Owing to the concurrence of several circumstances, Mr. Higgins's statement produced an impression on the public mind, beyond that which a mere solitary instance of neglect was calculated to do. The animadversions of Mr. Mason and his friends, had long ago convinced many respectable persons that the system of the institution was radically bad. It was the general opinion that the rich patients were attended to, and the Physician benefited, but the poor were neglected. It was also suspected that the attendants were unfeeling and harsh in their treatment of the patients; and circumstances occasionally came to light which confirmed the suspicion\*. Dr. Best's recent attack

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\* To mention one within my own observation. About fifteen years ago an unfortunate young man, who had been my class-fellow at school, became deranged whilst at Cambridge. His mother, a person in limited circumstances,



on Mr. S. Tuke and Dr. Belcombe, and the controversy to which it gave rise, assisted to excite a more than ordinary attention to Mr. Higgins's case of alleged abuses; and the eyes of the public were anxiously turned to the proceedings which the Governors would adopt at their Quarterly meeting.

**THE QUARTERLY COURT** was attended by twenty-seven Governors; at that time an unusual number. Mr. Higgins's statement was read; after which, the accused servants of the house were called in and sworn. They denied upon oath, the truth of the charges.—No other evidence was called for, nor was any minute committed to writing of what had been sworn by the servants.

Before the meeting separated, the following resolutions were passed, and were directed to be advertised in the York and Doncaster newspapers.

"The Governors having taken into their consideration the statement published in the York and other newspapers, respecting the treatment of **WILLIAM VICARS**, lately a Patient in this Asylum, and having examined **UPON OATH SUCH WITNESSES AS WERE COMPETENT TO AFFORD INFORMATION ON THE SAME**, are unanimously of opinion, that during

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placed him in the Asylum, where his health was rapidly declining. He expressed a wish to see me; I called, and was introduced to him in a room (I believe the kitchen) through which the attendants were occasionally passing. He appeared thin and emaciated; and there were black marks on his hands, which the keepers said were occasioned by his sitting too near the fire. He was perfectly collected—complained much of the want of his books—and begged to return home to his mother. The keepers were aware that this was the point which particularly touched his feelings. "You'll go home to your mother, Mr. Green, will you?—You want to go home to your mother, don't you, Mr. Green?"—was the language repeatedly and tauntingly addressed to him by the keepers. My unfortunate friend, thus delivered to the tormentors, died in the Asylum a few months afterwards. (Aug. 22, 1801.)



the time that the said William Vicars remained in the Asylum, he was treated with **ALL POSSIBLE CARE, ATTENTION, AND HUMANITY.**

**RESOLVED,**

That whilst the Governors are at all times ready and anxious to promote an inquiry into the supposed existence of any abuse in the conduct of this institution, they cannot but regret the mode by which an *ex-parte* statement of the cause, which has this day come under their consideration, has been circulated in several newspapers previous to an opportunity being afforded to the Governors of a regular investigation of the grounds of the complaint.

**RESOLVED,**

That this Court be adjourned to **FRIDAY** the 10th day of December instant, at Twelve o'clock."



### CHAPTER III.

*The History continued.—Influx of new Governors, and investigation of further cases of abuse.*

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THE publication of the resolutions upon the case of Vicars, was evidently intended to quiet the public mind, and to whitewash the institution—the effect produced, however, was directly the reverse. The proceedings on this occasion proved, that a fair investigation was in vain to be expected from the Governors. Several persons in York, of opposite political and of various religious opinions—who could, therefore, be least suspected of party views, were disposed to make an attempt to rescue the charity from the state into which it had fallen. It was a *forlorn hope*—many who wished success to the attempt, declined the task of joining in it. “It is an Augean Stable, you will never be able to cleanse it”—was the remark of a shrewd observer.

Besides the case of Vicars, which fell within Mr. Higgins’s immediate notice, he had collected some other cases, and laid them on the table of the Governors. The court stood adjourned to the 10th of December, to dispose of these cases.

On that day, Mr. Nicoll and twelve other persons went down to the Asylum, at the hour of meeting, and paid the requisite donations to become Governors. After some hesitation as to the point of regularity, (this being an ad-



journe meeting) they were admitted to act and vote as Governors.

It would be difficult, to conceive the surprise occasioned by this unexpected incursion. Considerable indignation was naturally felt and expressed; but the impartial and dignified conduct of the chairman, (the Archbishop of York) contributed to restrain the meeting within the bounds of decorum. His Grace's efforts were exerted at this and every subsequent meeting, to unite all the Governors in a cordial co-operation, for an improvement in the system of the charity.

Though the court, on the 2d of December, appeared to have decided erroneously on the case of Vicars, the new Governors forbore to propose any revision of that case, or even to allude to it, conceiving that this would be an unnecessary attack on the measures of those with whom they were now to be associated. They were persuaded, that out of Mr. Higgins's remaining cases, if properly investigated, enough would be proved to evince the necessity of a change of system.

On the first of these cases, therefore, being brought forward, Mr. Nicoll proposed, that instead of an inquiry by the whole court, a *Committee* of investigation should be appointed. Mr. Nicoll's proposal was violently opposed—there were only “a couple of lousy cases, which might be disposed of in half an hour.”

The Archbishop, however, declared himself so decidedly in favour of a Committee, as the preferable course, that the opposition to it was withdrawn, and this mode of proceeding was agreed to be adopted. Mr. Nicoll then proposed nine names for the Committee—including *three* of the new Governors. Mr. Alderman Wilson proposed a different list, which included only *one* of the new Governors. On a division, there were 18 for Mr. Nicoll's, and 17 for Mr. Wilson's list.



## FOR MR. NICOLL'S LIST.

Tho. Smith, Esq. (Lord Mayor)  
 Mr. Bland  
 Col. Lloyd  
 Mr. Robt. Swann  
 Dr. Belcombe  
 Mr. Nicoll  
 Mr. Russell  
 Rev. Mr. Graham  
 Mr. Priestman  
 Rev. Jas. Richardson  
 Mr. Dyson  
 Mr. Daniel Tuke  
 Mr. Ratcliff  
 Mr. Gimber  
 Rev. Mr. Wellbeloved  
 Mr. Crosby  
 Mr. S. Richardson  
 Mr. J. Gray\*

## FOR MR. WILSON'S LIST.

The Archbishop of York  
 Dr. Best  
 Rev. Mr. Preston  
 Rev. Mr. Dealtry  
 Mr. Palmes  
 Mr. Fenton  
 Dr. Lawson  
 Dr. Beckwith  
 Mr. Alderman Wilson  
 Mr. Cattle  
 Mr. E. Wallis  
 Mr. Healey, (Governor of the Merchant's Company)  
 Mr. Saltmarsh  
 Mr. Brook  
 Mr. Roper  
 Mr. Prince  
 Mr. Hodgson.

Mr. Nicoll next proposed, that the committee should inquire *generally* into the *rules and management* of the institution. This was opposed, as being premature, until some ground for a general inquiry should be established.

At length, Mr. Nicoll agreed to withdraw the motion, the Archbishop promising to second it at a future meeting: and his Grace, at the same time, stating his opinion, that, whatever might be the result of the examination into Mr Higgins's remaining cases, there *ought to be a general inquiry into the rules and management.*

The inquiry by examination of witnesses—*upon oath*, was strongly objected to by the new Governors.—In lieu of it, another mode, which however seems liable to still greater objection, was adopted. The witnesses were to be examined *without an oath; after which*, it was

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\* The names of the new Governors are in italics.



to be proposed to them to confirm *upon oath*, the deposition so taken.—An oath ought certainly not to be administered, except where it is prescribed or authorized by the legislature, and is accompanied with penal sanctions.

The following were the resolutions of this meeting:

RESOLVED,

That the cases now before the court be referred to a Committee of nine persons, who shall investigate the same, take down the evidence in writing, on both parts, and report the same to the next adjournment of this court.

That every Governor have liberty to attend the Committee, and that Dr. Best be empowered to ask any questions.

That the Committee be requested to propose to the parties examined, that they shall sign their depositions and afterwards make voluntary oath to the same, before a Magistrate.

That the Committee consist of,

The Archbishop	Col. Lloyd
The Lord Mayor	Mr. J. Gray
Mr. Brook	Mr. Ald. Wilson
Rev. Mr. Graham	Mr. Nicoll.
Mr. Bland	

And that any five of them have power to act.

RESOLVED,

That this court be adjourned to Friday the 7th day of January next.

RESOLVED,

That the thanks of this court be given to the Archbishop; for his patient, polite, and judicious conduct in the chair.

The Committee met on the 20th, 21st, 23d, 24th, and 27th days of December, and on the 7th of January; and



Mr. Higgins's remaining cases of abuse were inquired into. The expense of the attendance of witnesses from a distance, (which had been urged as an objection by the court) was defrayed by a subscription amongst some ladies in York.—In the Appendix, p. 8 to 40, will be found the substance of the depositions, with the opinion of the Committee upon each case.



## CHAPTER IV.

### *The Fire.*

ON the 28th of December, 1813, (the day after the committee had closed their examinations) the detached wing of the Asylum was destroyed by fire. This is a calamity extremely rare in the City and suburbs of York; and it therefore made the greater impression on the public mind. It also happened at a time when a general attention was excited to the institution.

On the following day a number of Governors assembled to inquire into the circumstances. It could not be ascertained from the keepers what number of patients was missing—the apparent remains of two human bodies had been found, and two patients were stated to have escaped. It was proposed by some of the new Governors that the names of all the patients should be called over, and the keepers should give an account of those under their respective care—but this was over-ruled; as it was said to be unusual and improper to make a disclosure to the Governors at large, of the names of the patients. The meeting separated at the end of three hours, without ascertaining what number of human lives had been lost.

On the next day, December the 30th, a Special court, (at which 28 Governors attended) was held, and the circumstances were more fully investigated.

It appeared that at about five o'clock, on the evening of the 28th, the chimney of a day room on the ground floor,



occupied by patients, had been observed by the Apothecary and Servants to be on fire, by the sparks issuing out of it. The chimney had not been swept for some time.—The fire in the range was stated to have been in consequence extinguished; and all appearances of fire had ceased.—At a little past eight the same evening, one of the female patients having gone up stairs with a candle, to attend on the gardener who was sick, came down into the kitchen and told the keepers that the house was on fire.—The testimony of a lunatic had been rejected by the committee as entitled to no credit; but a different rule of evidence prevailed amongst the keepers.—They instantly took the alarm. The apartment on fire was a lumber room, in which flocks were deposited. There had not been a fire in the room for a fortnight. The door was locked, and Mrs. Atkinson kept the key. The flock room was on the second story—the flue of the chimney which had been on fire was contiguous to the chimney of the flock room, but not at all connected with it. It seemed possible that sparks out of the one chimney might have fallen down the chimney of the other, among the flocks; but these are not of an inflammable nature; and the flue of the flock room chimney was bent out of the perpendicular, which would render the passage of the sparks down the chimney difficult. This therefore does not satisfactorily account for the fire, but no other account has ever been given.

This accident, it will be observed, took place at a time when an investigation into abuses was in progress, and the domestic officers and keepers might be expected to be on the alert.—It appeared that the *Physician* had been called to attend a patient at a distance from York, in a case of emergency.—The *Steward*, who was superintendent of the house, and had the controul over the servants, was at his residence at the Asylum gate, a quarter of a mile



from the building. At his advanced age of 82, he could scarcely be expected to take an active part. He was not, however, unemployed. Fearing lest the Asylum should be plundered by a mob, he barred the gates against any access to those who were running to assist, on the first appearance of the fire; so that they were obliged to make their way through the fields, and over walls and fences.

*Mr. Atkinson, the Apothecary*, whose office appears limited by the rules, to the preparation and administration of medicines, having probably performed those duties for the day, was gone out with his wife (*Mrs. Atkinson, the Housekeeper*) to spend the evening. Of the four men servants, who had the charge of about 120 male patients, one had intrusted a fellow-servant with the locking up his patients; and was absent. Another had put his patients to bed, according to his own admission, AT A LITTLE BEFORE the usual *hour of eight*\*: that he might go to a dance. There remained in the house two male attendants. One of these, since dead, being old and asthmatic, could not bear the smoke of the building. The other, Henry Dawson, exerted himself to the utmost in rescuing the patients. The fire broke out in the men's gallery, in which a considerable number of patients were locked up in their rooms. Henry states that he opened all the doors, roused all the patients, and pulled many of them out of bed. Many were instantly on the alert, and glad to escape. Others insensible to the danger, were obliged to be conducted to a place of safety; and some obstinately refused to quit their apartments,

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\* Whether the daily immuring in the dark, at so early an hour, a melancholy lunatic, who from habit has not been accustomed to retire to rest till 10 or 11—be conducive to restore cheerfulness or to nourish gloom—may be easily conceived, even by those who profess no extraordinary knowledge in this "obscure branch of medicine."



and it was necessary to take them away by force. In the mean time, owing to the quantity of straw, the fire spread rapidly; and at length the remaining patients were removed by Henry at the risque of his own life. He flattered himself he had succeeded in rescuing them all; and it was not till too late that he began to suspect that some were missing. In doing justice to his exertions, one cannot but remark, that if he had at first had another attendant to assist him, no lives would have been lost.

*Four patients perished in the flames; or, as the Steward has entered it in his book—"Died."*

Notwithstanding the efforts made to subdue the fire, it was so rapid, that the roof of the whole building had fallen in within less than two hours after the fire was discovered. The City engines and firemen were wholly inefficient—but an engine obtained from the Minster, was found serviceable. The favourable direction of the wind, prevented the flames from spreading to the main building.

At the meeting of the 30th December, it was resolved "that a Committee, consisting of Dr. Best, Mr. Cattle, Mr. Russell, the Rev. Wm. Bulmer, and Mr. Roper, be authorized to make such purchases of furniture and other articles, as may be necessary for the immediate purposes of the Asylum, and to make also such other arrangements in the apartments, as the emergency of the case may appear to require.—That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Directors and Subscribers to the Retreat, for their friendly and liberal offer of the accommodations which that establishment can afford to the patients in the Asylum under the present distressing circumstances. That the Governors, *on the representation of Dr. Best*, have reason to hope that it may not be necessary to have recourse to the offered accommodation—but should they be disappointed in this expectation, they will thankfully avail themselves of the proposed kindness."



The sum of 2392l. 4s. 2d. was received from the County Insurance Office, for damages occasioned by the fire.

At the adjourned court of the 7th of January, the fire was again the subject of discussion. Suspicions had been entertained, that some of the unfortunate sufferers by the fire, had been chained; it was, however, stated by Dr. Best and Dr. Beckwith, that neither those patients, *nor any other patient in the house*, were, on the night of the fire, under any personal restraint. A resolution was therefore passed, "that it appears on inquiry, that none of the unhappy accidents, which occurred on the late fire, can be attributed to any of the sufferers being in a state of restraint, from chains or otherwise."

Another resolution was also passed, thanking "those individuals who exerted themselves in rendering assistance on occasion of the fire." \*

The fire Committee made a report, containing suggestions of alterations and arrangements in consequence of the fire—these they were authorized to carry into effect—and nearly the whole of the sum received from the County Fire Office has since been expended under the direction of this Committee.

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\* Though the resolution, to avoid partial distinctions, omits the mention of names, it may be permitted to me to particularize Mr. Townend and Mr. T. Brook, as having been eminently active and serviceable on this occasion. It would have been desirable, had there been a precedent for it, that these gentlemen should have been voted honorary Governors, as the only mode in which the court could mark its sense of their services. Individuals in humbler stations were suitably remunerated for their assistance, by the fire Committee.

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## CHAPTER V.

### *The History continued—Inquiry into the rules and management.*

The Quarterly court stood adjourned to the 7th of January, on which day the Committee for inquiry into abuses, were to make their report. The number of new Governors was already increased to about *forty*; of whom Mr. Higgins was one—and *sixty-six* Governors attended the adjourned meeting of the court. The report of the Committee was received and approved—their opinion on the cases was confirmed; and Mr. Nicoll's motion for an inquiry into the rules and management was afterwards carried, without opposition. It appeared to those Governors, who had promoted the inquiry into Mr. Higgins's cases, that as enough had been done to obtain the desired object—viz. an investigation of that system, under which abuses had existed—it would be a waste of time to inquire into other cases of dirt, neglect, or abuse. Hence, though Mr. Nicoll held in his hand several cases, which he was prepared to prove, and which Mr Higgins truly describes as “very disgraceful to the management of the Asylum,” he stated that he should not propose a reference of these to the Committee.\* The resolution adopted was as follows:—“that it be referred to the following Committee

\* To instance two cases, which occurred before Dr. Best's appointment.

1. Eliza West, of Louth, in Lincolnshire. Admitted Aug. 17, 1796. Removed May 8, 1797. Delivered of a male child August 19, 1797.—2. Dorothy Exilby, of Kirby-Malzeard. Admitted February 8, 1801. Discharged cured



(any five of whom shall have power to act) to make an inquiry into the rules and management of the institution, and to report facts and their opinion thereon, to the next or subsequent Quarterly court of the Governors, or to the General meeting in August, viz :—

His Grace the Archbishop of York	Benj. Brooksbank, Esq.
Thomas Smith, Esq. (Lord Mayor)	Wm. Carr, Esq.
The Rev. Thos. Preston	Thos. Wilson, Esq.
The Rev. Wm. Dealtry	Henry Bland, Esq.
George Palmes, Esq.	The Rev. John Graham
S. W. Nicoll, Esq.	Mr. Brook
	Mr. J. Gray

“ That Dr. Best be requested to attend the meetings, to answer such questions and inquiries as may be proposed to him, and to offer any suggestions which may occur to him, as beneficial to the institution.”

The first work of the Committee, was an examination of the books, and an arrangement of those *rules*, which were found to be scattered through the order books, never having been collected or digested into any regular form. These are published in their Report; and the most important of them have been already noticed.

They then proceeded to investigate the *management*.

Under this head, one of the first points which engaged the attention of the Committee was, the mode of admitting patients, together with their payments to the institution, and to the Physician.

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February 20, 1802. Delivered of a male child 21st September, 1802.—In the former case, a keeper in the Asylum, was apprehended on a charge of being the father of the child, and he paid the parish of Louth 30l. for the maintenance. This fact was notorious, and it was equally notorious that THIS KEEPER WAS NOT DISMISSED—THAT HE CONTINUED TO ENJOY THE CONFIDENCE OF THE GOVERNORS; AND ON HIS RESIGNATION, RECEIVED FROM THEM A TESTIMONY OF “APPROBATION OF HIS CONDUCT DURING A SERVICE OF 26 YEARS.”—In the other case, the *father* of the child was a patient.



For the purpose of drawing out an average of the number of patients of each class, Mr. Surr, the Steward, was desired to send to the house of a member of the Committee, his account books, for the *four quarters of the year 1813*. Four Quarterly books were, in consequence sent, but in selecting these, Mr. Surr had unintentionally occasioned a remarkable discovery. *Three* of the books sent, were the Steward's accounts, with the Governors for the 2d, 3d, and 4th quarters of the year—the *fourth* book—sent instead of that for the *first* quarter, proved to be *another* account for the second quarter of the year. There was, therefore, no account for the *first*, but *two* accounts for the *second* quarter, both professing to contain the weekly payments of the patients. Upon a comparison of the two books for the same quarter, it was found, that in the book which appeared to have been sent by mistake, Mr. Surr had entered one set of patients at 15s.—another set at 12s.—and a third set at 10s.—per week. In the *other* book, the *very same patients* were entered as follows:—Those who paid 15s. were set down as paying *eleven* shillings; those who paid 12s. as paying *ten* shillings; those who paid 10 shillings, as paying *nine* shillings. In Mr. Surr's accounts with the Governors, he only gave credit for the *smaller sum*—the book sent by mistake, therefore, did not tally with the Steward's accounts with the Governors\*—on the contrary, it proved, that a portion of the payments from three classes of the patients, amounting to no less a sum than 65l. 13s. for a quarter, or 262l. 12s. per ann. had never been brought to account. On inquiry, it appeared, that this sum was paid over by the Steward to the Physician.

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\* Mr. Surr has since burnt this book, and the series of Quarterly books to which it belongs, to prevent their falling into the hands of the Committee—but, the fact which was accidentally disclosed, stands uncontroverted.



The Committee also found, that for the opulent patients (sixteen in number) the Steward neither received nor gave credit in either of the sets of books, for more than 14s. per week—but, in the private account already alluded to, each of these patients was marked B.—and it was explained, on inquiry, that the accounts of this class, did not pass through Mr. Surr's hands. They were "*private patients*," whose accounts were settled with the Physician, and for whom he accounted to the Steward for 14s.

With the exception of the Reduction fund already noticed, (which produced about 35 l. per annum) the Asylum was without any fund for the maintenance of the patients, or the salaries and maintenance of the officers and servants. The interest of 8400 l. (3 per cent cons.) was relied on for buildings, repairs, and furniture only. The weekly payments of the patients, therefore, discharged not only their board and lodging, but the board and lodging of the Apothecary, Housekeeper, and Domestics—besides salaries and wages amounting to 36 l. 12s. per annum.

The total sum paid to the house, by patients, in the year 1813, is about 92 l. 1s. per week; to which 13s. from the reduction fund being added, the total is 92 l. 14s. per week. This sum divided by 199—the number of patients in July, 1813, gives 9s. 6d. per head, as the average sum paid by each patient, for board, lodging, and attendance. Of this sum, the opulent patients contribute 14s. per week; the parish paupers 9s. The 14s. for the opulent patient, cover all charges "for board, lodging, coals, candles, tea, and medicines." "The upper classes have tea twice a day; the lower classes have no tea." They have "gruel, or milk and oatmeal for breakfast." "The better classes dine at one table, and the paupers at another." "There are about 12 gentlemen and ladies, whose diet is the same as that at Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson's table." "The middle class



have three meagre days; the paupers have three meagre days, and have roast meat only on Sundays. On Saturdays the middle class have principally cold meat, and the lowest class have offal in hash." Mrs. Atkinson "separates the coarsest parts for the lowest patients."

From the report of the Committee, it therefore appears, that whilst a few gentlemen and ladies, with an excellent table, tea and sugar twice a day, and the best apartments in the house, were paying only 14s. each per week for board and lodging, 125 poor persons, coarsely fed and ill accommodated, were paying 9s. each. Thus it is evident that the 125 paupers, each paying nearly the average cost of a patient—but maintained in the narrowest space and on the cheapest fare—were the great support of the house—that their "*overflowings*" were the means of providing the affluent with board and lodging, and medicines, at 14s. which, in no other place, they could have obtained under twice that sum. Surely there must at least be some inaccuracy in the statement made in a published report, which will shortly be alluded to, that "*the expenses of the indigent are reduced by the payments of the more affluent patients.*"

It must have already appeared, that the admission by the Physician of those persons as his private patients, and for his own sole benefit, who ought to have been patients of the house—and his participation in the weekly payments, not only of patients who were barely above the condition of paupers, but of 17 patients in the 9s. class—were contrary to several rules, as well as to the original design of the Charity. Still the question arises—had not the existing system of 1813 received the implied sanction of the Governors?—Did not the Physician so consider it?

It happens that in this very year, 1813, Dr. Best thought fit to publish a report of the state of the institution; and



it is the only one which has appeared for the last fourteen years. [To this report, therefore, (Appendix p. 4.) it is important to refer, in order to learn what was now considered by the Physician and the Governors to be the authorized system.

The report is thus sanctioned by the Quarterly court, in January, 1813: "Resolved, that [the report now produced, and submitted to the court by Dr. Best, be adopted, and that the same be printed and distributed." It contains the following passages:—"The friends of the patients pay a weekly sum in proportion to their ability; and by this arrangement the utility of the institution is extended to the various classes of society, and at the same time *the expenses of the indigent are reduced by the payments of the more affluent patients.* Parish and other *paupers* are maintained at the expense of 9s. a week. The weekly payments of persons in low circumstances, but not absolutely in the condition of *paupers*, is from 10s. to 15s. Patients in better circumstances, and in the higher stations of life, are charged with moderation, according to their respective means. A certain number of patients in very distressed circumstances, who pay for their own board, and have no assistance from their parishes, receive the benefit of 35l. per annum (being the interest of the "Reduction Fund,") along with the **OVERFLOWINGS** of the payments of the more affluent patients. The above payments discharge lodging, board, coal and candle, tea, washing, and medicines; but those patients whose expenses exceed 9s. a week, are separately charged for their washing." *The Physician is required to attend gratis on the paupers, and on those who are maintained at reduced payments; but is authorized to receive from the friends of the more affluent patients the reasonable emoluments of his profession.*"

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We are told that "parish and other paupers are maintained at *nine shillings*;" and we are given to understand, that the Physician receives emoluments from the affluent only. Yet from seventeen of the patients maintained at *nine shillings*, the Physician was receiving one shilling per week each. We are told the Physician "is authorized to receive *reasonable* emoluments from the affluent." Mr. Wilson paid one hundred and nine pounds four shillings per annum—of which the Physician only accounted for *thirty-six pounds eight shillings*—retaining the remaining sum of *seventy-two pounds sixteen shillings*, as his *reasonable* emolument. The *thirty-six pounds eight shillings* paid to the house, was also to leave *overflowings* to the distressed patients.

Previous to the Committee making their report, it was observed by a friend of the Physician, that Dr. Best had been the greatest benefactor to the Asylum—having contributed to it more than 1000 l. This assertion was grounded on Dr. Best's statement to the Committee, that the highest class of patients, or those called Dr. Hunter's own, at the period of Dr. Hunter's death\*, paid only ten shillings per week each to the institution—which Dr. Best advanced to 14s. That the sum of 15s. per week paid by the next class, was divided in Dr. Hunter's time into portions of 5s. to the Physician, and 10s. to the house—which Dr. Best made 4s. to himself, and 11s. to the house.

Though this charge by Dr. Best against his predecessor rests on his own assertion, and the books which might

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\* When it was attempted to justify Dr. Belcombe's advertisement of a private madhouse, by referring to the authority of Dr. Hunter, this was said to be "an expiring effort to defend the *improprieties* of the living, by disturbing the ashes of the dead." How soon is Dr. Best himself obliged to have recourse to this expedient!



have proved it are burnt, there is no reason to doubt the veracity of Dr. Best\*. As to the merit claimed for Dr. Best, on account of the augmentation to the house, it must be observed, that as its support is dependant solely on the payments of the patients, it was prudent for the Physician to take care that the sums paid to the house should be adequate to the growing expenses of the times, and the highest class of patients had been paying *ten shillings per week* to the house as far back as the year 1796, and probably longer. It does not appear that from the above augmentation, there arose any surplus—or any addition to the number of distressed objects. Even if this were made out, it would still be incumbent on those who claim for the Physician the merit of a gift to the charity, to show that these payments were his *right*—the reverse of which appears from the report of 1813.

The sums received by the Physicians are therefore to be considered a debt due to the charity.—It is true the Governors have acquitted Dr. Best of any criminal intention, attributing his conduct to mistake: but the misapplication is fully admitted.

As to the actual amount of the sums misapplied, it appears considerably over-rated. There are in fact no suf-

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\* So long ago as 1796, Dr. Hunter appears to have received a proportion of the weekly payments of the patients, at the rate of about 175*l.* 10*s.* per annum. In 1799, he received a proportion, amounting to only 102*l.* 24*s.* per annum. It cannot, however, be ascertained by the books, whether at this period, there were any patients whose accounts did not pass through the Steward's hands—if there were not, it is improbable that Dr. Hunter at a more advanced age, should have, begun to take from the Steward the burden of keeping any accounts. There were two practices in existence—both contrary to the rules—the one was the Physician's participation in the weekly payments made to the Steward—this clearly originated with Dr. Hunter—The other was the withdrawing from the Steward the accounts of the opulent patients, and paying him a small sum for their board. By whom, and at what period this practice was begun cannot be discovered.

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sufficient data on which to form an accurate estimate. The sums received from the private patients were forborne to be inquired into—there were different bargains with different patients—in some cases the payment was to include wine and other extras—so that the Physician could not himself easily ascertain his net profits.

When the new Committee lately succeeded to the management of the Asylum, there had been in consequence of the fire a reduction in the number of patients—seven out of the sixteen affluent patients had been taken away. One of those who were removed had paid three guineas a week—the payments of the rest were not known. None of those nine who remained in the house paid so much as two guineas a week.—Mr. Higgins's estimate of two guineas a week as the average—(on which he has calculated the Physician's profits at 1417*l.* a year, and the whole sum misapplied at 39,676*l.*\*)—seems to be much too high; and a guinea and a half is probably nearer the mark since Dr. Best's appointment.—In Dr. Hunter's time the estimate ought to be taken considerably lower.

Sixteen patients at a guinea and a half per week, deducting fourteen shillings paid over to the charity—leaves	}	£.	s.	d.
The payments to the Physician from the three middle classes amount to		728	0	0
Fees on admission	}	262	12	0
		30	0	0
		<hr/>		
Per annum		£1020	12	0

But on the other hand, it must not be forgotten that whilst a court of equity would require the Physician to account for his receipts, he would receive a liberal allow-

\* Mr. Higgins has, however, thrown off twenty thousand pounds, to allow for errors in his calculation.



ance in lieu of those fees which by the rules of the institution he was entitled to have taken.

Supposing, therefore, the average sum paid by the affluent patients to have been *a guinea and a half* per week, or 78 guineas per annum, we may suppose the 78 guineas equitably divisible as follows :

	Guineas.
Board, lodging, and medicines - - -	50
To lessen the payments of the poor patients -	14
To the Physician - - - - -	14
	<hr/>
	78

Fourteen guineas a year to the Physician for 16 patients, give 235l. 4s. as the annual sum to be allowed him in compensation for fees.

From 1020 0 his supposed actual receipts,  
Take 236 4

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£784 16—Annual balance in favour of the institution.

The rules of the institution appeared to have been little attended to in other particulars. The Committee for the admission of the patients, and regulation of their payments, had long ceased, and all admissions were by the Physician. Visitation, it has already been observed, had also ceased—and not an entry had been made in the visitors' book for 27 years.

Other topics of inquiry related to officers and servants.—The Steward was vested by the rules “with full powers over every servant in the house.” Yet this officer, in whom the superintendence was placed, was residing, with the approbation of the Governors, at some distance from the Asylum. His infirmities often prevented him “from going out and visiting the Asylum during the winter season.” The Committee found an “almost total want of



subordination and vigilance amongst the servants in the absence of a watchful and confidential head."

The Steward, in the copy which he gave to the house-keeper of the regulations for her conduct, had omitted ten rules out of fifteen; he had also placed the key of the beer and bread in the hands of an inferior male keeper, and Mrs. Atkinson exercised only "a partial and contested authority in the house." The Apothecary was not vested by the rules with authority over the servants, and did not consider himself possessed of any.

The description given by Blackader and Dawson, two of the keepers, of the internal regulations of the Asylum, is such as might be expected. Blackader, the nominal head keeper, says: "the doors *used* to be locked at ten; but for several years the regulations have not been so strictly enforced; any servant can go in and out of an evening. The servants refuse to obey his orders or directions.—Backhouse *used* to have the principal power, though Blackader was called head keeper.—There is not any one keeper with particular powers. Henry Dawson has the whole power over the other two keepers. He is looked on as having the head power." Henry Dawson says the "back kitchen door is never locked, night or day. A servant may go out at this door and be out all night. When patients are confined, the cells are cleaned out three or four times a week."

The servants received for the higher classes more than 100l. a year for perquisites; besides the cast clothes of the patients, which they take, "*when they consider them to have been worn a sufficient time.*"

On the 28th of January, 1814, the Archbishop of York and the rest of the Committee, were conducted through the different wards and apartments. They found the structure of the building and the disposition and dimen-



sions of the day rooms ill adapted for the accommodation and superintendence of the patients."

Mr. S. Take observes, "there were\* only 93 sleeping rooms for the 200 patients, the resident officers, and the servants. We must remember too, that the opulent patients occupied more than an equal proportion of this space, and the same may fairly be presumed, as to the servants and officers.—What was the actual average space allotted to each poor patient, it would be a matter of painful curiosity to ascertain."

"There were not any day rooms with contiguous airing courts. There were but two airing courts for all the classes of patients, except the opulent, who took their exercise in the garden. All the other classes of men were turned into one court, and the women into the other.—There was no provision in either court, for shelter against the rain or heat. Very few of the patients were allowed hats, and shoes and stockings were not unfrequently wanting. In this state, you might see more than 100 poor creatures shut up together, unattended and uninspected by any one; the lowest paupers and persons of respectable habits, the melancholic and the maniac, the calm and the restless, the convalescent and the incurable. It is needless, and it would be painful, to enumerate the evils and the dangers resulting from this system of indiscriminate association. The danger of patients injuring each other, was also very great, from their being shut up in considerable numbers in their day rooms, without any attendant or inspector. Nor must we forget, in this short sketch of the domestic evils which existed in the Asylum, that utter neglect of ventilation and cleanliness, which rendered so many parts of the place alike disgusting and unwholesome. It is almost impossible to conceive any place in a more damp and offensive state, than that part of the building

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\* i. e. Before the Fire.



called the low grates. The light, in several of the rooms, was obstructed by the erection of pig-styes, and other disagreeable offices; and the little air which was admitted, passed immediately over these places. The upper galleries suffered in some degree, from the same causes as the lower one. Their elevation prevented them from being damp; they were, however, with some exception in favour of that part occupied by the opulent, as gloomy as ingenuity could devise to make them, and, as defective as possible in ventilation\*."

Upon occasion of the fire, offers of accommodation had been received from the Asylum at Nottingham and the Retreat at York; but these had been declined† on Dr. Best's representation that such assistance would not be wanted. The Asylum was, however, found by the Committee to be excessively crowded. The building designed for 54 patients, contained 160; and additional patients continued to be received.—Numbers were huddled together in small day rooms; and some slept three in a bed. The air was in consequence extremely offensive and unwholesome.

It is remarkable that immediately before the fire, when a writer in the newspaper was challenging a comparison between the Asylum and the Retreat, as to their comparative number of deaths, the unfortunate patients crowded together in uncleanly and unventilated apartments, were perishing in great numbers. About the beginning of July there had died 5 patients in 18 days—about the beginning of November (the period of the controversy) there died 7

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\* See the Appendix to the "Vindication of Mr. Higgins."

† The offer from Nottingham was never even acknowledged—a circumstance which excited dissatisfaction there; and certainly did not tend to retrieve the credit of the York Governors for attention.



patients in 16 days.—On the 28th of December, the day when four patients perished by fire, a fifth lay dead in the house.

The number of patients in the house, at different periods during Dr. Hunter's life, has been already stated.—The average was 84—and the deaths on an average\* were eight per annum—or about a tenth of the whole. Since Dr. Hunter's death the number of patients has been as follows :

1809	—	156	1812	—	186
1810	—	168	1813	—	200
1811	—	168	1814	—	173

The average number of patients is 175. The deaths on an average have been 25 in a year, or a seventh of the whole.

During the year ending the first of July, 1814, the number of patients was as follows :

1813 July	200	1814 January	173
August	198	February	160
September	196	March	160
October	199	April	159
November	188	May	139
December	186	June	121

The average number for the year—173. The deaths were 33, or nearly a fifth of the whole.

\* Nothing can be more fallacious than to institute an inquiry into the mortality in an institution, by comparing the number of deaths with that of admissions. Supposing Mrs. Barber's hotel, instead of being remarkable for comfortable accommodations, were as uncleanly and unwholesome as a Lunatic hotel, and should send out 33 funerals in a year, a very plausible annual statement might nevertheless be drawn up as follows :

In the hotel at the beginning	}	30	Quitted the hotel, relieved,	}	10917
of the year			and refreshed		
Received into the hotel during the year	}	10950	Died only	}	33
			Remaining in the hotel		
		10980			10980

The inquiry must always be, what is the average number of persons in family.



The Annual report of deaths published in the newspapers, under the Apothecary's signature, was found to have been extremely incorrect, and below the actual number. The total to July, 1813, was stated at 221. It ought to have been 365. In one year, alone, Mr. Atkinson had taken off from the deaths a cool hundred. It appears at first sight a mere mistake in transcription, or an error of the press; but this does not account for it. The statement is a debtor and creditor account—every patient received being entered on one side—every patient discharged, or dead, or remaining in the house, on the other. The admissions are correctly entered; and an accidental error of a number in the deaths would have been discovered by the casting up the totals—the account would not have balanced.—But the numbers taken from the deaths are clearly, in one instance, added to the *cures*\*, and thus the

\* Extract from the York Herald of August 17, 1811:—

Admitted from the first Establishment in 1771, to 1st July, 1810	2254	Cured	996
From the 1st July, 1810, to 1st July, 1811	92	Relieved	592
		Incurable and removed by their friends	294
		Died	292
	2346	Remaining in the house	106
		men—66 women	172
			2346

Extract from the York Herald of August 22, 1812:—

Admitted from the first Establishment in 1771, to 1st July, 1811	2346	Cured	1112
From the 1st July, 1811, to 1st July, 1812	99	Relieved	616
		Incurable and removed by their friends	312
		Died	210
	2445	Remaining in the house	116
		men—79 women	195
			2445

The number of deaths to 1812, is reported less by 84, than the number to



account is made to balance. This is something more than either accident or carelessness.

The Committee of Rules and Management on reporting the general result of their investigations, added the following observations :

“ On a deliberate review of the results of their investigations, your Committee feel it their duty for the present to subjoin the following observations :—

1. That the admission of private patients of the Physician, on the plan for many years past adopted, is a practice not sanctioned by the rules of the institution, and in itself objectionable ; and that the principles on which the Physician to the Asylum shall be remunerated require the most serious attention.

2. That though the admission of opulent patients, if subjected to proper and specified limits, may be expedient for the purpose of deriving assistance for poor patients from their liberal payments, no sufficient advantage at present results from the admission of such patients.

3. That the permission given to the servants to receive perquisites from the richer patients, is calculated to occasion a neglect of the poorer classes, who have it not in their power to purchase the same attentions.

4. That as the appointment of visitors seems indispensably necessary in all public institutions, committed in a great

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1811. Instead of which, there were in fact, 19 deaths to be added for 1812—so that the error of the report for 1812, as to deaths, is 101 omitted.

The number of cures to 1812, is reported *greater* by 116, than the number to 1811—whereas the whole number of cured, relieved, removed, and buried, during the year, was, in fact, only 76. The average number annually reported cured, for the 4 preceding years, was 15. Deducting this number from 116, we have an error of 101, the excess in the number reported cured. One hundred and one dead men were, therefore, reported as cured. The error was not corrected in the report for 1813 ; on the contrary, twelve more dead men were either wholly omitted, or included amongst the cures.



measure to the care and management of hired servants, your Committee feel the greater cause to lament their discontinuance at the Asylum, where the necessity for their attendance is particularly urgent, as the Steward who is vested with the authority of a superintendent of the house, does not reside in it.

5. That the structure of the building, and the disposition and dimensions of the day-rooms, appear to your Committee ill adapted for the accommodation and superintendence of the patients.

6. Your Committee consider the present number of servants wholly inadequate to perform the work of the house, and give the requisite care and attention to the patients, who in consequence of this insufficiency in the number of keepers, are too frequently left to themselves.

7. As the deviations from the existing rules which your Committee have remarked, appear to have existed before the appointment of Dr. Best, your Committee are of opinion, that in case any censure should be considered by the Governors, as attaching to these deviations, it ought not to be imputed to him."

The Committee met on the 21st, 26th, and 28th of January, and on the 8th of February. On the last of those days their report was prepared; but previous to the Archbishop's departure to London, they determined to adjourn the revision and alteration of the rules until they might again have the benefit of his Grace's assistance. No further meeting, therefore, took place until the month of June.—The report as to rules and management was in the mean time submitted to the Quarterly court in April.

During the March assizes, two remarkable circumstances engaged the public attention.—A pauper from Bishophill, York, was sent to the Asylum, and was immediately lodged in the same apartment with three other



lunatics—one of them in a violent state. The new patient received mortal bruises, and died a few days afterwards in the Asylum. The Steward entered him in the book—"Died"—and for greater secrecy, instead of a coroner being sent for, the body was removed into Bishophill, and put into a coffin, and notice was given to the minister and parish clerk for the funeral. The clergyman, however, (the Rev. J. Graham, one of the new Governors of the Asylum) having heard a rumour of the circumstances, procured an inquest to be held—and the jury found a verdict, stating that the lunatic, John Bardwell, "*died of bruises given him by all, or some, or one of three other lunatics, who were confined and slept in the same room.*"

The other fact alluded to, was published by Mr. Higgins, in the York Herald of the 26th of March.

"Visiting the Asylum early this morning, (March 24th) says Mr. Higgins, I discovered to my great surprise, that the house is yet in the most shocking state. I discovered a number of *secret* cells in a state of filth, horrible beyond description, and which in my opinion it was impossible could be produced by the occupation of one or two patients in less than several nights; in one of these cells was a chain, with handcuffs affixed, FASTENED TO A NEW BOARD in the floor. These cells were occupied the last night by women, the most miserable objects I ever beheld. Upon inquiry, I find that these cells were kept secret from the two Committees who were appointed to examine the state of the house, &c. and that they were informed, as I was, before I discovered the door which led to these hidden cells, that they had seen the whole of the house. A Special meeting of Governors being held about 2 hours after my discovery, at which Col. Cooke, of Owston, presided, I was enabled to have these cells examined by at least 20 of the Governors, but not until all the straw, *perfectly soaked*



with urine and excrement had been removed, and clean straw put in the place. The state they were in even after this operation, I leave to the Governors to describe."

In the next week's newspaper, Dr. Best inserted an answer to Mr. Higgins's statement: he described the cells as "of a very sufficient size, entirely lined with wood, and "furnished with ventilators, straw-beds,\* blankets, &c. "With respect to the chain and handcuffs, (proceeds the "Doctor) they have been particularly examined by a Com- "mittee of Governors. The locks of the handcuffs being "entirely filled up and the hinges obliterated by rust, it is "evident, on the most casual inspection, not only that they "are incapable of being used at present, but that they can- "not have been employed as far as can be judged from "their appearance for a long series of years. It is quite "impossible that this circumstance can have escaped the "notice of Mr. Higgins, and yet he has deliberately at- "tempted to disseminate a belief, that this chain and these "handcuffs are still in use at the Asylum; or in other "words, he has laboured to mislead and inflame the pub- "lic mind to the deep prejudice of individuals, by an in- "sinnuation, WHICH AT THE TIME HE WAS BRINGING IT FOR- "WARD, HE KNEW TO BE WHOLLY UNFOUNDED."

This gross and unjustifiable attack on Mr. Higgins, was made in consequence of his simple statement of the fact, that he had discovered a chain and handcuffs in the Asylum. Mr. Higgins stated that the chain was fastened to a new board—and *it proved on inquiry, that the board had been put down only about six months before.* Was it not perfectly natural, under these circumstances, for Mr. Higgins

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\* Would the public have supposed from the term "*Straw-beds*," that these patients were bedded like horses on loose straw!



to conclude that the chain was fixed into the board for the purpose of being used?—It is admitted that Dr. Best convinced of the unpopularity of chains, had ordered them to be disused, and removed from the Asylum—yet it is very possible, that amongst the keepers, there was still an inclination for chains; and as this chain had remained so long without the knowledge of the Physician, it is easy to suppose that unknown to him, it might occasionally have been in use\*.

At the Quarterly court of the 14th of April, the circumstances of Mr. Higgins's discovery of secret cells, came under discussion. Three of the Committee, who considered Mr. Higgins's publication as a censure on that body for their remissness of inspection, thought it necessary to state in vindication—that when the Committee were conducted by Dr. Best and the keepers through the Asylum, these cells were not shown; and that they were led to believe, they had seen the whole building.

The following motion was then put and carried by a considerable majority.

“That it appears to this court, that when the Committee of rules and management were conducted through the Asylum on the 28th of January last, the four cells for female patients recently discovered by Mr. Higgins *in a state of extreme dirt and neglect, were not shown to them.*”

Dr. Best having declared that he had no intention of concealing the cells, a motion was made, to the following effect—*That it appears to the court that there was no INTEN-*

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\* A few weeks afterwards, one of the newly-appointed visitors discovered in a closet some *heavy irons*, intended to confine the person in a painful position. On his inquiring of one of the keepers respecting the irons, the reply was—“they were the irons of Turpin, the highwayman.”



TION \* on the part of Dr. Best to conceal these cells from the knowledge of the Committee.—Mr. Nicoll seconded the motion, and took considerable pains to procure for Dr. Best, a vote of exculpation. He said he was perfectly convinced that there had been no intention of concealment on the part of Dr. Best—and he was the more anxious to express his sentiments, as he had a motion to bring forward, which materially affected that gentleman. On a division, the motion was *negatived* by a small majority.—It was put in a new shape, and again supported by Mr. Nicoll—but the result was the same.

Mr. Nicoll then brought forward the other motion to which he had alluded.

“ That it is the opinion of this court, that Mr. Higgins is entitled to the thanks of the Governors, for his upright, persevering, and successful exertions in bringing to light the abuses which have prevailed in this institution.”

Mr. Alderman Wilson, though he did not oppose the vote of thanks, said he considered it out of season. He objected to its being brought forward at this particular period. Another Governor objected to it, because he thought it was intended to convey an implied censure of Dr. Best. Mr. Nicoll said his intention had not been misunderstood. He *did* intend a censure of Dr. Best, for his unjustifiable charge against Mr. Higgins: this, he said, was his reason for bringing forward the motion at the present time. Mr. Wilson declared, that now that Mr. Nicoll had avowed the real object of his motion, he would oppose it with all his might †. Violent altercation and recrimination ensued;

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\* This, it will be observed, was a question of *intention*, and no man can be certain of the unmixt nature of his own. We are apt to forget those things which it is not convenient for us to remember—and we have no suspicion that this forgetfulness is in some degree intentional.

† At the Quarterly court in December, 1814, the proceedings of this meet-



and at length a division took place, when Mr. Nicoll's motion was carried by a small majority. The names of the minority were published in the newspapers, as having protested against the vote.

Mr. Palmes then made a motion, which he begged the court would allow to be carried without opposition:—“That the chain found in one of the four cells was in that state of rust and decay, that it could not have been used for a considerable length of time.” Mr. Palmes' pleading for a friend, was irresistible, and the motion was accordingly carried, *nem. con.*

Undoubtedly the chain was extremely rusty—but it is possible to conceive that an extreme degree of rust may be produced in no considerable time, under the circumstances in which the chain was found—soaked in moisture. As to *decay*, the chain would have secured the strongest man in the room.

The Quarterly court in April, for the first time after a lapse of twenty-eight years, appointed visitors.—The visitors found an old rule, that in order to prevent fraudulent charges, no bills (except for subsistence) should be sent by the Steward to the friends of the patients, without the signature of the visitors—and they gave notice of this rule to Mr. Surr; who did not choose to submit to the new regime.

At an adjourned Quarterly court on the 5th of May, “Mr. Surr having been called in and desired to explain

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ing were referred to by Mr. Alderman Wilson—and Mr. Nicoll stated the ground on which he had put his motion of thanks to Mr. Higgins, detailing the transactions of the 14th of April, in substance as above given. Dr. Best immediately accused Mr. Nicoll of asserting a falsehood. Another Governor supported him. In consequence of this indecorum, the Archbishop properly interfered, to stop further altercation. A statement of what passed at a public meeting, cannot be considered as falsified by the *lie direct* of one or two individuals. The recollection of a large majority of the Governors present at the April meeting, must confirm the correctness of the statement now given.



why he refused to observe the order required of him by the visitors, said he was not aware such an order existed; that he had been so long, (viz. ever since he was appointed Steward) accustomed to sign his own bills only, that he should consider it an *impeachment of his integrity* if such an order was now enforced; and that he would rather resign his situation than comply with such a requisition."

It has already appeared in the instances of the fire, and of the discovered cells, that the knowledge of the inquiries which were going on, and the observation to which their conduct was exposed, had produced in the keepers, no degree of vigilance, or of attention to the persons of those under their care—that their feelings were become callous by habit. Another instance of the same kind which occurred about this period, is authenticated by Mr. Samuel Tuke.

"Mr. Tuke visiting the house, accompanied by the architect, between ten and eleven o'clock one morning, in the month of April, 1814, found a male patient, *without any clothes whatever*, standing in a wash-house on a wet stone floor, apparently in the last stage of decay; he was indeed a mere skeleton; his thighs were nearly covered with excrement in a dry state, and those parts which were not so, appeared excoriated, as did also some parts of his waist. A keeper, who was called, said, that the patient was not accustomed to leave his bed, that he was a perfect child, and could do nothing for himself; that his attendant was busy *killing pigs*, and could not, therefore, attend to him. The bed which he was said to have left was in the most filthy state, and corresponded with that of his body. He was spoken of by all (indeed it was impossible to see him and consider him otherwise) as a dying man. The further history of this poor creature proved, however, the fallacy



of appearances. He was removed to another part of the Asylum where he was better attended, and, in a few months, was so much recovered, as to be removed to his parish, in an inoffensive, though imbecile state of mind."

It cannot be wondered that such a spectacle should make a strong impression on one who had been accustomed to witness the humane attention of the managers and keepers at the Retreat.

It has already appeared in the instance of the late and of the late, that the knowledge of the inmates which was going on, and the observation to which they were exposed, had produced in the keeper, no degree of vigilance, or of attention to the persons of those under their care—that their feelings were becoming callous by habit. Another instance of the same kind which occurred about this period, is substantiated by the same facts.

Mr. Lake visiting the house, accompanied by the architect, between ten and eleven o'clock one morning, in the month of April, 1814, found a male patient, who had only lately returned, standing in a wash-house on a wooden floor, apparently in the last stage of decay; he was indeed a mere skeleton; his limbs were nearly covered with excoriation in a dry state, and those parts which were not so appeared excoriated, as did also some parts of his chest. A keeper who was called, said, that the patient was not accustomed to leave his bed, that he was a perfect child, and could do nothing for himself; that the attendant was busy with his pigs, and could not therefore attend to him. The bed which he was said to have left was in the most filthy state, and corresponded with that of his body. His was spoken of by all (indeed it was impossible to see him and consider him otherwise) as a dying man. The further history of this poor creature proved, however, the fallacy

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## CHAPTER VI.

### *Petition against Mr. Rose's Mad-House Bill.*

AT a special meeting of the Governors, held the 16th of July, 1814, it was determined to petition the House of Lords, against the bill which had then passed the House of Commons. There were several grounds for this petition. Though the regulations of the bill might be extremely salutary in private mad-houses, (of which the York Asylum, previous to 1814, was one) yet in the case of an institution vigilantly attended by a Committee and by visitors, the vesting such a controuling power in the Magistrates, as in effect to take the management out of the hands of those who are interested in the welfare of the charity, would produce injurious effects. Public charities are encouraged, because they are under the management of their patrons. If abuses arise, the public either makes an exertion to remedy them, or withdraws its countenance from the abused institution.—The Asylum might, it was apprehended, be guarded against a relapse into its former state of neglect, by requiring an affidavit of visitation to be annually made by the visiting Governors.

Another reason for petitioning was, the heavy and unnecessary tax to which this bill would have subjected the funds of the Asylum. This had been pointed out in the Committee of the House of Commons; and the Right Hon. Chairman (who listened with humane and patient attention to every suggestion for the improvement of the bill) adopted a clause for lightening the burden, not only in the case of institutions for parish paupers, but in that of insti-



tutions like the York and Nottingham Asylums, which are of a mixed nature—admitting many patients, who though not technically *paupers*, (i. e. maintained by parishes) are equally objects of charity. It was therefore justly a matter of surprise, that after the bill had been committed and recommitted, printed and reprinted, it came down into the country, containing indeed the mitigating clause alluded to—but by the omission of two words\*, wholly deprived of its effect. Under these circumstances, the Governors of the Asylum united in the petition against the obnoxious clauses of a bill—the general intention of which must be admitted to be excellent, and its effects—when it shall have been matured and passed into a law—likely to be salutary.

Mr. Higgins, about the same time, presented a counter petition, praying the House not to listen to the Governors, but rather to *make the law more strict with respect to the Asylum*. Both petitions concur in pointing out the expediency of a visitation by Magistrates of the *county* as well as *city* of York. (Copies of the petitions are inserted in the Appendix, page 46 to 49.)

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\* The missing words had been afterwards supplied, unknown to the petitioners.—The bill, however, was withdrawn; but will probably again come before Parliament during the present Session.



## CHAPTER VII.

### *Projected Alterations in the System of the Asylum.*

THE Committee of rules and management assembled occasionally during the months of June and July, to consider of the arrangement of a new code of rules. These were laid before the Quarterly court in July, in order that they might be in the hands of the Governors, and might be weighed and considered by every individual before the great Annual meeting in August, of which an account will be given. In the present chapter, it is intended to notice only a few topics, which were not afterwards particularly discussed at the General meeting.

1. It was supposed by many, that the appointment of *two* or more Physicians, instead of *one*, would be proposed by the new Governors, as a sovereign cure for all evils and abuses—that the situation of Physician to the Asylum, like the rectory of Simonburn, was too fat a living for one, and would afford to carry double at least. The fact, however, was, that most of the new Governors thought one Physician sufficient—they had no wish for a change of the individual. Dr. Best was as acceptable to them as any other man; and his professional abilities were unquestionable. Even if a change were to have been made, there is no point on which we should have entertained such various opinions, as on the nomination of a successor to Dr. Best.

As opulent patients, however, were to be admitted for the sake of the poor, it seemed reasonable that the Gover-



nors should not be restricted from admitting the patients of other Physicians ; and it was therefore proposed in the Committee, that affluent patients might be attended by any regular medical practitioner whom their friends chose—(a rule adopted in the Asylum at Glasgow). This was strenuously resisted by Dr. Best and his friends, and was negatived—the numbers in the Committee being equal, *pro* and *con*.

2. To improve the annual income, it was proposed to admit subscribers of two guineas per annum, as Governors. The patients had been materially reduced in number, in consequence of the fire ; yet it appeared that it would be necessary to support the same establishment of officers and servants, whose salaries and board must be provided for out of the payments of the reduced number of patients. It was apprehended that without some additional aid the charity would either be soon bankrupt, or be unable to admit the poorer classes at a moderate weekly sum. The proposed method of improving the income of the charity, excited the jealousy of the country gentlemen, as calculated to introduce amongst the Governors, a lower order of persons, who, *unlike the Old Governors*, would be disposed to promote jobs and private interests, instead of the good of the charity. On this ground the proposal was negatived.

3. It was also proposed in the Committee to supply the want of a Chaplain to the Asylum. It had been observed, that on the morning after the fire, a bible and the “Whole duty of man” were found in the apartments of the patients—the leaves partly consumed. One of these lay open near the remains of a patient’s apparel, and had evidently been in his hands before he retired to rest.—There can be no doubt that in a state approaching to convalescence, the offices of religion must be consolatory and advantageous. Mr. S. Tuke observes, “to encourage the influence of re-



religious principles over the mind of the insane, is considered of great consequence, as a means of cure."—"Many patients attend the religious meetings of the Society, held in the city; and most of them are assembled on a first day afternoon, at which time, the superintendent reads to them several chapters in the bible. A profound silence generally ensues, during which, as well as the time of reading, it is very gratifying to observe their orderly conduct, and the degree in which those who are much disposed to action, restrain their different propensities."

It was, therefore, proposed in the Committee, "*that the minister for the time being of the parish, should have free access to the Asylum; and visit the patients as often as he should see occasion.*"—Some mad Methodist, perhaps—was the remark of a clergyman, to the Archbishop of York on the proposal being made\*.

It had more than once been stated in the Committee, as an established fact, that fanaticism is the principal cause of lunacy—and therefore, it seems not wholly foreign to

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\* This is not the first time that it has been attempted to impress the Archbishop of York with a persuasion that there is a body of mad enthusiasts amongst the Clergy of his diocese.

The Rev. Sydney Smith, in a visitation sermon preached at Malton, thus presents the heads of his brethren in a charger to the Archbishop. "It is impossible not to observe that there is gradually growing up among us a new faction of ministers, pretending to more than ordinary sanctity, and emphatically *distinguishing themselves*† by the name of the Evangelical Clergy.—What we have to fear from all this fresh impetuosity is, that it will produce a crisis—it can never be stationary; it must come to an end; it is a contest of extravagance, a perverted struggle, where the least wise is the most honourable, and where the object seems to be to *lash mankind* to a state of the *greatest folly and delirium* which the wide limits of human imbecility will permit."—"That such men as I have described have entered, and are entering into our establishment, is one of the greatest misfortunes by which the church is this day afflicted."

† They do not assume the appellation—it is given to them as a term of reproach.



this history, to inquire into the grounds of the assertion. It appears to be founded on the opinion of Mr. Haslam, the apothecary to Bethlem hospital—"In his "Observations on madness," page 265.

"We see nothing in the solemn pomp of *Catholic worship*, which could disorganize the mind; as human beings, they have employed human art, to render the impression more vivid and durable. The decorous piety and exemplary life of the *quaker* has signally exempted him from this most severe of human infirmities. The established church of this country, of which I am an unworthy member, will delude no one by its terrors to the brink of fatuity."—"The pastors of this church are ALL men of liberal education, and many of them have attained the highest literary character; they are, therefore, eminently qualified to afford instruction."—"Although the faction of faith will owe me no kindness for the disclosure of these opinions, yet it would be ungrateful, were I to shrink from the avowal of my obligations to *METHODISM*, for the supply of those numerous cases, which has constituted my experience of this wretched calamity."

Mr. Haslam in a note on the word "*methodism*" quotes the following passage from the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1808, p. 342—"We shall use the general term of *methodism* to designate these three classes of fanatics, *Arminian* and *Calvinistic methodists*, and the *evangelical clergymen* of the church of England—not troubling ourselves to point out the finer shades, and nicer discriminations of *LUNACY*, but treating them all as in one general conspiracy against common sense, and rational orthodox christianity."

It must be evident from a perusal of these extracts, that Mr. Haslam is meddling with a subject with which he is wholly unacquainted.



"There is nothing," he says, "in the pomp of Catholic worship to disorganize the mind."—Were religion under any of its forms amongst the causes of madness, there is none more likely to affect the mind than the Roman Catholic. The rapturous discourses of its divines—the pomp of its religious rites—the sublime musical compositions which accompany its *Te Deums* and masses,\*—the vows and penances which it exacts—are all calculated to work strongly on the passions of the worshipper.—The Pope himself would scarcely venture to promise the Catholic a dispensation from lunacy.

Mr. Haslam's ignorance of Quakerism is no less remarked. "The decorous piety of the Quaker, has signally exempted him."—Mr. Haslam is evidently ignorant of the peculiar tenets of this sect—and of the frequently impassioned manner of their public speakers—or they would have been honoured with a place in his list of fanatical methodists. Even in the sphere of his own profession, he is also ill informed on the subject of the Quakers. Because they have taken care that their lunatics shall not be placed in the clutches of Mr. Haslam—the secrets of whose prison-house are now before parliament—he rashly concludes that they are "signally exempted" from insanity. Yet in the Retreat at York, at the very time Mr. Haslam was writing, there were *SIXTY* lunatics belonging to this religious society.

After complimenting the establishment, and pronouncing the clergy to be "*all* men of liberal education," he informs us of his obligations to *methodism* for the supply of numerous cases—and, adopting his creed from the Edinburgh

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\* Whoever is acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Latrobe's selections of sacred music, from the composers of Germany and Italy, must admit that it is there we must look for the finest church music in the world.



Review, he includes under this term, *Arminian and Calvinistic Methodists*, and the *Evangelical clergy of the church of England*. Yet out of about fifty cases, noticed in his book, there is only one in which the patient's disorder is attributed to enthusiasm—and this Mr. Haslam only takes from report.—Out of 150 cases recorded by Mr. S. Tuke, at the Retreat, he does not trace *one* to religious impressions.—“In one instance,” he observes, “the disorder came on during the singing in a methodist meeting-house\* ; but an extraordinary excitement had been previously observed, which it is at least highly probable, led the patient to the place where the ebullition of his mind could no longer be repressed.”

To Mr. Haslam's questionable evidence on this head, is opposed the counter testimony of Mr. Crowther, the surgeon to Bethlem ; who says—“As for the opinion which some entertain of the prevalent effect of methodism, in producing insanity, *proof*, in place of bold and bare assertion,

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\* This anecdote, notwithstanding the guarded manner in which Mr. Tuke has introduced it, will doubtless be considered by some members of his Society, as furnishing an additional argument against the use of music in divine worship, and perhaps by some members of the Establishment as an objection to that congregational singing sought to be introduced into our churches. Yet this is a practice of as high antiquity as the establishment of Christianity itself. The Christians in the first century were accustomed to sing responsive hymns to Christ as God. † When two of the first preachers of Christianity were thrust into an inner prison, and their feet made fast in the stocks, they sang hymns to God ; and though it was midnight, they sang so loud, that the prisoners *heard them*. Could Paul and Silas now visit the churches, it is difficult to say whether their surprise would be greater on attending the Quakers' meeting, where they would find no singing at all—or on entering one of our churches, where the idle people pent up opposite to each other in those vile inclosures, called pews, have resigned the work of praise to the execrable solo of the parish clerk.

† Carmenque Christo quasi Deo canere secum invicem—Plin. lib. 10. Epist. 97.



is required to settle this point." (Crowther's practical remarks.)

Joanna Southcott has lately deluded a number of persons with the promise of a new Messiah—The number of her followers has been estimated at *one hundred and ten thousand*. Never perhaps, since the time when the prophets of Baal, vainly cutting themselves with knives and lancets, were exposed to the mockery of Elijah—have impious expectations been more completely overwhelmed with contempt and derision, than by the opening of the body of Joanna Southcott.—At this period, if fanaticism were the grand cause of insanity, we might expect our mad-houses to be crowded with the disappointed followers of Joanna—Let the inquiry be fairly made throughout the kingdom—all I can say is, that though her disciples were numerous in Yorkshire, no application has been made to admit any one of them into the Asylum.

It seems, therefore, scarcely necessary to observe on the improbability of the charge preferred against the *evangelical clergy*. These are for the most part useful and respectable men—remarkable in the closet for a diligent study of the scriptures, and the writings of the fathers, and in public for the other duties of their office. Their zeal, of which it has been prophesied that it must come to an end, has in many instances been burning with a steady and unabated flame for a period of 20, 30, or 40 years. Under such pastors the heads of our church need not be alarmed, lest the people should be lashed to delirium. There is more danger from apathy than from enthusiasm.—The present, it should be observed, is no new attempt to raise a cry against religious zeal, as the proof of a disordered intellect. Of the author of our religion his countrymen said—"he hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye



him?"\* Of his great apostle a pagan governor said with a loud voice, "Paul thou art beside thyself;" and the disciples were taught to expect such accusations. "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call them of his household?"

To return to the proposal before the Committee respecting the clergyman of the parish; if fanaticism be amongst the causes of insanity, we are furnished with an additional argument for allowing the attendance of a judicious chaplain. How otherwise are the erroneous notions which have been the cause of the disease to be eradicated?—Till this is done, we cannot expect an effectual cure.

Notwithstanding the alarm endeavoured to be excited, the motion was approved by the Archbishop, and adopted by the Committee.

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\* His friends sought to lay hold of him; for they said, "Οἱ ἱερεῖς."



## CHAPTER VIII.

### *Proceedings of the Annual Court.*

IT will have already appeared that the report of the Committee of rules and management was neutralized, for the purpose of producing unanimity. It was not likely to meet the sanguine views and expectations of Mr. Higgins; and that gentleman was apprehensive lest the result should be unsatisfactory. Previous to the Annual meeting, he therefore published a letter in the newspapers, alluding to the principal abuses of the Asylum, and labouring to make a strong impression on the minds of the Governors\*.

#### \* *To the GOVERNORS of the YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.*

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

As the abuses, which are now not denied to have existed in the York Lunatic Asylum, will probably be laid before Parliament in the ensuing Session, it is unnecessary to say much about them.

Let me however briefly remind you, that it appears from the reports of your Committee, that large sums of money arising from the admission of opulent Patients have not been applied, according to the original intention, to the relief of the poorer classes; and that the lunatic poor, who have been confided to the care of your officers and servants by the Magistrates, have been neglected and abused. It does not, however, appear that any of the persons, who have thus abused your confidence, or betrayed their trust, have yet been dismissed from their situations, or even censured for their misconduct.

Under these circumstances, I hope you will not fail to attend at the General meeting, which is fixed for Friday in the ensuing Race week, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon.

I think it now both my right and my duty to call upon you to do justice to the institution and the public, and I feel confident I shall not call in vain.

In the name of all those persons, whose violent deaths are so stated in your books, as to disguise the facts from you, I call for justice.

In the name of one hundred and forty-four Patients, whose deaths have been concealed from the Public and from you, I call for justice.



*The general Annual court of the 25th of August, held at the Guildhall, was attended by about 80 Governors. The*

I call upon you to clear the house of every individual, who has neglected his duty or abused his authority.

I call upon you to cleanse the Augean Stable, from top to bottom.

I have the honour to be,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

GODFREY HIGGINS.

Skellow-Grange, Aug. 1814.

*In consequence of this letter, Dr. Best published the following :*

**YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.**

*To the EDITOR of the YORK CHRONICLE.*

Sir,

From the nature of the letter published by Mr. Higgins, in the York Herald of Saturday last, it is not to be doubted that decided steps will be taken by the Governors of the Asylum, at the approaching Meeting on Friday.

Should the facts, to which the Governors are referred, be found to warrant the contents of that letter, *justice demands* that the suggestion therein contained, should be acted upon without hesitation, in regard to every officer and servant of the house. Should it appear that the charges are not warranted by the facts to which reference is made, it follows as a matter of course, that suitable notice will be taken of conduct, on the part of the accuser, which it would in that case be impossible to designate by appropriate expressions.

In either event, whether the guilt be affixed on the accused or on the accusing party, justice will not be complete, in circumstances of such enormity, unless some ulterior measures be resorted to by the public at large, or by the Magistrates of the County.

I am, Sir, &c.

August 23d, 1814.

Y. Z.

It is certain that the General meeting acquitted Dr. Best of criminality, and did not censure Mr. Higgins. According to Dr. Best's declaration, therefore, *justice will not be complete in circumstances of such enormity, unless some ulterior measures be resorted to by the public at large, or by the Magistrates of the county.*



first proceeding in order and importance was, the consideration of the new rules proposed by the Committee. An attempt was, however, made to divert the attention of the meeting to the discussion of Mr. Higgins's letter. Mr. Hall Wharton, M. P., the Rev. Mr. Dealtry, and others, expressed themselves warmly against Mr. Higgins, and intimated that he ought to be censured. Lord Milton observed that the business before the court was the regulation of the Asylum, and that Mr. Higgins was not amenable to their tribunal. It was decided, by a large majority, to proceed to consider the rules. The principal of these will here be noticed in their order.

1. It was determined unanimously, that there should be *one Physician*: and (by a majority) that *the friends of patients might call in any regular Physician in consultation.*

2. That the *Apothecary* should be *the superintendent* of the house.

3. The *qualification of Governors* was fixed to be a *donation of £20 or upwards to general purposes.*

4. The powers of the *Quarterly and Annual courts* were defined.

Under this head a resolution was adopted, that *no Governor, or other person, shall be present, when any matter relating to himself is under consideration, unless with the approbation of the court.*

Lord Milton proposed (and the resolution was adopted by a majority) that

*No Governor, being an officer of the establishment, shall be of the quorum, either at a General, or a Quarterly, or Special court.*



5. *A Committee of seven* was directed to be regularly appointed by ballot at each Quarterly court, for the general superintendence and government of the house.

It was moved by Lord Milton, and carried by a majority, that

*No officer of the institution shall be eligible to act on the Committee.*

6. *Visiting Governors* are to be appointed at each Quarterly court—and *ladies* (whether contributors or not) are to be requested to visit the female wards. The proceedings and observations of the Committee and the visitors to be entered in writing, and read at the Quarterly courts.

On the motion already alluded to—that the minister of the parish should be a visitor—being put, Mr. Higgins moved as an addition, that patients of different persuasions should be attended by their own ministers. This amendment occasioned some difficulty, and, in the end, the original motion was withdrawn, and the matter was left to the discretion of the Committee.

7. The admission and classification of patients came under consideration. These were divided into various classes, from three guineas a week downwards.

Earl Fitzwilliam here expressed his great surprise, on learning from the report of the Committee, that the highest class of patients at present in the Asylum, paid only 14s. a week. This, his Lordship observed, was contrary to the rules. What (he asked) had become of the higher classes, who, according to the rules, were to pay 20s. per week and upwards?

These, it was answered, were Dr. Best's *private patients*, for whom he received what he thought fit, and paid the house only 14s. Earl Fitzwilliam declared his astonishment; he had been a Governor for a long period of



years, and regularly attended the Annual meetings, but he never before heard of any private patients of the Physician.

8. THE PHYSICIAN, *in addition to his professional duties, is to notice any negligence or misbehaviour which he may observe in any of the officers or servants.*

To which Earl Fitzwilliam moved, that it be added,

*He is expected to pay attention to the state of the persons of the patients, and to remark the condition of their apartments.* This was carried.

9. The remuneration of the Physician came next under consideration. A fixed salary was proposed in lieu of fees. This Lord Fitzwilliam strenuously objected to. He showed, from the state of the finances, that the charity was without any funds for the maintenance of the patients: he had no objection to the Physician's receiving his fees from the affluent patients, according to the old rules, but would never consent to vote him a salary, which the charity had no means of paying, and which must therefore come out of the pockets of the poor lunatics. To this it was replied, that the system of fees was liable to abuses.

On a division, *the remuneration by salary* was carried by a large majority; *the physician to accept no fees or gratuities.*

On the *quantum* of salary, various opinions were entertained—and it was determined that the question should be first decided, whether the Physician should be precluded from having private establishments.

Lord Milton strenuously contended against this privilege to the Physician, as detrimental to the interests of the charity, and calculated to occasion the removal of those affluent patients from the house, whose overflowings were relied on for the relief of the poor. Upon a show of hands, Lord Milton's motion for precluding the Physician from pri-



vate establishments was declared to be lost. The noble Lord called for a division, when there appeared a majority of six against the motion.

On this occasion, many of the leading promoters of reform voted in favour of this privilege to the Physician. To prohibit Dr. Best from private establishments would, in effect, have been a dismissal—for though a liberal salary might be allowed, his private lunatic establishments were conceived to be a source of greater emolument. If the Governors were not prepared to dismiss their Physician upon a direct motion for the purpose, there seemed a hardship towards him in adopting a rule, which, however desirable for the charity, was in effect—though indirectly—compelling Dr. Best to resign.

Different sums were then proposed for the salary: 400*l.* was negatived without a division: 200*l.* and 300 guineas were then proposed. Mr. Thompson, of Hull, M. P., remarked, that it was very unusual to give so large a salary for attending any charitable institution. Most of these were attended gratis; and he doubted not if the situation was vacant, offers would be made by many Physicians of their gratuitous services. The credit of the situation, and the introduction to private practice, (from which the Physician would not be restricted) was a sufficient inducement without any salary at all. In the great hospitals in London, he understood 50*l.* or 100*l.* per annum, was the highest salary. He therefore could not vote for so large a sum as was proposed. Earl Fitzwilliam repeated his determination to vote for no salary at all, until it was proved there were funds to make it good. Several shows of hands now took place; and at length, the majority was declared to be in favour of a salary of *THREE HUNDRED GUINEAS* per ann. till further order.

10. The duties of the situations of *Treasurer, Apothecary, Steward, Matron, and Servants in general*, were defined.



11. It was decided that *the present and future contributors to Lupton's Accumulating Fund should be Governors, whenever that fund should be opened.*

The whole code of new rules being adopted, Mr. Higgins proposed, that as abuses had prevailed, and as a new constitution was now adopted, the whole of the officers of the house should (in a parliamentary phrase) be sent back to their constituents; in other words, that their places should be declared vacant; and a new election take place on a future day. The motion was regularly made and seconded. Mr. Higgins was now called upon by Mr. Hall Wharton and others, to lay a ground for his motion, by showing that abuses had existed. This Mr. Higgins proceeded to do in the three instances alluded to in his letter: and though he was repeatedly interrupted and attacked, he preserved the greatest temper and coolness. He showed, in the first place, from the report of the Committee, that large sums, arising from the payments of the opulent patients, had never been placed to the credit of the institution, for the benefit of the indigent, according to the intention of the charity; and that even of the sums received from the middling classes, only a part had been brought to account.

Here Mr. Higgins was interrupted by Dr. Best and his friends, who charged Mr. Higgins with a personal attack on the Doctor. Mr. Higgins disavowed any such intention—he had been called upon to state facts, and he had confined himself to a plain statement, without attributing blame any where. Earl Fitzwilliam and Lord Milton declared they now heard, with the utmost astonishment, that the Physician, instead of taking moderate and reasonable fees from the affluent, which the Governors had authorized him to do, had put in his own pocket those sums which were intended for the support of the poor lunatics; and



that though he was allowed to take fees from the affluent only, he had even participated in the weekly payments of patients paying so low as 10s. per week. Dr. Best underwent a long interrogation from the two noble Lords, during which, he vindicated himself on the grounds of the practice of his predecessor, and the presumed connivance of the Governors. Earl Fitzwilliam held up his hands in great agitation at the discovery—he said he had been deceived in Dr. Hunter; his Lordship was almost the oldest surviving Governor, and had audited the accounts at every Annual meeting; yet so far from conniving at, he had never even entertained a suspicion of such practices.

Dr. Best called on the Governors to come to an immediate decision, whether or not he had misapplied the funds. It was late in the day; and Lord Milton proposed an adjournment, but Dr. Best's friends were pressing. A motion was made and seconded—that *Dr. Best was not guilty of misapplying the funds of the institution*. This motion being strongly opposed by Earl Fitzwilliam and others, as contrary to the facts, it was withdrawn, and another was substituted by Mr. Nicoll—"that no CRIMINALITY ATTACHES TO DR. BEST for misapplication of the funds of this institution." This resolution was carried with only a small minority—amongst whom were Earl Fitzwilliam and Lord Milton.

The court adjourned, at about six o'clock, to the following day.

The next morning Mr. Higgins resumed his proof of abuses, in which he had been interrupted by the discussion already noticed.

Having proved misapplication of funds, he proceeded to prove from the report of the Committee, neglect and ill treatment of the patients—particularly those of the poorer class—and concealment of the actual number of deaths.



Mr. Higgins had now made good his case, and might fairly have urged his motion for a general dismissal of officers and servants, which had not been postponed, and never withdrawn.—Another motion, however, was now introduced by the Rev. Mr. Graham, and supported by Mr. Nicoll—that the offices of Steward, Apothecary, and Matron, should be declared vacant.

This motion was severely animadverted on by Lord Milton, on account of the omission of the Physician—“*why* (exclaimed his Lordship) *not pounce upon the head?*”—Other Governors wished the subordinate officers to have a hearing; but most of those who had been strenuous to save the Physician from dismissal, seemed indifferent as to the fate of the inferior officers. They were called in, however, and indulged with the formality of a hearing—after which, Mr. Graham’s proposition was carried with very few dissenting votes.

It is acknowledged, that with a view to the future welfare of the charity, it might be sufficient to change the domestic officers—retaining the Physician—but if the proceeding had reference to the past, and to the comparative responsibility which attached to the superior and to the subordinate officers, this line of conduct was extremely hard and unjust towards the latter—justice to them called for that general removal which Mr. Higgins proposed.—The marked forbearance shown towards the Physician, was also liable to misconstruction. Dr. Best had before publicly declared in the newspapers, that the characters of himself and of Mr. Higgins, were at issue, on the event of this meeting; and the friends of the Doctor were now emboldened to claim a decisive victory. The public were congratulated in the newspapers that “after a most scrutinizing and minute investigation into the direction, management, and treatment of the pa-



tients"—only the two cases of Kidd and Schorey had been proved. As to the Physician, it was said, that a "severe scrutiny" had led "to a perfect conviction on the mind of every gentlemanly observer, that the conduct of that officer had been *peculiarly correct*, and that his unsolicited resignation of some of the emoluments which his predecessor enjoyed, as proved at that meeting, had been *nobly disinterested*."

It cannot excite surprise, that under these circumstances, Mr. Higgins and the active promoters of reformation conceived that further explanation was necessary. Mr. Higgins's letter to Earl Fitzwilliam appeared soon afterwards.

There was an adjourned General court on the 7th of October, for the election of an Apothecary, a Steward, and a Matron. Mr. Miller, of Malton, was elected Apothecary—Mrs. Harrison (then the Matron to the County Hospital) Matron—and Mr. Pyemont, Steward.

At this meeting, a case of conscience was stated by Dr. Best, on the rule which prohibits fees or gratuities to the Physician, from the friends of *patients in the Asylum*.—A patient recovered and discharged, had sent him a brace of partridges. Was he either to throw them out into the street, or be charged with criminality? Whilst it is impossible not to remark on this occasion, a splenetic attack on the promoters of the new system, it may also be noticed as an instance of successful attention on the part of the Physician, and of gratitude on the part of the patient.—It happened to me last winter, to be in company with a gentleman recently discharged out of the Asylum, after a short confinement—*cured*—who considered himself greatly indebted to the care and assiduity of Dr. Best—Let it not be concluded that the horizon of the Asylum was universal darkness—that its moon was too far in the wane to afford the smallest light, or the cloud which covered it, so un-



broken, that not a single star appeared. Doubtless there have been many, (whose malady was materially connected with bodily indisposition) to whom medical skill and attention were beneficial, and it is also hoped a few solitary instances, in which the patient *when he saw that he was healed, returned, giving glory to God, and thanks to the Physician.*



## CHAPTER IX.

### *History of the Asylum, from the General Meeting, 1814, to the end of the year.*

THE election of a new Apothecary, Matron, and Steward, on the 7th of October has been noticed. On the same day, a new set of attendants was introduced into the Asylum. The attention of the visitors had indeed already produced very salutary improvements in the appearance of the house, and the condition of the patients; the effects of the reformation were already apparent—nor did it appear that any other disorders or irregularities had ever occurred amongst the servants, except such as might be expected in a large establishment, left wholly to itself. Yet still it was feared that habits had been acquired of a callous insensibility to the comforts and enjoyments of the patients, which it would be difficult, if not impossible, to correct; and therefore, the Committee, to whose discretion it was left, conceived it desirable to have an entirely new establishment of servants. The difficulties arising from the inexperience of the new officers and servants were temporary, and less than could have been supposed.

At the Quarterly court of the 14th of December, 1814, the report books of the visiting Governors—of the Ladies, visitors of the female wards—and of the Committee, were read. These reports were of considerable length, embracing a number of regulations, most of them important, and



others though minute in themselves, yet tending to promote the accommodation and comforts of the patients. It was sufficiently apparent that a progressive improvement was taking place in the management of the Asylum.

A few circumstances had also transpired during the quarter, which were noticed in the report of the Committee, and tend to show more fully (if it were necessary) the defects of the old system.

The Committee reported that the Matron had been in the habit of charging a profit on articles purchased by her for the use of the house\*—There was an unaccountable deficiency in the stock of linen, beds and bedding, notwithstanding considerable recent supplies.—But the most extraordinary circumstance reported by the Committee, as connected with the old system, was the conduct of Mr. Surr, the late Steward.—The Committee being in want of his quarterly books of account as to the patients, on the Monday before the Quarterly court, Mr. Pyemont, the new Steward, was dispatched to apply to Mr. Surr for these books—he returned twice without them—Mr. Surr did not know what books the Committee wanted. The Committee waited on him in person. He peremptorily refused to deliver them up, or to give any account of them. The Committee, therefore, reported to the Quarterly court, that they conceived these books to be the property of the institution, and submitted that Mr. Surr should be required to deliver them up.—In consequence of this re-

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\* Mrs. Atkinson admitted to the Committee that the rugs for the patients' beds were too short, and the blankets would not tuck in. In an *obscure branch of medicine*, experiments are laudable—an application of extreme cold to the head had been vouched to the public as efficacious in the cure of insanity—the late managers of the Asylum might wish to try the experiment of a similar application to the feet.



port of the Committee, Mr. Brook, the treasurer, was deputed by the Quarterly court, to demand the books—he returned with an answer, that Mr. Surr, after the Committee left him on Monday night, had *in a moment of irritation*, BURNT THE WHOLE OF THE BOOKS—except the book for the quarter just expiring.

The following resolution was then passed:

“That the conduct of Mr. Surr, in withholding from the Committee, several account books belonging to this institution, and destroying them, deserves the severest reprehension of this court, and is a most ungrateful return for the indulgence shown him by the last Annual court, in allowing him to reside in the Steward’s house until the 6th of April next.”

A no less extraordinary circumstance occurred at the next meeting of the Committee—sufficiently proving that if the burning of the books really took place, it was not a sally of passion, but a deliberate act of selection. Mr. Surr produced to the Committee those quarterly books which tally with his accounts, and are so contrived, that whilst the Physician was receiving considerable sums out of the weekly payments of the patients, he does not appear to receive a single shilling—the other set of books, which would have disclosed the Steward’s actual receipts, he still declared he had destroyed.

In the Asylum investigations, CONCEALMENT appears at every step of our progress. 365 patients have died—the number is advertised 221. A patient disappears, and is never more heard of, he is said to be “REMOVED.” A patient is *killed*—his body is hurried away to prevent an inquest. He is *cured*—but it is by some medicine, the composition of which is known only to the Doctor. The public cry out, that a patient has been neglected—there is a *levy en mass* of respectable Governors to quell the distur-



bance, and to certify that the patient has been treated "with *all possible care, attention, and humanity.*" A Committee of investigation desires to be shown the house—certain cells "in an extreme state of filth and neglect" are omitted to be pointed out to them. The Governors examine the accounts—there are considerable sums, of which neither the receipt nor the application appears. They inspect the Physician's report—it only aids the concealment. The Steward's books are inquired for—in a moment of irritation he selects for the flames, such of them as he thought it not advisable to produce. And yet every circumstance of concealment is imputed by some to mere accident—and every attempt to tear off the mask, and exhibit the Asylum in its true character, is stigmatized as a libel, or an indelicate disclosure!

It is not, however, suspected that there is any material fact concealed from the public, which the burnt books would have disclosed, nor that any individual was privy to the act of burning them.

The only Quarterly books of this series which have escaped the flames, are the accounts of Mr. Eastburn, the former Apothecary, for the first and second quarters of 1797, and the account of Mr. Surr for the second quarter of 1799. The latter was accidentally found out of its place, amongst the bundles of Quarterly accounts delivered up by the late Steward.

*Mr. Eastburn's Accts. Mr. Surr's Accts.*  
1st Qr. of 1797. 2d Qr. of 1799.

Patients at 24s. per week, of which Dr. Hunter

received of the Steward 14s. ....	1	.....	0
— at 16s. of which Dr. H. received 6s. ...	1	.....	0
— at 15s. of which Dr. H. received 5s. ...	0	.....	1
— at 14s. of which Dr. H. received 4s. ..	1	.....	1
— at 12s. of which Dr. H. received 2s. ..	2	.....	2
— at 10s. 6d. of which Dr. H. recd. 1s. 6d. 1	1	.....	1
— at 10s. of which Dr. H. received 1s. ...	27	.....	25
— at 10s. accounted for without deduction 12	.....	.....	5



Parish Paupers, &c. at 8s.....	48	.....	47
Indigent Lunatics at 7s.....	2	.....	0
————— 6s.....	13	.....	16
————— 5s.....	1	.....	2
————— 4s.....	7	.....	10

*Mr. SURR's ACCOUNTS.**2d Quarter of 1813.*

Dr. Best's private Patients, whose accounts do not pass through the Steward's hands—for whom the Steward received of the Physician 14s.—and who were distinguished in the burnt books by the letter B* .....	16
Patients at 15s. of which Dr. Best received of the Steward 5s. ....	16
———— at 12s. of which Dr. Best received 2s. ....	11
———— at 10s. of which Dr. Best received 1s. ....	17
Parish Paupers, &c. paying 9s. ....	110
Indigent Lunatics at 8s. ....	13
———— 6s. ....	7
———— 5s. ....	4
———— 4s. ....	4

As there are in the Quarterly accounts for 1797 and 1799, a few patients at 10s. a week, which sum the Steward gives credit for without deduction, it may be presumed that these patients either requited Dr. Hunter by fees, or were his private patients, and settled their accounts with the Doctor himself—in which case, the 10s. entered by the Steward, was the sum received by him of Dr. Hunter for each patient.

If there were patients in 1797, whose accounts were settled with Dr. Hunter himself, and for whom he only allowed the Steward 10s. per week, it seems extraordinary that in 1797, the Steward was keeping an account for a

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\* Mr. Wilson, who was accidentally discovered to have paid 2 guineas a week, was in this class. At the time of the fire there was a patient at 3 guineas—the payments of six others, since removed, are unknown—one patient, remaining last September, paid £120. per annum, which in this single case included clothes and all other etceteras—3 others paid 11. 11s. 6d. or 11. 10s.—five were at lower rates, from 16s. to 30s.



patient at 24s.—since this patient would have belonged to the class of private patients, if such a class existed. It may be answered, that the patient at 24s. was probably removed into the private class between 1797 and 1799—this was not the fact—the 24s. patient of 1797, is the same person who is the 15s. patient of 1799, so that Dr. Hunter's profit upon him was reduced from 14s. to 5s. per week; and he was still a patient of the higher class, according to Mr. Surr's books. There is, however, no doubt, that the class of 10s. patients (12 in number in 1797, but only 5 in 1799) were patients of the higher class, for whom Dr. Hunter was either remunerated by fees, or by retaining a proportion of their weekly payments.

It appeared important to enable the reader to form an opinion for himself, whether or no Dr. Hunter had, at this period, begun the practice of keeping the accounts with the affluent patients, a practice which, from age and infirmities, he was very unlikely to adopt at a later period of his life. Dr. Hunter's profits in 1797, exclusive of what he might receive from the 12 patients at 10s.—are at the rate of 175l. 10s. per ann.: in 1799, exclusive of what he might receive from the five patients at 10s. they are at the rate of 102l. 14s. per ann.



### *Remarks in Conclusion.*

**I**T is unnecessary to swell these pages with an account of the proceedings of the Committee in the internal regulation of the Asylum. These are so simple and obvious in themselves, that they must have occurred in the management of all similar establishments; and it is only a matter of surprise that here they should never before have been attempted.

To provide the patients with the means of employment and amusement, and to prevail on them to use these means, is a great desideratum in an establishment for lunatics. The malady induces habits of desponding inactivity, and the patient must be roused to exertion. Here an active and intelligent superintendent possesses advantages over the Physician, who can only be a periodical visitor. The patient, from indolence or perverseness, may refuse those employments or recreations in which he is desired to join—but the superintendent can watch a favourable opportunity for accomplishing the point.

Such of the patients, the nature of whose malady will allow it, are now taken to some place of worship every Sunday, and they appear highly gratified, and desirous of proving themselves worthy of the confidence placed in them.

There is a circumstance connected with the new system, which has been justly complained of by those who had been in the habit of being employed about funerals from the Asylum, and to whom “custom hath made it a property of easiness.” There has now (Feb. 3, 1815) been no death amongst the patients since the 14th of July last—a period



of nearly seven months\*. Too frequent visitation, it is said, unsettles the patients; zeal certainly is the fault of young beginners. This fault is cured by time; and the patients may, perhaps, soon be again permitted to die without interruption. In the former year, exclusive of the four deaths by fire, there was a mortality of one-sixth of the whole of the patients (29 out of 173). The same proportion would allow of 17 deaths during the present year. It must, therefore, be a high satisfaction to those Governors who have been active in reforming the institution, to be assured, that several human lives have, in all probability, been already saved through their exertions.

If there had been a change in the Physician, the public might have erroneously ascribed this remarkable cessation of mortality to a superiority of medical ability in the successor to Dr. Best. It is therefore material to remark, that the change has taken place under *the same Physician*†. It is believed that there had been no want of medical skill; but a want of those *common attentions* to the patients which are due from one human being to another. A clergyman was considered by the keepers *no better* than a dog—a parish pauper *much worse*. The patients were left at the mercy of tyrannical and unfeeling servants. The poor were crowded together, that the rich might be accommodated. There was a neglect of cleanliness and ventilation.—The change on which the Governors may now congratulate

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\* The number of patients has been as follows:—

1814, July	115	December	101
August	99	1815, January	105
September	101		
October	100	Average	103
November	100		

† Dr. Best is now relieved from that responsibility which attached to him whilst he was acting not merely as Physician, but as sole manager, and exercising “a general superintendence over the subordinate officers and servants.”



themselves, is therefore the result of common attentions, and it respects rather the improved bodily health of the patients, than their restoration to sanity. Madness appears to be nearly out of the reach of medicine, and to baffle all the efforts of human skill.

"Therein the patient

"Must minister to himself"—

Or, rather, we must look to that "unerring Providence," to whom it may seem fit, "presently to remove from us this great calamity, or still to suspend it over us."

Yet something may doubtless be done by the perseverance of an observing and judicious superintendent, always on the spot, marking the different cases of the patients, with their daily vacillations. The Reviewer of Mr. Samuel Tuke's work (in the *Edinburgh Review* for April, 1814) has made some forcible observations on this subject, which deserve to be quoted.

"Very little dependence (he observes) is to be placed on *medicine alone* for the cure of insanity. The experience, at least, of this well governed institution (the Retreat) is very unfavourable to its efficacy. Where an insane person happens to be diseased in body as well as mind, medicine is not only of as great importance to him as to any other person, but much greater; for the diseases of the body are commonly found to aggravate those of the mind—but *against mere insanity, unaccompanied by bodily derangement, it appears to be almost powerless.*"—"They" (the Quakers, observes the Reviewer)—"are always ready with their money, and what is of far more importance, with their time and attention, for every variety of human misfortune. They seem to *set themselves down systematically before the difficulty*, with the wise conviction that it is to be lessened or subdued only by great labour and thought, and that it is always increased by indolence and neglect: In this instance they have set



an example of *courage, patience, and kindness*, which cannot be too highly commended, or too widely diffused; and which we are convinced *will gradually bring into repute a milder and better method of treating the insane*. For the *aversion to inspect places of this sort is so great, and the temptations to neglect and oppress the insane so strong*, both from the love of power and the improbability of detection, that we have no doubt of *the existence of great abuses in the interior of many mad-houses*. A great deal has been done for prisons; but the order of benevolence has been broken through by this preference; for *the voice of misery may sooner come up from a dungeon, than the oppression of a madman be healed by the hand of justice*."

Speaking of the Quaker's Retreat, the same writer observes—"the great principle on which it appears to be conducted, is that of *kindness to the patients*. It does not appear to them (the Quakers) because a man is mad upon one particular subject, that he is to be considered in a state of complete mental degradation, or insensible to the feelings of kindness and gratitude. When a madman *does not do what he is bid to do, the shortest method to be sure is to knock him down*; and straps and chains are the species of prohibitions, which are the least frequently regarded. But the Society of Friends seems *rather to consult the interest of the patient than the ease of his keeper*; and to aim at the government of the insane by creating in them the kindest disposition towards those who have the command over them. Nor can any thing be more wise, humane, or interesting, than the strict attention to the feelings of the patients, which seems to prevail in their institutions."—  
*"An attendant on a mad-house exposes himself to some risk, and to some he ought to expose himself, or he is totally unfit for his situation. If the security of the attendant were the only object, the situation of the patients would soon be-*



come truly desperate. The business is not to risk nothing, but not to risk too much\*."

The foregoing narrative may serve to show the nature of those abuses, to which charitable institutions, particularly receptacles for the insane are liable—the danger of implicit confidence, and the necessity that the Governors, and Committees, and Visitors of the Asylum, and of all other charities, should be vigilant. It may also vindicate the new Governors from the charges which have been circulated, that they stepped forward without necessity, excited unnecessary clamour, or were influenced by personal considerations. "What," (said a shepherd's boy in sacred history) "have I now done? is there not a cause?"

MISMANAGEMENT, like the Goliath of the Philistines was stalking abroad, and challenging attack. In vain had the two great champions, Mason and Burgh, wielded their swords; for the Giant "was armed with a coat of mail;" and "one bearing a shield went before him." In this hopeless situation of things, Mr. Higgins and Mr. Nicoll, together with a few humble individuals, (who were tauntingly told that their donations of twenty pounds did not make them gentlemen) stepped forward—like the scorned

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\* It ought not to be omitted to be mentioned, that the Reviewer speaks of Mr. Tuke's work in terms of commendation. "The present account is given to us by Mr. Tuke, a respectable tea-dealer, living in York; and given in a manner, which we are quite sure *the most opulent and important of his customers could not excel.*"—If, as there seems reason to suspect, the ingenious Reviewer lives not so far north of York as Edinburgh, it is extremely desirable, that he would lend his assistance to the improvement of the Asylum. His vigorous and powerful mind would be beneficially employed in devising appropriate plans of treatment, for the different classes and degrees of lunacy—a subject which perhaps has never received that attention which its importance deserves.

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stripling, they "drew near to meet the Philistine"—and they have prevailed.

To exhibit the hideous features of the slain giant, and to prevent the possibility of his ever rising to life again, the writer of these pages has ventured to appear before the public "WITH THE HEAD OF THE PHILISTINE IN HIS HAND."



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## APPENDIX.

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### Copy of a Letter, sent by Dr. HUNTER to the GOVERNORS of the LUNATIC ASYLUM.

*YORK, August 24th, 1787.*

GENTLEMEN,

AT the request of several of the Governors of the Lunatic Asylum, I here give a few thoughts on that charity; and as they are the result of nine years' attention, I flatter myself that they will be of use, in case of my death, or resignation. In the first place, I am convinced that at no time the payments from the parish poor should be reduced, as under such an alteration the house would be immediately, and most pressingly, filled with the lowest and meanest of the poor, to the exclusion of those of a middling rank and in low circumstances, for whom the Asylum was principally constructed, and its government planned. The Institution has already reduced the number of many miserable persons kept in places of private confinement; and has been fortunate in restoring many such objects to their friends, in bodily health, and in sound mind, without any material injury to their fortunes. This, I have ever considered, as the spirit of the Institution, and I have invariably conducted it upon that plan. During my attendance on the Asylum, I have studied to make the payments of the patients as advantageous as possible to the charity; but my successor may not be willing, or able, to make such a sacrifice. I therefore recommend that a salary should be given to the attending Physician; and which I think should not be less

A



than two hundred pounds per annum. This will attach him to the Asylum, and *prevent his establishing a private house of confinement, which would evidently counteract the design of the original foundation of the Asylum.*

At the same time, the salary of the Apothecary should be raised to one hundred pounds per annum, which will secure to the house the attendance of a judicious and regular person in one of the most important departments of the Asylum.

The Physician's salary being fixed, all fees from persons of superior condition will cease, and the full amount of the fees and pensions be paid into the hands of the Steward, for the use of the charity.—

As I apprehend that at sometime the Asylum must be under such a regulation, would it not be well to try the experiment at present?

If the Governors approve, I shall willingly make the trial, for one year, in my own person, with this assurance, that I will remit the whole, or any part of the salary, in case the payments from the patients should not exceed the expenses of the house; under which, all kinds of provisions, Apothecary's salary, and Servants' wages, are comprehended.

The incidental expenses will naturally be provided for by the interest of money already in the funds. Under the article, incidental expenses, are comprehended bad debts, and wear of bedding and furniture.

*Taking fees, at the discretion of the attending Physician, from patients of better condition, may, at a future period, be attended with bad consequences; it is on that account that I recommend a salary, in preference to the mode at present practised, and recommended at the General Court, held in August, 1785.*

The sum of the whole is this:

First, As the house was built and furnished by the public for the reception of Lunatics of different denominations, so it ought to be kept furnished and repaired out of the public fund.

Secondly, *As the public fund was never considered to extend beyond this idea, the whole expense regarding the board of the patients,*

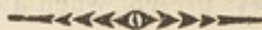


*together with medicines, salaries, and Servants' wages, must be defrayed by the patients themselves, or their friends, by weekly payments proportioned to their respective abilities.*

I am, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient Servant,

A. HUNTER.



*Dec. 27, 1804, Quarterly-Court.*

Ordered, That the letter written by Dr. Hunter to Mr. C. Atkinson, dated 11th December, 1804, be inserted in the Order Book, and that Dr. Best be admitted as Dr. Hunter's pupil; and that all the other directions contained in the letter be observed:

**Copy of Dr. HUNTER's Letter to Mr. C. ATKINSON, Apothecary to the York Lunatic Asylum.**

*YORK, December 11th, 1804.*

SIR,

Acting under the order of a General Court, held on the 23d August, 1799, I desire you to take notice, that I have accepted Dr. Best as my Pupil at the Lunatic Asylum; and I would have you and every other person holding an office in the Asylum, to consider that I have done so in consequence of a perfect knowledge of his medical abilities, he having regularly studied in the University of Edinburgh, where he took a most honorable degree, and having also spent two years in attendance on the medical schools in London; since which time he hath been engaged in regular practice in this City, visiting frequently the patients in the Asylum, both with me and for me, when business called me from home. I speak confidently of the gentleness of his deportment when visiting at the Asylum, and this I conceive a necessary qualification in an attendant on an Asylum, established for the reception of insane persons. To Dr. Best I mean to communicate all the knowledge I have gained from the experience of



twenty-five years. And further, to assist his studies in this *obscure branch of medicine*, I mean freely to disclose to him the manner of preparing the different medicines so successfully made use of at the Asylum, and of which the composition is unknown to every person but myself. You will therefore take notice that you keep nothing secret from him; and as neither Dr. Best nor myself can be always present when a patient comes in, you will take care to collect from the patients' friends an accurate account of the case in writing, for the inspection of Dr. Best and myself, to be afterwards corrected and inserted in a book kept for that purpose,

*Some persons have imagined that this letter is intended to prepare the public for my resignation: on the contrary, I declare that it is my fixed and unalterable resolution to continue in my honourable office to the utmost period of my life.*

A. HUNTER.

### REPORT OF 1813.

"8th February, 1813.—At an adjourned Quarterly Court, &c. ORDERED, That the Report now produced and submitted to the Court by Dr. Best be adopted, and that the same be printed and distributed."

1813.

### YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM,

The York Lunatic Asylum was founded by general Subscription in the year 1777, for the reception of individuals labouring under all the varieties of mental disorder, from every quarter of the British dominions.

The objects it has in view are, To secure to the patients admitted, the moral and medical treatment, best suited to their several cases.—To afford them the accommodations, the comforts, and the humane attentions, which so materially assist in effecting the restoration of reason.—To prevent them from committing



any acts of violence either on themselves or on others.—To seclude them from public observation and the intrusion of idle curiosity.—To maintain them in a manner suitable to their respective stations in life, without impairing their circumstances;—and, lastly, By relieving private families from the heavy burthen of supporting a lunatic in his own house, to lessen, in a material degree, the expense and distress attendant on insanity.

These objects, it is evident, are of no small importance to the community, either taken collectively, or individually considered; and the flourishing condition of the Institution, and the estimation in which it has long been held by the public, are the best proofs that the proposed ends have been attained.

Being an Establishment without an adequate Fund, or an annual Subscription for the maintenance of its inmates, *the friends of the Patients pay a weekly sum proportioned to their ability; and by this arrangement the utility of the Institution is extended to the various classes of society, and at the same time the expenses of the indigent are reduced by the payments of the more affluent Patients.*

*Parish and other Paupers are maintained at the expense of nine shillings a week. The weekly payment of persons in low circumstances, but not absolutely in the condition of Paupers, is from ten to fifteen shillings. Patients in better circumstances, and in the higher stations of life, are charged with moderation, according to their respective means. A certain number of Patients, in very distressed circumstances, who pay for their own board, and have no assistance from their Parishes, receive the benefit of £35 per annum, (being the interest of the "Reduction Fund," especially established for the relief of the most necessitous objects, at the discretion of the Governors,) along with the OVERFLOWINGS of the payments of the more affluent Patients. The above payments discharge lodging, board, coal and candle, tea, washing, and medicines; but those Patients whose expenses exceed nine shillings a week, are separately charged for their washing.*

*The Physician is required to attend, without remuneration, on the Paupers, and on those who are maintained at reduced pay.*



*ments; but is authorized to receive from the friends of the more affluent Patients, the reasonable emoluments of his profession.*

The present property of the Asylum consists of the sum of £7700 capital Stock, in the 3 per cent. consolidated Bank Annuities; and also of the principal sum of £183 6s. 8d. due on certain Turnpike Securities, together with the buildings, furniture, and premises.

The total number of Patients admitted since the first establishment of the Asylum in 1777, to the first of July, 1812, was 2445; of whom there have been reported cured 1112,—relieved 616,—incurable and removed by desire of their friends, 312,—\*dead 210,—remaining in the House, 116 men and 79 women.

### *Mr. Higgins's Statement, in the Case of William Vicars.*

A few days previous to the 17th of April, 1813, complaint was made to me by an old woman, that William Vicars, of Fishlake, had assaulted her, &c. in consequence of which I granted a warrant to apprehend him, and upon his being brought up, I found he was insane. He being a Pauper, I ordered the Overseer of the Poor, Thomas Leach, to take proper measures for conveying him to the Asylum at York, to which place he was taken on the 17th of last April; and from which he was brought away on the 13th of last October. When I saw Vicars before he went, he appeared in good bodily health, no ways weak or emaciated.

About a fortnight ago, application was made to me, by Sarah, the wife of William Vicars, for an order for more relief from the Overseer of the Poor. I summoned him to the Town's Hall, in Doncaster, and upon inquiring into Vicars's situation, the following documents marked A B C D E, were sworn to be true by Sarah Vicars, and the Overseer, Thomas Leach, in the presence of W. Wrightson, Esq. and myself:—

A. Inventory of what clothes Wm. Vicars took into the Asylum, and also of what he brought back with him.

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\* N. B. The real number of deaths was 341.



# APPENDIX.

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He took with him a good and nearly new blue coat, a new scarlet silk shag waistcoat, a pair of good velveteen breeches, a new down hat, cost 15s. two pair of blue stockings, never been mended, a pair of new shoes, two new blue and white striped shirts, a short velveteen jacket, another scarlet waistcoat, spotted with black, another pair of velveteen breeches, two neckerchiefs, one of silk and one of cotton, two pocket-handkerchiefs, and two night-caps.

He brought back with him, one short jacket and one waistcoat, two white shirts, two pairs of stockings, an old hat, not the hat he took, and a pair of bad shoes: he has not brought back one article he took with him. *He has brought back the Itch with him.*

SARAH

Her      ✕      Mark.

VICKERS.

Bill paid by the OVERSEER.

York, July 5th, 1813.

B.      W. VICARS,

Bought of JOHN HODGSON,

	£.	s.	d.
4½ yds Dark Cloth, 3s. 9d.....	0	16	11
2½ yds Stout Cord, 3s. 9d. ....	0	9	5
4½ yds ditto Cotton, 1s. 2d. ....	0	5	3
Pocketing for 3 Coats.....	0	1	10
3½ Dozen Buttons, 8d.....	0	2	4
	1	15	9

Bill paid by the OVERSEER.

C.

Mr. VICARS.

Shirts mended.....	0	1	6
7½ yds Cloth .....	0	13	9
2 Shirts made .....	0	2	9
2 pair Stockings .....	0	6	0
	1	4	0



Bill paid by the OVERSEER.

D. The Overseers of Fishlake, Dr.  
To the Governors of the York Lunatic Asylum,

OCTOBER 13th, 1813.

	£.	s.	d.
Board, &c. of Wm. Vickers, 4 weeks 3 days, 9s.....	1	19	9
Letter 1s. 9d. Shaving 5d. Stamp 2d.....	0	2	4
Paid short .....	0	0	6
Received, George Surr,	2	2	7
Allowing deposit	1	1	0
	1	1	7

E. This is to certify that I was sent for, by Mr. Hopwood, of Thorning Hirst, on Thursday the 14th instant, to examine the state in which William Vicars, of Stainforth, was dismissed from the York Asylum. He had the itch very bad, was also extremely filthy, for I saw his wife not only comb several lice from his head, but take them from the folds of his shirt neck; his health was so much impaired, that he was not able to stand by himself; his legs were very much swelled, and one of them in a state of mortification. He is now much recovered, both in mind and health, by bark and a generous nourishing diet. Witness my hand this 29th day of October, 1813.

CHARLES MAPLES, Surgeon.

### *Evidence, in the Case of Martha Kidd.*

JOSEPH KIDD, of the City of York, cork-cutter, saith, that his wife, Martha Kidd, is about 49 or 50 years of age, and that she was sent to the York Lunatic Asylum in September, 1806, in consequence of his application, that he saw her several times while she was there, that she had been afflicted with the rheumatism, and was an ailing woman for 14 years; that he found her clothes while she remained in the Asylum, and the latter part of the time he found washing. The reason of his taking the washing was that the clothes were not always clean, and sometimes were torn, when she was washed for in the Asylum. That



the first time he got them to wash, his daughter said she was almost sick from the nasty smell of them. That sometimes he was applied to by the servants for clothes, when he could not afford to furnish them, particularly latterly. That sometimes stockings and other linen, which were not his wife's, and not so good, were brought back by his daughters from the Asylum instead of her own linen. Saith, that sometimes his wife appeared clean, and sometimes dirty. He once took her to be washed. He saw her at the Asylum about two months before she came away, and she was lame and meanly clad, and her flesh did not seem as if it had been cleaned. That he usually visited her about four times a year, and that she was brought to a room. Saith, that about three weeks after she was removed, he saw her at Pontefract, and his daughter Martha Kidd was with her, and she had then the daughter's clothes on. That he did not know of his wife's removal from the Asylum until Thursday se'nnight after she had been removed by the parish officers to Pontefract, when his daughter went with clothes to the Asylum. Saith, that he was never denied seeing his wife at the Asylum. He has frequently seen black marks upon her thighs and legs, and has sometimes seen bits of flannel and old cloaths on her legs instead of stockings. That once when he visited her, her head was tied up, and there was a scab on it for several months, but the last time he saw her the wound was healed. Saith, that he supplied her while she was in the Asylum with three new bed gowns, about twenty shifts, about half of them new, and that she had with her when she went, three gowns, besides the one she wore, and he bought her more than two or three petticoats. That when her linen came to be washed it was very dirty, but not lousy. That about a year before she left the Asylum he inquired respecting his wife's lameness, and complained that he thought her hip was out of joint; and Mr. Atkinson informed him that it was not so, and that he had had his brother to it. That he was applied to by the servants at the Asylum for clothes, different times, about three months before she went out; but could not then supply any. That he did not mention to any one at the Asylum



that she was ill used, for fear that she might be worse treated; because he was afraid of the savage nature of the keepers. That he was once leading her through the passage, and one of the keepers found fault with him in a very surly manner, and asked the deponent "what he was doing," and said, "she knew the way as well as him," and at that time as he came from the door *he heard her scream out*. That no objection was made at the Asylum to his being left alone with his wife when he visited her. That he made complaint of his wife's ill usage to his shop-mates, his master, and Mr. Chapman, during her being in the Asylum. That his wife had a ring on when she went to the Asylum, and observing her without it, he inquired for it of Sarah Cuthbert, a female keeper, who told him his wife had not a ring, but if she had, it was brass or copper, and that she (Cuthbert) would see for it. That the next time he came to the Asylum he inquired for the ring, and Cuthbert gave it to him. That his wife's cloaths being torn, appeared from the effects of violence, and not from being worn out. That he never asked any one at the Asylum how she got bruises. That she wore black worsted stockings, but they were scarcely ever washed. That he got several pairs of new shoes for her while she was in the Asylum, at Emmerson's shop in Low-Ousegate.

MARTHA KIDD, of the City of York, straw bonnet maker, (daughter of Martha Kidd the pauper,) saith that she was in the habit of visiting her mother at the York Lunatic Asylum, that she was generally in a ragged state, not particularly dirty. That the deponent had not seen her mother for about two months before she went away; that sometimes her mother has been without a cap, and hardly with any clothes but what were very ragged; that her father bought her mother as many things as he could afford, and when he could not provide her cloathes, this deponent furnished her with part of this deponent's own clothes; that when this deponent inquired at the Asylum for her mother's things to wash, they were often changed; that this deponent usually applied for them once a week or once a fortnight, and Sarah Cuthbert, one of the keepers, sometimes said that they



were torn in pieces, and sometimes said they had been washed. That this deponent saw her mother the day when she came to Pontefract, soon after her arrival; she had then hardly any thing on, and was very dirty; the next day she had been cleaned, and looked very different; saith that her mother wore black stockings when she was in the Asylum, and this deponent washed them whenever they could be got. When her mother came to Pontefract she smelt offensively, and frequently did so when this deponent visited her in the Asylum. That her mother's face and hands were once washed by this deponent at the Asylum, when she was very dirty; that this deponent has observed bruises upon her mother when she was in the Asylum; that this deponent generally visited her mother about once a fortnight, and generally had to wait a long time at the Asylum before the deponent could see her; that her linen, when washed, was often offensive, but not lousy; that this deponent cannot say how often her mother's black stockings were washed; saith, that she has seen her mother at the Asylum in shoes without stockings, and with rags round her legs; that this deponent inquired of Mr. Atkinson respecting her mother's lameness, and he said that he had spoken to Dr. Best, and got Mr. James Atkinson to examine her; that this deponent has called two or three times at the Asylum, and could not see her mother, the keepers saying that she was too bad to be seen; that this deponent has bought her mother new shoes, but cannot say when she had the last pair; that when she came to Pontefract, she had a bonnet not her own; that this deponent was once leading her mother, when lame, along the passage at the Asylum, and one of the keepers pulled her mother away by the arm, and said, that she knew the way as well as this deponent did; that she never saw any lice upon her mother while she was in the Asylum; that Mrs. Beckwith shewed the deponent her mother's black stockings, at Pontefract, full of lice, and the deponent saw Mrs. Beckwith burn them; saith, that this deponent went to Pontefract in August, 1812.

That before her mother went to the Asylum she used to destroy her clothes and bedding; that the morning after her



mother arrived at Pontefract, she smelt different from what she did the night before, but smelt faint and dirty, and it was not the smell of fish; that this deponent frequently changed her mother's stockings in the Asylum, and never saw any vermin in them, or upon her person; saith, that she thinks her mother had been neglected after this deponent left York. That after her mother became ill, and before she was removed to the Asylum, she did not foul her linen, but was remarkably clean; that she never heard the servants at the Asylum complain that her mother's clean clothes were not brought; that the deponent made two shifts for her mother, and Mrs. Thackray made others for her, which came new to the Asylum; that some shifts, caps, and other things of her mother's were missing at the Asylum, and never recovered. Admits that she (the deponent) has been in a company of Thespians.

ELIZABETH KIDD, of the City of York, spinster. deposeth and saith, that she is the second daughter of Joseph and Martha Kidd, and lives with her father, that she was sometimes employed in carrying clothes for her mother, to and from the Asylum; that the last time she saw her mother there, was about a month before her mother left the Asylum, when this deponent carried her a shift, a cap, and a handkerchief; this deponent saith, that she sometimes visited her mother, in company with this deponent's sister, who left York at the August races, 1812, and went to Pontefract; that this deponent used to go to the Asylum about once in a week or a fortnight, after her sister was gone, and that she brought her mother clothes which were marked; the clothes she took to wash were oftener other persons' clothes than her mother's. That on going to the Asylum, this deponent sometimes saw her mother directly, and sometimes waited a good bit. The keepers sometimes said her mother had her things off, it was a woman who told her so. Her mother's hands and face were sometimes very dirty, but not always; this deponent cannot say she saw the other parts of her person; this deponent saith she does not recollect taking away any stockings to wash after her sister went; that sometimes when this deponent and her sister



went, their mother had pieces of flannel wrapped about her legs, and no stockings; does not recollect that the black stockings were ever taken away to wash. This deponent used to dress and undress her mother, but after her sister went, never took her stockings off: That when this deponent and her sister asked for their mother's clothes the keepers sometimes said she had torn them to pieces, sometimes that they were too dirty to be sent; that this deponent once shifted her mother's clothes after her sister went, she was not very dirty nor very clean; that sometimes one shift and sometimes two were left for her mother; that she made two shifts for her mother during the three years she was in the Asylum, but does not know how many her sister made; that a woman of the name of Thackray, in Walmgate, made some. Her mother had about twenty-four or twenty-five shifts, whilst in the Asylum, four or five of which were worn by her sister before they were taken to her mother; that when her mother was in the Asylum she generally had no clothes but what she had on, but she had more than one cap; that this deponent called at the Asylum, about a fortnight before her mother was removed, the people said her mother was so bad she could not see her, and that they would wash her clothes themselves; that she called again with a shift and other clothes for her mother, and found she had been removed to Pontefract. This was on the Wednesday after her mother went; that this deponent never saw any lice on her mother's person, or on the clothes she washed for her; that she has seen marks of bruises on her mother, and sometimes black marks on her arms, and once a bruise upon her head; that this deponent's sister generally changed her mother's clothes; that the reason given by the keepers for sometimes giving this deponent other clothes besides her mother's, to wash, was that they were clothes she had had on; that her mother was brought to her in a room; that she never saw any cruelty practised in the Asylum. Says she never was questioned, before the present time, by any person, how her mother was treated in the Asylum.



\* MARGARET, the wife of Benjamin Beckwith, of Pontefract, in the County of York, governess of the poor-house, at Pontefract, maketh oath and saith, that she knows Martha Kidd, and that she was brought on the 4th of October, 1812, by the Pontefract fish cart, to the poor-house, at Pontefract; that this deponent assisted in bringing her from the cart into the house; that the said Martha Kidd was then in a very dirty state; that her clothes were very ragged, and very mean, and she had lice in her hair and on her carcass, and her legs appeared as if they had not been washed for years; that she had part of a shift on, which was dirty, and did not appear to have been washed of three or four weeks; that when her stockings were taken off, the skin of her legs appeared scaly from dirt, and her toe nails hung one over another; that she was in as sore a state as could be; that her shoes were very bad, and only just covered her toes. That this deponent put the said Martha Kidd to bed, and the smell from her was so offensive as to leave a disagreeable sensation in this deponent's stomach for several days, and about ten days after she was taken violently ill; that this deponent on the day after the said Martha Kidd's arrival put her a clean shift on, and washed her; that this deponent then turned down the said Martha Kidd's stockings, and the lice were rank within side her stockings; and this deponent burnt her stockings; that she had no petticoat in front, and no stays; that under her breast, and all over her, she was so dirty, it appeared as if she had not been washed for years, and she could not have been so dirty if she had laid in a fish cart three weeks; that she was speckled with dirt all over; that she takes no exercise, and does not wear her clothes fast, and does not tear her clothes; that she is willing to be washed, and this deponent has no trouble with her, except to serve and clean her; this deponent saith, that there are now in the work-

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\* The manner in which this witness gave her evidence, was such, that Dr. Best and his friends acknowledged their conviction of the veracity of the statement;—a more complete picture of a human being, lost in filth and wretchedness, could scarcely be delineated.



house, at Pontefract, twenty-three persons; that her husband is the master of it, and they have two servants to assist them, and an apothecary, who has a salary, attends the work-house; that she has no acquaintance with any body belonging to the Asylum; that this deponent never observed any bruises or marks on Martha Kidd's head, or any other part of her body; that if her hair was not constantly combed, and her skin regularly washed, she would be very dirty; that she never soiled her bed clothes, or the clothes on her body, till within the last fortnight, when she has had fits; that when this deponent cleaned the said Martha Kidd, on her first coming from the Asylum, she scraped the dirt off her stomach with her nail; that the said Martha Kidd could not have been washed under her clothes for years; that there was dirt about \*\*\*\*\*. That this deponent showed the stockings to the said Martha Kidd's daughter, and burnt them in her presence; that the said Martha Kidd dislikes to be cleaned or washed by any person, except this deponent. That during the time the said Martha Kidd has been in the work-house, she has had two new shifts, two old gowns, two pair of stockings, one new the other old, two new handkerchiefs, two new caps, two new petticoats, and one pair of new shoes.

THOMAS BARKER, of Pontefract, in the County of York, maltster, one of the guardians of the poor-house, at Pontefract, maketh oath and saith, that he never saw Martha Kidd in the York Lunatic Asylum, nor heard of any complaints made respecting her treatment while she was there; that she was removed from the Asylum to the poor house, at Pontefract, on the fourth of October, 1812, because the directors of the poor-house thought that she would be kept cheaper there than in the Asylum; that he saw her about an hour after she arrived; that she looked comfortable of herself, but her clothes were in a mean, ragged and bad state; that her daughter came in and flew into her mother's arms; that the daughter made no complaint; that Martha Kidd's clothing and her skin were dirty, and it was not dirt from travelling in a fish cart. *She was an object; he never saw a worse object in the street or in any other place.* That no



complaint was made respecting the matter by the guardians of the poor-house, to the governors of the Asylum; that the impression made upon him at the time, was such that he would not afterwards have sent any paupers to the Asylum; that he saw her two or three days after her removal, and that she had then got fresh clothes, and had been cleaned, and looked better of herself. That Mrs. Beckwith was recommended with a good character to the situation of governess of the work-house, and has conducted herself to the satisfaction of the guardians. She has the chief management of the house.

DAVID RIDEAL, of Pontefract, in the County of York, woollen draper, one of the guardians of the poor-house, at Pontefract, maketh oath and saith, that he attended at the York Lunatic Asylum in the month of September, 1812, to ascertain if Martha Kidd and George Arundel, then patients in the said Asylum, were in a state to be removed into the new built poor-house, at Pontefract; that he saw the said Martha Kidd, at the Asylum, for about two minutes before he returned, and she appeared in good bodily health, and made no complaints, but seemed from her manner to be in an insane state; that her clothes were not amiss, and she appeared then very decent, and that he shook hands with her, and she began of singing; that he came to the Asylum unexpectedly, and she was in a light room when he saw her; that she was removed to Pontefract poor-house, on the fourth of October, 1812, by the Pontefract fish machine, but that no person attended from Pontefract to see her removed. The machine brought fish that day; that he saw her at the poor-house on the evening of her removal, she was then dirty and forlorn, and her clothes were in a bad state; that her clothes seemed to be the same which she had on when he saw her at the Asylum; that she was lame at the time he saw her at the Asylum, and she still continues so, and is obliged, generally, to be carried. That he does not know that any complaint was made, during the time she remained in the Asylum, respecting any improper treatment of her, and that her husband never complained of her being ill treated; that this deponent never knew

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or saw her until he attended in September, 1812, at the Asylum; says, that she was two or three years in the Asylum; that it was candle-light when he saw her at Pontefract, on the day she was removed: her face, hands, and neck were dirty, and appeared to want washing, but he did not minutely examine her person; that he made no application to the governors of the Asylum respecting her treatment, but Mr. Higgins wrote to him about three weeks ago, to make inquiries respecting it; that the overseers would not have thought of making any complaint, had they not been applied to; that Martha Kidd is not able now to give any account of her treatment, nor was so when she was removed from the Asylum; that neither Martha Kidd nor her friends applied for her to be removed from the Asylum, but she was removed to save expense to the parish.

ANN BATTY, the wife of Benjamin Batty, of the City of York, innkeeper, saith as follows: that this deponent and her husband were keepers of the York Lunatic Asylum, and left it about seven months ago; that this deponent saw Martha Kidd the day she left the house, and saw Sarah Cuthbert wash her and clean her that morning, and *this deponent went into the room to see how clean and neat she was*; that Sarah Cuthbert washed Martha Kidd's face, hands, and neck, that morning, and that the night before being Saturday night, she had seen the said Sarah Cuthbert take a pail, and a towel, and soap, to wash the patients in the room with Martha Kidd; that this deponent does not know how many patients there were; that the patients' feet are washed on a Saturday night, if they stand in need of it. That on the Sunday morning before Martha Kidd left the Asylum, Sarah Cuthbert said to deponent "*don't you think I've made her neat and clean?*" and this deponent replied *she had*; that Martha Kidd's clothes, for what they were, were as clean and neat as they could be made; that she looked a *decent clean old woman* for the clothes she had on; that she had no offensive smell; that she had no bonnet, but Sarah Cuthbert fetched her an old bonnet of her own; that this deponent did not see her shift, petticoat, or shoes; that she had a neck-handkerchief on; but this depo-



nent did not observe whether it was clean or not; that her daughter came on the Saturday following, to bring her a clean shift, not knowing she was gone; that the said Martha Kidd walked with a limp; that during the whole time Martha Kidd was in the Asylum, she had only a couple of new shifts; and that the rest that were brought, were old ones; that Martha Kidd altered the make of her clothes, by picking and unpicking, but this deponent does not know that she tore them by violence; that Martha Kidd was very quarrelsome with the other patients.

SARAH CUTHBERT, a female keeper at the York Lunatic Asylum deposeeth and saith as follows: that she has been employed as a keeper in the Asylum for twelve years; that she recollects a patient called Martha Kidd, who was one of the patients in the gallery, under the care of this deponent; that the said Martha Kidd was very violent and mischievous when she first came, and very dirty; that this deponent took as much pains as she could in washing, cleaning, and combing her; that the said Martha Kidd was always washed and combed every Saturday; and oftener, when she required it; that her legs and feet were washed every Saturday; *that her hands, face, and neck were washed on the morning of the day on which she was taken away from the Asylum, and her hands, face, neck, and feet had been washed the night before.* That this deponent does not recollect any thing particular in her feet, or any dirt on her legs; that the said Martha Kidd was very poorly dressed when she left the Asylum, but this deponent made her as decent as she could be made in the clothes that she had; that she had an old black gown, and part of a petticoat on; that she had not a clean shift on, her daughter came with clean clothes the Tuesday following; that this deponent does not know when the said Martha Kidd had had clean stockings; she wore black stockings, which do not show dirt; that this deponent does not recollect to have seen her have a ring, nor that her husband asked this deponent for one; this deponent recollects no conversation with Martha Kidd's husband, or any other person, about a ring of Martha Kidd's; that it is



the custom of the house to take away rings from those who are not capable of taking care of them; the rings are kept by the housekeeper, Mrs. Atkinson, and are ticketed; says, the patients are always made clean before they leave the Asylum; that Mrs. Batty saw Martha Kidd on the Sunday morning; that there was then no bad smell about Martha Kidd, or her clothes; that she was not so dirty in her person the latter part of her stay in the Asylum; that she had been very dirty in the day rooms, and was in the habit of taking off her clothes and rubbing them on the ground; that she used to dabble and wash them, she dabbled and made dirty deed with her cap and clothes, and seldom had a decent cap on; that she used to tear her clothes, but not so much latterly; that she had not so good a supply of clothes as other patients usually had, but was very much neglected at times. That for twelve months her clothes were washed in the Asylum, during which time she had a couple of new shifts, two caps, two checked aprons, one gown, one top petticoat, and two pairs of stockings, and no other clothes; that the last year of her stay, her daughters washed for her, but were very irregular in bringing and fetching her clothes; they were sometimes a week or a fortnight, and longer, before they brought them back; that they never brought any clothes for her but those she put on. This deponent has told them they neglected their mother. That Martha Kidd was at first in the habit of fouling her linen and bed clothes, but latterly, for some months, had kept her bed very clean, and had not fouled her linen; that she is sure Martha Kidd never had more than two new shifts during her being in the Asylum; that this deponent used to comb her with a small-tooth comb, and has sometimes found some few lice, one or two on her head, but none on her person. That each of the female keepers has a distinct set of patients under her care, and there are about nineteen or twenty under the care of this deponent. It takes nearly two hours to wash them all on a Saturday night. That all the patients who are not capable of washing themselves, are washed on the Saturday night: *their hands, face, and feet, are always washed*; that flannel and soap are used in washing; that



it is usual, occasionally, to inspect their persons under their clothes; that this has always been the case, and no difference has been made lately; that this deponent never recollects Martha Kidd having a blow on her head; that she was in the habit of teasing and fighting the other patients, but this deponent never saw any patient strike her so as to injure her, or make any mark; that this deponent saw her immediately after the accident to her hip.—she was able to walk up to her own room: It happened in summer, about five in the evening; that when this deponent saw her, she was on the grass-plot, in the women's court with other patients; that there was a goat with them; does not recollect that the goat had ever done any injury before. In consequence of the accident, the goat was sent away by Dr. Best's orders; that Martha Kidd has been separated from the other patients for quarrelling with them, but to the best of this deponent's belief was never put in a dark cell. Does not recollect that her daughters were ever refused seeing her,—they always saw her immediately. She was in the habit of dining at table with the other patients; says, that the last time Martha's younger daughter came to change her linen, she took away her flannel petticoat, and did not leave one instead of it, and that she only brought back the flannel petticoat on the Tuesday after her mother was gone\*.

¶ Martha Kidd, the lunatic, informed her husband, that the bruises on her person were from being *brayed* by the keepers; and that the wound on her head was from a blow with a key:—this was rejected as inadmissible evidence.

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\* After the witnesses from Pontefract had confirmed their depositions on oath, and at the moment when the oath was about to be proposed to Ann Batty and Sarah Cuthbert, the Archbishop of York observed, that if it was intended to administer an oath to them, he must leave the room; as he was convinced both from the manner of these witnesses, and the improbability of their statement, that they were asserting what was untrue. It was then proposed and agreed that the administration of an oath should in future be wholly discontinued.



*Opinion of the Committee, on Martha Kidd's Case.*

*"A gross neglect of cleanliness and of attention to the person is in full proof."*

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*Evidence in the Case of George Arundell.\**

MARGARET BECKWITH, of Pontefract, in the County of York, wife of Benjamin Beckwith, maketh oath, and saith, that when *George Arundell* arrived at Pontefract, on the fourth of October, 1812, on his removal from the York Lunatic Asylum, he was a deal better and a deal cleaner than Martha Kidd; that he smelled a fainty smell; that this deponent did not examine his person. He did not smell bad the next morning; that he had a clean shirt on, and she saw no vermin upon him. That she never heard the said *George Arundell* make any complaint of ill usage in the Asylum; that this deponent does not believe he had any filth on him; and saith, that she saw no bruises on his person.

DAVID RIDEAL, of Pontefract, in the County of York, woollen-draper, maketh oath and saith, that *George Arundell*, a lunatic pauper, was sent from Pontefract to the Asylum at York, about three years ago. That he was removed from the Asylum to the work-house, at Pontefract, on the fourth of October, 1812; and that this deponent saw him upon his arrival; that he seemed strong in bodily health, and did not appear in a ragged state, but his hands and face appeared dirty; that this deponent

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\* Mr. Higgins states that he never meant to attach blame to the case of *George Arundell*. This man, however, having been mentioned in Mr. Higgins's statement as removed along with Martha Kidd, the committee thought it right to inquire into the case. The fact turned out to be that *Arundell*, who was a strong, active man, was not dependent on the keepers, but regularly washed and cleaned himself.



saw him at York, at the Asylum, about a fortnight before his removal, and he appeared, at that time, not to be in a neglected state, or to be in such a situation as to attract this deponent's observation; but he was not then with the said George Arundell above two or three minutes; and that this deponent has seen the said George Arundell frequently, and never heard him complain of his treatment in the Asylum. That Mrs. Beckwith is a humane and managing woman; that she was well recommended, and that she conducted herself well and had given satisfaction.

THOMAS BARKER, of Pontefract, in the County of York, maltster, maketh oath, and saith, that he saw George Arundell when he was removed to Pontefract poor-house, in October, 1812, from the York Lunatic Asylum; that his hands, face, and clothes, appeared dirty, but he had a clean shirt on; that this deponent has not heard the said George Arundell complain of any ill treatment in the Asylum.

*Opinion of the Committee on George Arundell's Case.*

*"No sufficient ground of censure has been established."*

*Evidence in the Case of the Rev. J. B. Schorey.*

MARY SCHOREY, widow of the late Reverend John Butterfield Schorey, clerk, deceased, saith, that her late husband was formerly of Queen's College, Oxford; that he never had any preferment in the church; that he was curate to Dr. Zouch, at Scrayingham; that they had no family, except one child, which died in infancy; that her husband was three several times a patient in the York Lunatic Asylum, and that he died there on the tenth of December, 1812, aged forty one. That he was first placed in the Asylum between four and five years ago, when James Backhouse and Benjamin Batty, who were then keepers in the

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Asylum, fetched him from the sea side, at the desire of this deponent. He remained in the Asylum about six months. During this period the deponent did not live in York, but came once or twice to visit her husband; on one of these occasions he had sprained his ankle; and this deponent, in consequence of the accident, attended him three days in his bed room; that she observed his bed and all about it was dirty, and there were a great many fleas in it. That her husband was taken home for about three months, in consequence of his mental health being better, after which it again became necessary to place him in the Asylum, and Mr. Backhouse fetched him from the neighbourhood of Yarm; he remained in the Asylum, the second time, for about seven or eight months; during a part of which time she took a house in Gilly-gate York, in order to be near her husband, and visited him regularly every fortnight; on these occasions she observed him to be ill treated by the keepers, particularly Benjamin Batty, under whose care he was.

When she went to see her husband, she was shown into the keeper's lodge, and her husband was brought to her there; they used to push him and kick him into the room to her; once on Benjamin Batty's pushing him into the room, with his foot, this deponent said "you should recollect my husband is a clergyman,"—Batty replied "*he's no more now than a dog.*"

This deponent paid fifteen shillings a week, for her husband, besides paying for his washing, shaving, and ale; his clothes were washed in the Asylum, but he used to be very dirty; and this deponent finding him so, used always to bring him clean clothes, when she went to the Asylum, and always brought two towels, one wet and the other dry, in order to wash him; she always found him dirty; she washed him, and cut his nails. She never during this period, observed any lice on his person, or his clothes, but his linen had the marks of dirty beds and fleas; there was no other ill treatment observed by this deponent, during this period of her husband's confinement, except abusive language, which her husband was capable of feeling, and it seemed to give him great pain.



That her husband having again improved in mental health, this deponent, on the recommendation of Dr. Best, took him home to her lodgings, in York, for five weeks; that Dr. Best said, he would come to see him at her house, but he never did, though this deponent wrote two letters to Dr. Best, by 'the post, requesting him; that her husband grew so bad, she could not do with him at home, and she in consequence called on Dr. Best, and it was arranged for her husband to return again to the Asylum, where he remained till his death.

That during the former part of the third period of his confinement, \* this deponent continued to visit him regularly as before; he was pushed or kicked into the room to her almost every time; there was no necessity for using force with her husband, he was desirous of coming. Benjamin Batty used to take him by the shoulders, and kick him into the room with his foot. On one occasion she happened to go into the passage to meet her husband, and Benjamin Batty *kicked him down stairs*; † Benjamin was at the top of the stairs, she heard a kick, and her husband came tumbling down stairs. She occasionally observed marks of bruises on her husband's person, but does not know that there was any want of food.

During the third period of her husband's confinement, she applied to Dr. Best to lower the terms, and also requested Mr. James Richardson to apply to him, and the terms were accord-

\* N. B. Surprise has been expressed that Mrs. Schorey should place her husband again in the Asylum; but her circumstances should be considered.—Educated as a gentlewoman, she was obliged to seek her own subsistence, by manual labour, in order to afford ten shillings a week for her husband, and there was no other institution to receive him on these terms.

† Here Dr. Best, (who, it must be observed, acted as the advocate for the servants, conceiving the whole to be a conspiracy against himself and the institution,) remarked it was impossible Mr. Schorey could be kicked down stairs, as he was always on the ground-floor; and he called Batty to contradict Mrs. Schorey's statement. It is very remarkable, however, that Henry Dawson confirms Mrs. Schorey, and contradicts Batty.



ingly lowered from fifteen shillings a week to twelve shillings, and afterwards from twelve shillings to ten shillings.

She continued to see her husband for several months, she always found him dirty, and his clothes had a strange smell. She never saw any vermin upon him in the Asylum; she carried him fresh linen every fortnight, and let them have as many clean clothes for her husband as they wished, and she took away the dirty clothes to wash. Her husband, by agreement, was to be always washed for in the Asylum.

Says, that about six months before her husband's death he became so ill, that it was not thought proper for her to see him any more; the last time of her seeing him, he did not know her; that she continued to call at the Asylum, with clothes, as before. After she had ceased to see her husband, the clothes which she took to wash began to have lice; that she has seen his stockings, waistcoat, and shirts, all over lice. Ann Bridgewater, a washerwoman, was employed by this deponent to wash the linen, three or four times; the first linen she washed was clear of lice, but afterwards on Bridgewater's complaining to this deponent of having found lice on a flannel jacket of Mr. Schorey's, this deponent took the washerwoman with her, and they went to the Asylum to complain.

They first called on Mr. Surr, at the gate, he told this deponent she was a liar, and shut the door in her face; they then went to the Asylum, and Mr. Surr followed them; the men keepers denied there was any such thing; Benjamin Batty, Henry Dawson, and Charles Holgate were present. Henry Dawson used indecent, brutish language, which this deponent cannot repeat. Mr. Surr desired Mr. Schorey to be brought down to the room. He had on a cloth stock, which he had a fancy to; the washerwoman took it off and found lice upon it; it was very lousy indeed. Though the keepers saw the lice, they said we were liars, and that there were no lice whilst they were looking at them; they said the washerwoman had brought the lice with her. The keepers then left this deponent and Ann Bridgewater in the room with Mr. Schorey: he was very lousy. Dr. Best



afterwards sent for this deponent, and said he would see her husband was cleaned; this deponent told Dr. Best of the abusive language of the keepers; he said, he did not wish the keepers to behave so. This deponent is positive those were Dr. Best's words; that was all the redress this deponent could get; this deponent durst not complain of the ill treatment of her husband, and never acquainted Dr. Best of her husband's being kicked down stairs, she was afraid she should be ill used and not see her husband again; she knew whoever she complained to, it would be all in vain. She admits it might have been better if she had acquainted Dr. Best. She often called upon him, and was treated with civility and attention, and he never refused to acquaint her with the state of her husband's mind; she had called upon him so frequently to enquire about her husband, that latterly he seemed to think her troublesome.

This deponent says, that her reason for sending her husband again to the Asylum, after having seen him ill used there, was that she could not manage him at home; she was a stranger in this country, and did not know where else to send him, or that he would be better used elsewhere.

Says that on some of the last times of visiting her husband, she observed bruises on his back and all over him. Her husband never had his hands or person confined when she saw him; she always saw him very soon after she came to the Asylum, and had not to wait.

Says, that she never was in his bed room, except during his first confinement, on occasion of his ancle being sprained; at all other times he was brought down to her. Says, that when he was pushed and kicked into the room, there were no strangers present, but the women of the house might sometimes see. This deponent says, that for the last six months of her husband's life she never saw him; that about four months before his death she went to Stamford, to visit a relation, and was absent from York, until her husband's death.

This deponent saith, she had a gold watch, which was a present from her brother as a keepsake. During her husband's last

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confinement in the Asylum, he requested her to allow him to keep her watch, as a pledge that he should see her again; Batty was present when the conversation took place between her and her husband; and it was understood that Batty should let her husband wear the watch when he was well enough, and should take care of it when he was not. Her husband then took it and used to wear it in his sob. For about six or seven months she saw him have it occasionally, but cannot be certain for how long a time; he sometimes had it, and sometimes not.

When this deponent went to the Asylum, with the washerwoman, to inquire about the vermin on the clothes, she asked Batty for the watch—Batty replied “he had it, and should take care of it.”

After her husband's death, this deponent asked Batty for the watch, he said he knew nothing of it; she said it was very strange; he repeated he knew nothing of it. This deponent afterwards met him on Bootham-flags, and asked him again, and he said he would inquire about it. This deponent never mentioned the watch to Dr. Best, or Mr. Surr, but Mr. James Richardson undertook to make inquiry respecting it.

ANN BRIDGEWATER, the wife of Christopher Bridgewater, of the City of York, deposeth and saith, as follows: that she is a washerwoman, and has washed for Mr. Schorey, but not lately; that she washed for Mrs. Schorey occasionally, from Christmas till Midsummer, the Summer before Mr. Schorey died; that Mrs. Schorey once brought her some linen to wash, which was both nitty and lousy; this was in summer; the clothes were not dirtier than usual; there were nits on a shirt, but she did not examine it till it had been washed; she ironed the shirt to kill the nits. She had washed it about a month before; there were no lice on it before, but this time she found a number of lice on it; there were some scores. It seemed to have been worn next the skin; there were only nits on the shirt; she shewed the things to her husband; she found no lice on the stockings.

This deponent told Mrs. Schorey of the lice; the next morning she went with Mrs. Schorey to the Asylum by her desire.



They called on Mr. Surr, at the gate. Mrs. Schorey said "this is the person who picked the lice off Mr. Schorey's waistcoat." Mr. Surr said, "she was a liar," and clashed the door in her face. This deponent and Mrs. Schorey then went on to the Asylum, and Mr. Surr followed them; when he got there, he said it would have been better if Mrs. Schorey had acquainted them at the Asylum about the lice, than to go to that fine fellow Mr. Richardson. Mr. Surr asked Mrs. Schorey if she knew who she was talking to; she said it was proper it should be inquired into.

This deponent saith, there was a blue woollen stock on the chimney piece, which the keepers said belonged to Mr. Schorey; they said if he had lice, there would have been some on the stock. This deponent then took the stock and picked two lice off it, she laid them on the table, shewed them, and then put them in the fire. Mr. Surr said, they were no lice; if there were any, she had brought them there herself. He said she (this deponent) deserved to have \* \* \* \* \* bunched, for bringing such a report on the Asylum. Says, that Mr. Schorey was then sent for down, and this deponent and Mrs. Schorey took him into a room to examine him; one of the keepers told them to \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \*, he was not man enough for them both; they then set up a laugh.—Mrs. Schorey cried.

This deponent, along with Mrs. Schorey, examined Mr. Schorey, but saw no lice on his person, he had spots all over his body, but she saw no bruises; he appeared to have been greased all over; he was very dirty and greasy. As Mrs. Schorey left the Asylum she told the keepers she hoped they would not use her husband ill; they said, if they did, she might thank herself for it.

This deponent never washed any other waistcoat of Mr. Schorey's, except that already mentioned. This deponent heard Mrs. Schorey inquire about a gold watch, where it was, and if it was safe. Benjamin Batty said, he had it in his possession, and would take care of it; this was not at the time the stock was produced, it might be a month before.

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This deponent never had any conversation with Batty about the watch; has never received any money from Mrs. Schorey, except pay for work, nor received any present from her. A gentleman\* called about three weeks ago, to ask her what she knew about this affair; he gave her children two shillings.

This deponent, Ann Bridgewater, on her deposition being read to her says, that she was at the Asylum about a month before the time when she went about the filth; that she went with a note from Mrs. Schorey, and some tobacco for Mr. Schorey. This deponent now says, that the conversation about the watch was on the same day as they went about the filth, but that it was not at the same time when the words took place.

BENJAMIN BATTY, of the City of York, innkeeper, deposeseth and saith as follows: that he was eight years a keeper in the Asylum, and quitted that situation a few months ago. He had at first twelve guineas a year, and afterwards sixteen guineas and eighteen guineas, and at last twenty pounds. He found his own clothes. Says that Mr. Schorey was in the gallery under this deponent's inspection.

After Mrs. Schorey came to live in York, she came constantly to see her husband; oftener than once a week. She did not always see him, because it troubled him, and made him uneasy, and fret, when she was gone. This deponent does not think she was ever refused seeing him, except on account of his fretting; it was left to her own option whether to see him or not. She continued to visit and see him as long as she stopped in York; he does not recollect she was ever informed he was in such a state that it was no longer proper for her to see him. This deponent says, when she came to see her husband, he was brought to the room where patients see their friends. When this deponent was in the way, he always brought him. During his second confinement he was always ready to go when this deponent told him his wife was come to see him; he was glad to see her,—there

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\* Mr. Higgins.



was no occasion to use force ; he knew the room and sometimes went without this deponent. He was particularly clean in his person during the first and second times of his confinement. He used to go and wash himself, and was as clean a patient as ever was in the house.

This deponent sees the patients undressed every night. Mr. Schorey's feet were as clean as need be ; he was in a state of great cleanliness during the whole of his second confinement.—This deponent used to change Mr. Schorey's linen every Sunday morning.—Says the patients' feet are washed once in a week, or a fortnight, as they may require it. Mrs. Schorey was very particular about his personal cleanliness.

The latter part of his second confinement, she brought him a change of clothes once or twice ; his linen was then washed in the Asylum. To the best of this deponent's knowledge, she never took away dirty clothes during the second confinement ; this deponent says, the reason of Mr. Schorey's going home after the second confinement was, that he was peaceable and quiet, and anxious to go.

During the latter part of the third confinement, Mr. Schorey was sometimes in such a state as to refuse his victuals. This deponent has known force necessary to bring him down stairs ; has known him cling to the stairs ; has known force necessary to bring him to see his wife during this period ; has known him so bad, that he would not speak to her. During the latter part of this period he was not cleanly in his person. His wife brought clothes for him oftener than before ; she never, to this deponent's knowledge, at any time brought towels or soap, and washed him. She complained, at this period, of his person and clothes being dirty ; this deponent's answer was, Mr. Schorey was very dirty of himself, and could not be kept clean. Mrs. Schorey could not have got water to wash her husband without some of the servants knowing it. This deponent does not know he ever stopped in the room when she visited her husband ; she might sometimes stop half an hour or longer.

When Mr. Schorey first came, he had plenty of clothes, and it



was a long time before he got them worn out. When Mr. Schorey became dirty in his person, this deponent washed and cleaned him every morning, regularly; chiefly his hands and face, and every part of his body that required it; sometimes it was obliged to be done by force, and this deponent had help; sometimes he dirtied his breeches, and was obliged to be cleaned twice a day; in other respects there was nothing uncleanly about him. No other part of his body was dirty or offensive; this deponent always dressed and undressed him, and took his clothes out of the room every night, and if there had been any thing dirty or offensive, he should have observed. When any thing happened, he was cleaned immediately. This deponent never saw his appearance, as to cleanliness, improved after his wife had been with him.

This deponent says, that he never, to his knowledge, treated Mr. Schorey with any insult, or pushed, or kicked him—is positive he never did; never insulted him; never used violence; never kicked him into the room, and Mrs. Schorey never made a complaint on the subject. She never said to him “her husband was a clergyman;—she was surprized he should use him so;” never in his life, to this deponent’s knowledge. This deponent never, at any period of Mr. Schorey’s confinement, said that he thought no more of him than of a dog, or any thing to that effect.

Says that he never recollects Mr. Schorey falling, or being pushed down stairs. HE NEVER HAD TO COME DOWN STAIRS TO SEE MRS. SCHOREY.\*

In the day time, he was removed between seven and eight in the morning to the day room, which is on the same floor as the room in which Mrs. Schorey used to see him, and Mrs. Schorey never came to see him before that hour. HE NEVER WAS BROUGHT DOWN FROM HIS BED ROOM TO SEE HER, AND THEREFORE SHE COULD NOT SEE HIM FALL, OR BE KICKED DOWN

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\* See Henry Dawson’s evidence.



STAIRS \*. When Mr. Schorey was ill, and confined to his bed, Mrs. Schorey has been up-stairs to see him in bed. This deponent can positively say she has seen him in his bed room during the third period of his confinement.

This deponent says, he never observed any bruises on Mr. Schorey's person; that Mr. Schorey never was guilty of fighting with other patients; he has seen him wrestle with patients, but not so as to injure his person.

Says, Mrs. Schorey came down one Tuesday with a flannel jacket, and said there was filth and lice upon it. It was unwashed; there was a woman with her, but he does not know whether Ann Bridgewater, who was here yesterday, was the person. This deponent thinks Mrs. Schorey said, her husband had not had the waistcoat changed for some time; this deponent replied, it was not his fault, he had none to change it with, and it was not his business to provide clothes. This deponent had not before told her Mr. Schorey had no change; Mrs. Schorey informed him she had changed her husband's dress, and taken this waistcoat away, when she brought her husband another on the Saturday preceding, when this deponent was not within. This deponent thinks Mr. Schorey had worn the dirty one about three or four weeks; this deponent had sometimes changed the linen nearest Mr. Schorey's body, but that time Mrs. Schorey changed it herself. Mrs. Schorey shewed the dirty waistcoat; deponent saw four or five lice on it, and admitted to her that they were lice. Mr. Surr came in, whilst she was complaining about the lice—Does not recollect that any other person was present; there was a stock in the room, which he thinks Mrs. Schorey brought with her;—it was such as Mr. Schorey wore; these stocks were got because he attempted to strangle himself in his neck-handkerchief. When this deponent went into the room, Mrs. Schorey shewed both the stock and waistcoat. He does not know whether she brought the stock with her, or found it

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\* See Henry Dawson's evidence.



there; cannot exactly recollect whether Mr. Schorey had it on or not, from Saturday till the Tuesday, when she called. This deponent was only a few minutes with them: As Mrs. Schorey had asked to speak to Mr. Surr, he left the room. They began to talk on a subject in which this deponent had no concern. Says, there were some small filth on the stock, which Mrs. Schorey called nits, but to the best of deponent's recollection, she shewed him no lice on the stock. This deponent used no improper language, but said it was her neglect in not bringing a change of linen. This deponent did not hear any scolding between Mr. Surr and Mrs. Schorey before he left the room. Mr. Surr afterwards called for deponent to come back: when he returned into the room, this deponent thinks Mrs. Atkinson and two or three servants were present. Mr. Surr asked deponent if he had seen the filth, he replied, yes. No foul language was used in the room, to the best of this deponent's recollection. This deponent thinks Mr. Schorey was brought down; he was then not in good bodily health; thinks he had had a fit a little before, and was partly paralytic on one side, but was getting better. He had been rubbed with something on his knee and arm, and perhaps his thigh, in consequence of being paralytic, but this was some time before, he thinks more than three or four weeks. The rest of his body had not been rubbed with any thing at the time when he was brought down. It was not this deponent who fetched Mr. Schorey. Till that day, this deponent never knew he had had any lice. As Mrs. Schorey went away, she and Mr. Surr had some words at the door; Mr. Surr said to her, "I'm as good as you any day;" Mrs. Schorey was in a passion, but he heard her use no violent language;—there were some sharp words on both sides.—Does not recollect the words. This deponent recollects Mrs. Schorey and the washerwoman having Mr. Schorey in the room. Recollects hearing no indecent language, whatever, used by any person; no such language was used to Mrs. Schorey in this deponent's hearing;—*Is positive there was no such language*



*used either to Mrs. Schorey or the washerwoman, or any other person in this deponent's hearing\*.*

Mr. Schorey was a very stout man when he first came to the Asylum; latterly he was in a stupid way, but not mischievous; he would sometimes pull off his coat and waistcoat and leave them, and walk without them; has known him throw his hat and shoes out of the window. *Mr. Schorey never had a watch\**; this deponent never saw him have one all the time he was here, and never heard him mention a watch; if he had kept a watch we (the servants) must have seen it.

*This deponent never had any conversation with Mrs. Schorey about a watch, while her husband was alive.* He never saw the washerwoman there, except the day the lousy waistcoat was produced. He never saw any person come with Mrs. Schorey except a gentleman or two, at the assizes.

After her husband's death, Mrs. Schorey came to York. He was directed by Mr. Surr to wait upon her at the Tavern. About a week after Mr. Schorey's death, this deponent met her at the Tavern, when she gave this deponent something for the servants; she said she had taken away such part of her husband's clothes from the Asylum as she thought proper, and he might keep the remainder. She said, she wished to see where Mr. Schorey was buried, and to have a copy of the register. This deponent went to Mr. Sutton for the register. She never mentioned the watch at the tavern. Thinks it was the following week that he met her on a Sunday morning, as he was coming from the Minster; she said "have you my husband's gold watch?" he said "no." She said her husband had a watch, and wished this deponent would make inquiry at the Asylum;—he said he would make strict inquiry—this was all that passed. She did not remind him of any conversation respecting it; she did not appear angry. In consequence of this, deponent asked every servant in the house, and

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\* See Henry Dawson's evidence.



also the men patients, if they had ever seen it, and he asked Mr. Surr. This deponent informed Mr. James Richardson about a fortnight afterwards, when he met him, that he had made a search, and particular and strict inquiry in vain. He was inquired of about the watch, by the governors at the following quarterly court. This deponent never saw Mrs. Schorey again, till yesterday. Recollects Mr. Schorey breaking his spectacles, and cutting his arms with the glass.

Says, that soon after Mr. Schorey's confinement, and when Mrs. Schorey was not in the habit of coming often to the Asylum, this deponent had a conversation with her on the Asylum walk. She had some writings in a basket, and requested this deponent to take care of them. He declined it, and said he was not a proper person. He told her she was such an odd woman he would have nothing to do with her, or her writings. She also told him what property she had, and who had the management of it. She spoke of her husband and his preaching, and said, that a couple whom he had married, before he was insane, were parted, because he was confined in the Asylum. She said she might dissolve her marriage with Mr. Schorey, and could be parted from him. That he was not a man. This deponent replied "he thought it was very queer to make use of such an expression to him," being a young man (the deponent was then unmarried.) He returned immediately to the Asylum, because he did not choose to hold conversation with her. She was at that time much a stranger to him, he had not often seen her. He never heard her use any language approaching to indecency, except that time. She was a woman who talked freely about her affairs, and what fortune she had.

Says that Mr. Thompson, an attorney of Halifax, was once down with her at the Asylum. She called witness into the room, and wished him to be present, but he refused.

Says he has visited Mrs. Schorey at her house in Gillygate. He may have been ten times there. She sent for him to know how her husband was, and the state of his linen, when she was indisposed. Mr. Surr has sent deponent twice, or oftener, to



Mrs. Schorey, with the quarterly account. He has sometimes called on her for linen, and sometimes as a friendly call without any business. Has sat an hour and a half with her, and drank a glass or two of grog with her. She did not drink any herself. They conversed on different subjects; he never had any quarrel with her. Has been at her house both the second and third times of Mr. Schorey's confinement, and was there within two months of her leaving York.

Says that Mr. Surr wrote to Stamford, to acquaint Mrs. Schorey of her husband's death. He received an answer from a Mr. Scott, and sent the letter, by this deponent, to Mr. James Richardson, who read it in witness's presence.

The letter said Mrs. Schorey was at Brompton, near North-allerton; that Mr. Scott had received a letter from her, saying, she called on Mr. Schorey in her way through York to Brompton, and found he was much the same as she left him.

Mr. Richardson said that he thought her a very strange woman; that she was almost as bad as Mr. Schorey; that she was coming to his house in a day or two, and he would show her the letter. He then asked this deponent if Mrs. Schorey had called at the Asylum. This deponent said she had never called since she left York.

HENRY DAWSON, one of the keepers in the York Asylum, deposeth and saith as follows: that he has been a keeper in the Asylum between five and six years; that about a year and a half or two years ago, Mrs. Schorey stopped him one morning in Gillygate, near her own door, and asked him into the house, saying she wished to speak to him; this deponent said he was in a hurry, and wished to be excused. That she pressed him and he followed her in; that she asked how her husband was, and this deponent informed her; she then said that an old man in that street, whose name she did not know, had been giving him an excellent character, and that he was a nice young man. This deponent says he knew an old man in that street who died lately; he got acquainted with him from seeing him making hay, and knew very little more of him,



Mrs. Schorey then added, she had had a dream about him, this deponent, could he guess what it was? he replied "he could not," she said she had been dreaming he was her husband. This deponent does not recollect that he made her any reply; the door was open, and a woman came in, and this deponent went about his business. The conversation was not more than five or seven minutes. Nothing light or familiar had passed between him and her before she told him the dream, nor any previous conversation. She smiled when she told him.

Says he had been at her house once before, to fetch Mr. Schorey to the Asylum. He does not recollect any conversation between him and her before or since that above related, except inquiries about her husband.

That he never mentioned this conversation to any person till two or three months afterwards, when he mentioned it to Charles Holgate, another keeper. Thinks he mentioned it to him in Mr. Schorey's lifetime. Thinks he also mentioned it to Mr. Backhouse.

Says that in one of Mr. Schorey's illnesses, and he thinks about a month or six weeks before his death, he conducted Mrs. Schorey upstairs to her husband's lodging room.

When Mrs. Schorey came to see her husband he was sometimes in the day room, on the same floor as the keeper's lodge, and SOMETIMES IN THE DAY ROOM UPSTAIRS. When he was quiet, he was upstairs, when not so, he was down stairs. THIS DEPONENT HAS ASSISTED OTHER PERSONS IN BRINGING MR. SCHOREY DOWN STAIRS BOTH FROM THE BED ROOM AND UPPER DAY ROOM, IN CONSEQUENCE OF HIS DISINCLINATION TO COME. HAS KNOWN IT SO WHEN MR. SCHOREY KNEW HE WAS COMING TO SEE HIS WIFE.

This deponent recollects Mrs. Schorey, and the washerwoman, coming about the dirty clothes. The washerwoman and Mrs. Schorey were left in the room with Mr. Schorey; this deponent said "take care Mr. Schorey, for I think two women will be too much (or too many) for you." This deponent had fetched Mr. Schorey down from the day room upstairs, and he thinks he and Charles Holgate took him upstairs again.



To the best of this deponent's recollection, he said nothing more than he has now stated. He cannot recollect that any of the other keepers were present, or could hear. A good many words passed between Mr. Surr and Mrs. Schorey, and the washerwoman, relative to the dirt on Mr. Schorey's clothes. Mrs. Schorey asked Mr. Surr "who was he?" he said "he was as good as her any day of the week." This deponent does not recollect when the stock was produced; he thinks one or two lice were found on it. This deponent did not hear Mrs. Schorey say on the day of the examination of the filth, that she hoped they would not use her husband ill.

This deponent did not hear any conversation that morning about a gold watch of Mrs. Schorey's. *He thinks he once saw Mr. Schorey have a watch, during the last time of his being in the Asylum, but he cannot be certain. Mr. Schorey HAD IT OUT AND IN HIS HAND, to the best of this deponent's recollection\*— This deponent thought it was pinchbeck.* This deponent thinks it might be five or six weeks after Mr. Schorey's death, when Benjamin Batty made inquiry about the watch.

The Reverend JAMES RICHARDSON, of the City of York, clerk, deposeth and saith as follows: That he applied to Batty, after Mrs. Schorey's death, about Mrs. Schorey's watch, who said he knew nothing about it. He also mentioned the lousy case to Mr. Surr, who was civil, and this deponent thinks he said it should be inquired into.

This deponent does not think Mrs. Schorey insane, but will not say he has not said she was crazy. This deponent was shown a letter from a gentleman at Stamford, saying she was gone from thence; that he might, on that occasion, say, he thought she was as bad as her husband.

This deponent says, that he first became acquainted with Mrs. Schorey, in consequence of her coming to him in pecuniary distress, and asking to have employment, in consequence of which

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\* See Batty's testimony.



he procured her shirts to make; since that time he has found her conduct respectable, and he has had her to visit him. Her distress was at different times so excessive, on account of her husband's unfortunate situation, and her own embarrassed circumstances, that he was led to apprehend it might drive her to insanity. By her desire he applied to Dr. Best, about lowering the terms for her husband. Dr. Best behaved like a gentleman, and lowered the terms soon after, in a very handsome manner, from fifteen shillings to twelve shillings.

Mrs. Schorey told him, in her husband's lifetime, that he had her gold watch; her account to day agrees with what she has told him at different times. This deponent may have expressed doubts, in conversation, as to her sanity, and may have said he thought her crazed; but he never seriously thought her insane; and is convinced that her agitation and distress of mind was not insanity. She never acted like an insane person, during six months that she has been in his house; she has always been perfectly uniform in her statements on all subjects, and he never found her tell him a lie; he has no doubt complete credit is due to every thing she says.

Mrs. Schorey complained to this deponent of the ill treatment of her husband in the Asylum, but he never mentioned it, and did not know where redress was to be obtained.

On her second examination, the said MARY SCHOREY further deposed, that she never was, by any accident, in her husband's lodging room, except during his first confinement, when she was with him three days.

That when she left York, to go to Stamford, she left her direction with Mr. Surr; that a short time after her husband's death, she removed from Stamford to Brompton, near Northallerton, and that she travelled in a coach which passes through York in the night. She was in York about an hour, but made no inquiry about her husband; that she had then heard of him lately, when his bill was sent to Stamford; that he was said to be much as usual.

The day when she complained about the lousy waistcoat, she was three times at the Asylum. She first went alone to com-



plain; the second time she took the washerwoman, to prove that there were lice; the third time the washerwoman went with her again to carry clothes, but they were not permitted to see Mr. Schorey, and they left the clothes with Henry Dawson. The washerwoman went with her twice, and it was when they went to complain about the filth, that the conversation took place about the watch.

Says, that the lousy flannel waistcoat was not brought to the Asylum. As soon as it came back from the washerwoman's, this deponent burnt it.

Says, Benjamin Batty has called three times at her house in Gillygate; once when Mr. Schorey had cut his arm, and twice for bills—He made no stay. Says she never talked to him about her business or affairs; she was above speaking of any thing of the kind, to a servant in the house.

Says, that when Benjamin Batty and Henry Dawson came to fetch her husband from the house in Gillygate, to the Asylum, she gave them a glass of gin and water.

Says, that once as she was leaving the Asylum, Batty joined her at the first gate, and they walked together up the Asylum walk; they talked about her husband's health, and she asked Batty what he thought of him; he said he knew as well as Dr. Best, or any other person; that she never conversed with him about a couple her husband had married, and knows nothing of any particular circumstance of the kind.

Says, that she once took some writings, in a small basket, to show to her husband for his satisfaction, but does not recollect the time. Mr Thompson, of Halifax, an attorney, once called on her husband, to see if he was competent to sign a lease.

Says, she once met Henry Dawson, in Gillygate, it was after her husband had cut his arm, and was not long before she ceased to visit her husband; she asked Henry into the house, to inquire about her husband's health; he stayed not more than three minutes; no woman came in while he was there. This deponent said nothing to him about an old man having recommended him. This deponent knew nothing of him. She never told him

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she had had a dream; she never dreamt of him.—Is very much surprized to be asked such questions. She did not think there was any harm in calling him in, to ask how her husband was.

Says, that shortly after this, she was visiting her husband, and was standing with him at the window, in the keeper's lodge, talking. There was an old female patient sitting by the fire, whom she had sometimes before seen in that room, she was about sixty, and not capable of knowing any thing. Henry Dawson came into the room to mend the fire; this deponent and her husband had their backs to the fire, this deponent happened to look round, and saw Henry Dawson taking a very indecent liberty with the old woman.

Mrs. Schorey, on having her deposition read over to her, and on being asked if she had any thing to add, deposed, that she never received any of Mr. Schorey's clothes, or any thing belonging to him, after his decease, from the Asylum. That she inquired of Mr. Surr for Mr. Schorey's clothes, who said that he believed there were none; that so long as she paid fifteen shillings per week for him, an additional charge of one guinea per quarter was made for servants attending, and that she now has the bills and receipts upon stamp.

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*Opinion of the Committee, on the Case of the Rev. Mr. Schorey.*

*“ That in the case of the Rev. Mr. Schorey, there has been considerable personal neglect; and that both towards himself and Mrs. Schorey, some of the keepers have conducted themselves in a very reprehensible manner.”*

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### *Mr. James Wilson's Case.*

ALICE WILSON, wife of James Wilson, St. Saviourgate, deposeth and saith, that her husband was confined in the Asylum,



and was previously ill at home nineteen weeks, where she hired a keeper for him. When at home he was very violent, and grew worse; and for the sake of a change, she was advised to send him to the Asylum, where he remained fifteen months. She visited him as often as health would permit, sometimes twice a day.

When she could not visit him, she got Mr. Allen to do so. Dr. Best said she might come to see him whenever she pleased, and behaved to her like a gentleman. She was never refused seeing him, but always went up stairs to her husband's day room. A keeper used to follow her, and open the gallery gate; she was for a time satisfied with Mr. W.'s treatment—the first time she saw any thing to displease her, was about nine months after he first came. He had then received a violent blow over his lip, and it was disfigured, burst and swelled. Before that, when this deponent had his linen home to wash, she had two shirts returned almost torn to pieces: she thought he had been too much left to himself, and complained to Dr. Best. This was soon after he first came to the Asylum. She complained of the dirtiness of his linen, and was told that he was the dirtiest patient in the house. This uncleanness continued till he returned home, since which time his linen has had no such appearance. Before he came to the Asylum, his linen was occasionally dirtied, in a similar manner, but never since; the care and attention of the keeper, at home, has been sufficient to prevent it. He is now in good bodily health; he was stout, strong, and corpulent, when he was first sent to the Asylum, but when he came out, he was very much reduced. A few weeks before he came home, she found him with a black eye, all around the eye was black and bruised, and his shirt sleeve being bloody, excited her suspicion of his being bruised; she mentioned this wound to Dr. Best, who said the same might have happened at home. He was to have had a day room to himself, but she has seen other patients in Mr. Wilson's day room with him. He was allowed at proper times to walk in the gardens, and in the court-yard, as were other patients. He continued violent for some time after he

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came to the Asylum, but that violence had subsided before he was taken out; when he became less violent his bodily state was reduced very much, he continued to be reduced more and more, though in a calm state. The day she first saw him after he had a black eye, she came to the Asylum, and on enquiring for her husband, Mr. Atkinson told her he was so high she had better not see him: she persisted, however, and found him in his day room, very calm, and a patient, who occasionally assisted, was bathing his eye. In three weeks after, he came home. Mr. Wilson is now very much improved in his bodily health, his mental powers remaining the same, he has never been emaciated since he came home, and has been as quiet as a child. During the time he was in the Asylum, she paid *two guineas a week*\*, which included every thing, except a compliment of a guinea a quarter to Thomas Blackerley, who attended Mr. Wilson. She fancied the alteration in his bodily health may have arisen from the constant attention which has been paid to him in the night time. She was only once in his lodging room in the Asylum.

His bed was comfortable, and there was a smaller bed in which she understood a man slept; she has seen Mr. Wilson at dinner in his own day room, but did not see any one assisting him. One Sunday this deponent called, and there was no keeper in the gallery, but a patient was looking after the other patients.—Blackerley said the black eye was given to Mr. Wilson by a patient, who she believes was a quarrelsome man; she remembers his linen coming home, that had been flea-bitten; she therefore conjectured that he had not continued in the same bed, and she was told so by a patient. His body was clean; he had no bruises. Mr. Wilson always appeared clean. This deponent never went into any of the low rooms, but always went immediately to her husband up stairs, and never was impeded but in the case of Mr. Atkinson, when he had got the black eye.

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\* It subsequently was discovered, that out of this two guineas, only fourteen shillings were received by the Steward, for Mr. Wilson's board, lodging, and medicines,—the rest was retained by the Physician.



When he came from the Asylum he had a bruise on his toe, which might be recently done, as the skin stuck to the stocking. There was a scab on his leg also. His leg was never shown to Mr. Allen. When Mr. Wilson was in the Asylum, he had a habit of kicking with his feet, and since he came home he occasionally does so; she has seen him spit at people when in the Asylum, and since he came home he will do so; since he came home he has shown no disposition to violence.

Mr. OSWALD ALLEN, apothecary, deposes and saith, he frequently visited Mr. Wilson, during his being in the Asylum, and always found him clean and neatly dressed, and very comfortable, never saw any bruises on him: he has seen him put his feet on people's toes, and spit at them; once saw Mr. Wilson hold up his hand against him. When Mr. Wilson returned from the Asylum, his body was reduced, his health seemed impaired.—After he came home he improved very much. There never was any opposition made to his seeing Mr. Wilson, nor had he the least fault to find with Mr. Wilson's treatment in the Asylum.

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*Opinion of the Committee, on Mr. Wilson's Case.*

*"No sufficient ground of censure has been established."*

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***Richard Thirkell's Case.***

**MR. HIGGINS'S STATEMENT.**

JOHN THIRKELL, of Sherburn, says, that his son was sent to the Asylum on Tuesday in the August Race week, 1810. On the Saturday in the week before Candlemas he was informed, by a letter, that his son had absconded the preceding day. On his coming over a short time afterwards, he was told at the Asylum, that when his son ran away, he was nearly well, and



would have been very soon discharged; he has never since been heard of. J. Thirkell says, his son was of a good disposition, and attached to his family.

### *Evidence in the Case of Richard Thirkell.*

GEORGE SURR, of the City of York, Steward of the York Lunatic Asylum, saith, that Richard Thirkell, a patient, who escaped from the Asylum on or about the 7th day of February, 1812, was quite recovered. That this deponent issued handbills, and offered a reward, describing his person, and also wrote to inform his friends,

GEO. SURR.

*This Patient was entered, by Mr. SURR, in the Books,  
"REMOVED."*

*Opinion of the Committee.*

*"No sufficient ground of censure."*

### *John Thirkell's Case.*

Mr. Higgins's Statement at the foot of Richard Thirkell's case.

N. B. About ten years ago, there was a patient of the same name, and from the same place, who was said to be murdered by a fellow-patient.

G. H.

*Entry in the Order Book of a "SPECIAL REPORT" of the  
Coroner's Jury.*

"To prevent any injurious and false reports, such as are often circulated on occasions similar to the present, the Jury appointed to investigate the circumstances of JOHN THIRKELL's death, which took place at the Asylum on the 19th of the present month, think it an act of justice due to the various persons concerned in



the superintendence and management of that Institution, to declare that they consider the death of the above-mentioned person as an unavoidable accident, for which no blame whatever can be imputed; either to the servants or superintendents of the Asylum.

By Order of the Jury,

DEAN WOLSTENHOLME\*,

Foreman."

MAY 21st, 1808.

*This Patient was entered, by Mr. SURR, in the Books,*  
"DIED."

---

*Opinion of the Committee, on the Case of John Thirkell.*

*"No sufficient ground of censure has been established."*

---

### Copy of a Petition to the House of Lords.

*To the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled,—The humble Petition of the undersigned Persons, being Governors of the YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM, within the Suburbs of the City of York:*

SHEWETH,

THAT a Bill is now depending in your Honourable House, to repeal an Act made in the 14th year of the reign of his present Majesty, for regulating Madhouses, and for making other Provisions and Regulations in lieu thereof.

---

\* This is a most extraordinary extra-judicial proceeding. It bears internal evidence of being the production not of Dean Wolstenholme, but of Doctor Best. But it was kind in Dean to put his name to it, for the reason given in the paper itself—"to PREVENT REPORTS, such as are often circulated on occasions similar to the present."



THAT the York Lunatic Asylum, like the Hospitals of Bethlem and St. Luke, (both of which are expressly exempted from all the provisions of the said Bill, except as to the visitation thereof) is a Charitable Institution, designed for the relief of Lunatic Parish Paupers, and other Lunatics, in indigent and distressed circumstances, and admitting only a limited number of Patients, in easy circumstances, with a view to assist, in the maintenance of the poorest classes; and that it is under the government of your Petitioners, and others who have voluntarily contributed to its support, and is also under the inspection of Visitors appointed by the said Contributors from amongst their own body.

THAT the effect of the intended Bill will be, to take the Government and Direction of this Institution out of the hands of the Contributors to its support, who are naturally the Persons most anxious for its welfare and success.

THAT though the said Asylum is an Institution principally for the County of York, and has been erected and maintained chiefly by means of Contributions from Persons resident in various Parts of that County; yet that by the intended Bill, the Licensing and Government of this Institution will be vested in the Justices of the Peace for the City of York, which is a County of itself, and is a District of small extent, within which the said Asylum is situate, and over which the Justices of the Peace for the Three Ridings of the County of York have no controul.

THAT the Managers of this Charitable Institution will, by the provisions of the said Bill, be compellable to take out an Annual Licence, which will incur an expense of one Hundred Guineas, or upwards,—which sum must be wholly drawn from Funds of a purely charitable nature, whilst the plan of visiting contained in the said Bill might be effected for a sum, not greater than Six or Eight Guineas; and yet it is on account of the expenses of visiting solely, that there is a charge on the Licence to be obtained.

THAT although the said Bill appears to intend a Provision for relieving not only Parish Paupers, but other indigent distressed



Lunatics, from the burden of the higher rate of Charges for Licence, yet no Provision appears to your Petitioners to be made for the mode of licensing an Institution, where a part of the Patients are not Paupers; and that this Lunatic Asylum, which contains various Patients in different Classes, will be liable for all the Paupers and other distressed and indigent Patients to the highest rate of Charges.

THAT in case the visiting Justices or Physician should be disposed to perform their Office gratuitously, the Bill contains no Clause for remitting or abating the charge for Licences.

THAT the placing of Pumps, at all Hours accessible to the Patients, as required by the said Bill, may lead to mischief amongst the Patients.

THAT as Patients are brought to this Asylum from all Parts of the extensive County of York, as well as from other Parts of the Kingdom, a Restriction of the Power to grant Certificates for Admission to the Medical Practitioners of the City of York, (which would be the effect of the said Bill,) will produce much Inconvenience to Persons desirous of placing their Friends in this Asylum, since they must incur the Expense of a Journey to York, under an uncertainty as to obtaining Certificates of Admission, instead of applying to Practitioners in their respective Neighbourhoods.

YOUR Petitioners therefore humbly pray your Lordships, to adopt such Alterations and Amendments in the said Bill, for avoiding the Expense, and remedying the other Hardships and Inconveniences, apprehended by your Petitioners, as to your Lordships shall seem meet.

And your Petitioners shall ever Pray, &c.

(Signed by the ARCHBISHOP of YORK, and by 19 other  
Governors of the York Lunatic Asylum.)



*Prayer of Mr. Higgins's Counter-Petition, to the House  
of Lords.*

For those reasons, your Petitioner humbly prays, that your Lordships will not listen to any prayer of the said Governors, to exempt their House from the operation of the proposed law; but rather that, if any alteration be thought necessary, your Lordships would make the law more strict, with respect to the said Lunatic Asylum. And that your Lordships would be pleased to enact, that the visiting Magistrates should, in part, always be taken from the three Ridings of the County of York, as well as from the County of the City of York. That your Petitioner is ready to verify the above, and many other facts, at the Bar of your Lordships' House; or in any other way that to your Lordships may seem meet and proper,

And your Petitioner

shall ever pray,

G. HIGGINS.



*A List of the present Governors of the York  
Lunatic Asylum, (JAN. 1, 1815.)*

Date of Donation.		Date of Donation.	
1772, } to	The Lord Mayor of York.		Charles Best, M. D.
1777. }	The Mayor of Doncas- ter.		Sir Charles Anderson, Bart.
	The Governor of the York Merchants' Company.	1805.	Simon Horner, Esq.
	Earl of Carlisle.		Rev. C. Constable.
	Lord Dundas.		Rev. F. Best.
	Joshua Field, Esq.		T. Goulton, Esq.
	Earl Fitzwilliam.		John Hotham, Esq.
	Rev. W. Whytehead.		T. Norcliffe, Esq.
1778, }	Sir Henry Etherington,		Mr. John Roper.
to	Bart.		James Salmond, Esq.
1784. }	The Duke of Rox- burgh.		Rev. Richard Sykes.
	Leonard Thompson, Esq.	1806.	Mr. J. B. Wilson.
	Wm Walker, Esq.		R. F. Wilson, Esq.
1785, }	Richard Langley, Esq.		F. Constable, Esq.
to	Gregory Elsley, Esq.		P. Saltmarshe, Esq.
1791. }	F. Foljambe, Esq.	1807.	James Walker, Esq.
	Richard Key, Esq.		G. W. Wentworth, Esq.
	The Duke of Leeds.		Mr. E. Wallis.
	T. Lumley, Esq.		Mr. John Brook.
	Rev. T. Preston.		Rev. J. Preston.
	Richard Thompson, Esq.		W. Gossip, Esq.
	J. H. Wharton, Esq.		John Sykes, Esq.
	Thomas Wilson, Esq.		Richard Sykes, jun Esq.
1792, }	Mr. Gervas Elam.	1808.	Wm. Beckwith, Esq.
to	Rev. J. Eyre.		John Dalton, Esq.
1800. }	Richard Hobson, Esq.		W. J. Denison, Esq.
	John Lawson, M. D.		Wm. Danby, Esq.
	Earl Spencer.		J. Fox, Esq.
	Rev. Robert Croft.		Mr. James Fryer.
	St. Andrew Warde, Esq.		Mr. John Hodgson.
1801, }	Hon Lawrence Dundas	1809.	James Croft, Esq.
to	Dr. Markham, Dean		Wm. Beckwith, M. D.
1804. }	of York.		Thomas Swann, Esq.
			Rev. W. Bulmer.
			Henry Bland, Esq.
			Mr. Robert Cattle.
			Mr. John Elston.
			W. C. Fenton, Esq.
			M. C. Maxwell, Esq.



Date of Donation.		Date of Donation.	
	George Palmes, Esq.		Rev. W. Smith.
	G. Osbaldeston, Esq.		William Carr, Esq.
	Edward, Lord Archbi- shop of York.		C. Duncombe, Esq.
1810.	W. Belcombe, M. D.		B. Brooksbank, Esq.
	Thomas Lloyd, Esq.		Mr. J. Mason.
	Lord Milton.		Mr. S. Tuke.
	Mr. John Prince.		Mr. T. Proctor.
	Robert Swann, Esq.		Godfrey Higgins, Esq.
	Thomas Thompson, Esq.		Wm. Marshall, Esq.
	W. Whytehead, Esq.		John Cooke, Esq. (of Camps Mount.)
1811.	Rev. R. H. Whytehead.		Mr. J. Marshall.
	Mr. Thomas Bell.		Mr. J. Catton.
1812.	Bryan Cooke, Esq.		Mr. J. Wormald.
1813.	Rev. W. Dealtry.		Rev. R. S. Thompson.
	Henry Legard, Esq.		Richard John Thomp- son, Esq.
Dec. 10.	S. W. Nicoll, Esq.		Barnard Clarkson, Esq.
	D. Russell, Esq.		Mr. B. Clarkson, jun.
	Rev. C. Wellbeloved.		Mr. Michael Clarkson.
	John Dyson, Esq.	Apr. 14.	Mr. Thos Marshall.
	Mr. D. Tuke.		Henry Willoughby, Esq.
	Mr. J. Crosby.		J. L. Raper, Esq.
	Mr. J. Gray.		Rev. E. H. Brooksbank.
	Rev. J. Graham.		Sir W. Ingilby, Bart.
	W. Gimber, Esq.		Sir George Cayley, Bart.
	J. Rawdon, Esq.		John Swann, Esq.
	Rev. J. Richardson.		Rev. T. C. R. Read.
	Mr. S. Richardson.	Aug. 26.	Mr. W. Stead, jun.
	A Thorpe, Esq.		Rev. J. Dallin.
1814.	Mr. D. Priestman.		D. Gaskell, Esq.
Jan. 7.	J. Tweedy, Esq.		B. Gaskell, Esq.
	G. L. Thompson, Esq.		M. Stapylton, Esq.
	Mr. W. Hornby.		John Hustler, Esq.
	Mr. W. Tuke.		Wm. Aldem, Esq.
	Matthew Wilson, Esq.		Mr. John Mason, jun.
	R. T. North, Esq.	Sept. 14.	Mr. C. Peacock.
	Thomas Smith, Esq.	Oct. 7.	Mr. Thos. Wilson, jun
	William Gray, Esq.		



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Mrs. Lotthouse	20	0	0
Mr. Gray	20	0	0
Anonymous by Mr. Mason	20	0	0
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———— by Mr. Gray	25	0	0
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Mr. Kay, of Acomb	100	0	0
Mr. Abercrombie	50	0	0
Mr. Thomas Lund	50	0	0
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THE

Dork Lunatic Asylum.





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**The York Lunatic Asylum,**

PUBLISHED ORIGINALLY IN THE  
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1816.



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NEW YORK

AND THE  
REVOLUTION

NEW YORK

AND THE  
REVOLUTION

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THE POET, AND  
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## PREFACE.

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THE YORK ASYLUM contest has attracted general attention, and is of more than local importance. It is discussed by our reviewers and reported by our Legislative committees. It affords a lesson to the fearful never to despair; and may teach other old Governors, as well as the old Governors of a lunatic receptacle, that if they will oppose reform, they must submit to revolution.

Mr. Jonathan Gray's very excellent History of this Institution, is now in every body's hands. A clear outline of past transactions will be seen in that work, but the picture wants a finish; the minor parts are to be filled up; and what with him was a narrative, is here a drama; here the parties speak for themselves, for the most part it will be allowed, *con amore* and from the heart,

In this, as in most human transactions, effects appear wholly disproportionate to their causes. By Dr. Burgh, Mr. Mason the poet, and Mr. Withers, the reform of the Asylum was formerly attempted, but attempted in vain: they were always overruled and not seldom insulted.—What strenuous efforts fruitlessly combined to accomplish, a little volume, in which the Asylum was scarcely mentioned, has at once achieved.—I hardly need name Mr. S. Tuke's account of the Retreat.—Had this interesting work opened the eyes of the old Governors, the wonder would have been less: Instead of opening, it closed their eyes; the more there was to be seen, the less they would see—the more there was to be done, the less they would do.



Mr. Tuke's work operating on a suspicious and irritable mind, produced the letters signed EVIGILATOR: the public attention became roused—doubts and surmises were started; either confident in right, or daring in wrong, a general challenge was given; that challenge was answered; with what results it is needless to add\*.

The "Description of the Retreat" was unquestionably the prime cause, Mr. Higgins an able and efficient medium of the explosion, but it was the *torpedo* of EVIGILATOR himself, which blew up his own Asylum.

\* The challenge was answered chiefly by Mr. Higgins, in a statement of several cases of gross neglect and abuse. The public, interested by the previous discussion, watched with anxiety the conduct of the Governors. Their decision on the first case, that of Vickars, on the mere assertion of the servants, (the parties accused,) excited a strong feeling of indignation.—There appeared but one means of obtaining justice in the remaining cases. A number of gentlemen determined to qualify as Governors and enter the Court, on the day which was fixed for their hearing.—The Court was taken by surprise—The reform of the Asylum was sealed by this step.

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Reply to Ditto  
Reply to Ditto  
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Socratic Letter to  
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*Note.*—The additional subscriptions, page 57 and 58, were published in the York Herald on the 9th of April, and the 23rd of September; the Report of the Quarterly Court on the 23rd of April; and the succeeding piece on the 20th of August.

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From the

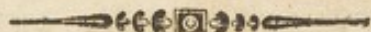
Mr. Editor,  
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## COMPLETE COLLECTION, &amp;c.



*From the York Chronicle, Sept. 25, 1813.*

Mr. EDITOR,

WHEN a vessel or a fort becomes the subject of attack, it matters not whether hostilities be carried on by storming, boarding, grape or shells, or by sapping, mining, catamaran, or torpedo. The intended effect is the same, and the same necessity exists for active defence. In like manner, when an attempt is made to injure the reputation and interests of any public body, or private individual, it is of little moment to the assailed party, whether the measure be accomplished by open libel, or masked insinuation. If no means of defence are employed, the mischief may be equal from either method; and it is therefore equally incumbent on the object of either species of attack, to notice and repel it.

The following brief statement will illustrate these remarks:

In an Account of the Quakers' Retreat for Lunatics, near York, published a short time ago, some highly indecorous and injurious insinuations were thrown out against other establishments for the same purpose, the intended application of which, no one could misunderstand; and which were as strikingly illiberal as they were grossly unfounded. To this attack it was not thought necessary to reply; but a **PRINTED HAND-BILL** having been recently received, which informs its readers in terms characteristic of similar productions, that the **PHYSICIAN** to the Quakers' Retreat, has formed an establishment for the reception of persons afflicted with insanity, "with a view to *introduce, on a small scale, the mild methods of treatment in use at that Institution,*" it would be an act of culpable supineness, to allow it to pass by without some degree of notice. It must be obvious to every one, that the words of this Advertisement (which may be considered in the light of a *torpedo*) were intended to impose a belief on its readers, that methods of treatment of an *opposite* description, were employed at the other Establishments for insane persons in York and its Vicinity; an insinuation in itself as disingenuous, and as totally destitute of foundation, as the *manner* of making it is perfectly unprofessional, and palpably incorrect.

The object of this letter being merely to expose these proceedings, from a sense of duty to others, and of justice to the



Writer's self, all feelings of personal animosity are utterly disclaimed; at the same time, should any one be desirous of ascertaining your correspondent's name, which it is not thought necessary to obtrude upon the public, it may be easily known by inquiry at your Office.

I am, Mr. Editor, &c.

EVIGILATOR.

York, September 22, 1813.

*From the York Chronicle of Sept. 30.*

9th Month, 29, 1813.

IN your last week's paper you have inserted a Letter under the signature of Evigilator, in which is the following paragraph, viz.

"In an Account of the Quakers' Retreat for Lunatics near York, published a short time ago, some highly indecorous and injurious insinuations were thrown out against other Establishments for the same purpose, the intended application of which, no one could misunderstand, and which were as strikingly illiberal as they were grossly unfounded."

As the Author of the Book alluded to in the preceding paragraph, I must beg leave to say a few words in reply.

Your readers will, doubtless, have observed, that the very serious charges which Evigilator has exhibited against me, are not supported by any quotation, or even a reference to any particular passages in the Book in question. I might perhaps, therefore, have been satisfied with calling upon your correspondent to support his accusations by evidence, and have reserved the whole of my defence till I should learn the particular instances of my imputed fault.

I cannot, however, refrain, in the mean-time, from so far endeavouring to unprejudice the public as to declare, that the remarks which are made on the frequent inhuman treatment of insane persons, were not directed against any particular establishment. It is asserted, that this unhappy class of people are too often treated in a most injudicious and barbarous manner, and if Evigilator wishes for instances, I regret to say it is in my power to produce many. It is also asserted, that the general mode of treatment in the Retreat, is more mild than that of most other establishments of a similar kind. If Evigilator deny this, I must request him to point out many institutions in which the use of chains is entirely discarded, and in

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which other modes of coercion are employed in an equally moderate degree, as is the case in the Retreat.\*

It is neither affirmed nor insinuated in the work which has given so much offence, that bad practices exist in all establishments, or that there are not any institutions as well managed as the Retreat. Whence then has arisen this extreme tenderness in the mind of Evigilator? What would he think of a man, who should feel himself personally insulted by the maxim of the Grecian Sage, *the majority are wicked*?—and the abuses in the management of the insane are, I fear, hardly less notorious than the general depravity of mankind.

I confess myself at a loss to conceive for what purpose Evigilator has presented so warlike a front. I can assure him, that the attitude he has assumed is far from having had any discouraging effect upon me.

If any thing which is said in the Description of the Retreat, is calculated to *sap* or *undermine* that detestable system of treatment to which the insane are too frequently exposed, I shall sincerely rejoice: and I assure Evigilator, that, so far from being alarmed by the attack he has made upon me, I will at all times be ready to defend, according to the best of my ability, the cause of this unhappy class of my fellow-creatures.

One compliment I must pay Evigilator: he thinks that "it would be an act of culpable supineness" to do otherwise than he has done. Supineness is certainly the cause of most of the abuses in public establishments, and I ardently wish that the Governors and Officers in establishments for the care of deranged persons, may be as jealous of the *existence* of abuses, as your correspondent is of their *imputation*.

I have only to add, that I do not feel myself, or the institution which I have described, at all implicated in the remarks of Evigilator on the advertisement of the Physician to the Retreat.—I shall, therefore, leave these remarks to his own animadversions, and do not doubt your ready insertion of this reply to the severe charges exhibited against me.

S. TUKE.

\* See Description of Retreat, p. 167.

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*From the York Chronicle of Sept. 30.*

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SIRS,

WHEN the Quakers' Retreat was first established, for the reception of insane patients, it was publicly avowed that the mildest methods of treatment would be adopted in that Institution. Professional men may surely be permitted to think



differently on this, or any other point of practice, without attaching censure to either party. I have experienced for more than ten years, the good effects of the system I found in practice at the Retreat; and had made up my mind to pursue the same plans, if my practice should ever be extended in that line of my profession.

I have now expended a considerable sum of money in the purchase of property, and providing accommodations for insane persons. I therefore judged it proper to give notice in the manner I have done, that my houses at Clifton were ready for the reception of patients. In doing this I did not suppose I could give offence to any one, or be considered as censuring, in the smallest degree, the treatment adopted at any other establishment in York or its Vicinity—Very few, I trust, will be found to think, with the person who signs himself *Evigilator*, that I have acted unprofessionally or incorrectly in publishing the notice alluded to, more especially as it relates to a *concern not wholly medical*. I think it right, however, now, that the notice should appear in your paper, and request you will insert it to-morrow.

I am your obedient Servant,

W. BELCOMBE.

York, 29th Sept. 1813.

(COPY.)

“At Clifton, near York, a private Establishment has been formed under the direction of the Physician to the Retreat, or Quakers’ Asylum, for the reception and cure of persons afflicted with nervous Complaints and Insanity, with a view to introduce, on a small scale, the mild methods of treatment in use at that Institution.”

*From the York Chronicle of Sept. 30.*

SIR,

Northallerton, Sept. 27th, 1813.

IT is customary with Travellers to call for the Papers, containing intelligence of the important events which now attract the attention of all the world. After my supper this evening, I indulged my usual appetite for news; and on two papers being brought to me, from a sort of instinctive partiality for Yorkshire, I seized the York Courant in preference to a London Paper, which was at the same time laid upon the table. The Editor’s summary account from the late Gazettes pleased me much; I there read, 1st dispatch—“*forced St. Cyr from a strongly entrenched camp.*” 2d dispatch—“*melancholy fact of Moreau having lost both his legs.*” 3d document—



*"Important Victory over Vandamme; and 4thly—" a Gazette, containing the numerical account of cannon and prisoners taken in the various actions."*

My heart was filled with exultation at these glorious achievements of our Allies—nothing less than the humiliation of the Grand Tyrant and the repose of all the world filled my imagination: When casually casting my eye upon a column of the paper parallel to that which contained this gratifying intelligence, I found an account of further hostilities having been carried on by "*Storming,*" "*Boarding,*" "*Grape or Shells,*" by "*Sapping,*" "*Mining,*" "*Catamaran,*" or "*Torpedo.*"—Now! thought I, for the fall of Dresden! And who is the gallant General that has employed all these means? On looking for the name and the date, I discovered, with astonishment, that "*York*" was the scene of these tremendous military operations.

In a fit of terror and surprise the paper fell from my hand—by an involuntary impulse I rang the bell; and on the waiter entering, anxiously enquired if he had heard that the City of York had been blown into the skies by some insidious Revolutionists. With equal surprise, but to my great joy, he answered—"No, Sir, all was well there to-day when the Coach left it." Recovering a little from my confusion, I took courage to examine this article a little more carefully, and found it was addressed to the *Editor* of the *York Courant*, and was occasioned by an alarm which one *Evigilator* had taken at a mere *Report* from the most un-warlike of all people, the inoffensive *Quakers*.

But that which seems to have produced the *stunning effect* upon the nerves of this poor gentleman, was some *wadding* discovered after the *Report* in the form, he says, of a "*Hand-Bill.*" The ingredient which appears to have been most destructive of the quiet of this gentleman, is a *notice* in the *Report*, and in the *Hand-Bill*, that "*mild methods of treatment* are used in the *Friends' Retreat* for Lunatics, and are adopted also, by the *Physician* to that *Retreat*, in a private *Establishment*; and, though he seems to concede, that "*mild methods*" are the practice of both these places, yet he intimates the *Conductors* have no right to tell the world so.

Now this appears to me, Mr. Editor, to be a little unreasonable—and it is certainly more so, to infer from this *notice*, that any imputation is intended to be cast upon the practice of other *Establishments*.

Leaving this matter, however, to be settled by those whom it concerns, I cannot help here expressing a wish, that the mildest modes of treatment, may be adopted in every establishment for the reception of the insane, and that the objects of this most dreadful of Heaven's afflictions, may be delivered from the



treatment of the illiterate empiric, and placed under the care of those, who, by education and professional habits, are the most likely to treat them with skill and humanity.

My eyes inform me that the hour of rest has arrived; and not doubting, Mr. Editor, that I shall find in the due course of my journey, your ancient city, with its Asylum and Retreat, standing, just as they were, I subscribe myself,

Yours, &c.

VIATOR.

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*From the York Chronicle of Oct. 7.*

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SIR,

THE letter of Evigilator, (or the officer on guard,) announces the commencement of hostilities in our own neighbourhood. I would therefore suggest to yourself and your brother Editors, that it might be an accommodation to yourselves and to the public, if you would insert the bulletins of the contending parties at those intervals when there happens to be no news from the Continent. By a little management, the *civil war* may even be prolonged till the armies in Germany have gone into winter quarters, when your readers will be able to give their undivided attention to the operations nearer home.

It would appear, from Evigilator's dispatch, as if the less strict amongst the Society of Friends, had not the same decided objection, as formerly, to every species of warfare. He intimates that though they will not attempt to take a place by storm, with the uproar of cannon, "grape and shells," yet they have recourse to the silent operation of *sapping*; and hence, no doubt, the appellation of *wet Quakers*, the origin of which was never before explained.—It is only fair, however, to observe, that Evigilator's charge of *sapping* is not yet substantiated by proofs.

It further appears from the medical part of his letter, that the mild system in the treatment of lunatics now in use at the Quakers' Retreat, is about to be introduced elsewhere; a circumstance which has justly excited the indignation of Evigilator. We all know the remarkable gravity and composure of the Friends, for the reception of whose lunatics the *Retreat* is exclusively designed. Now it by no means follows that the same severity may be necessary in the case of a mad Quaker, as in that of mad Churchmen, Papists, or Methodists; on the contrary, the mild system, though quite suitable in the case of the insane Quaker, might prove mischievous if applied to a lunatic of any other religious denomination.



May it not with reason be maintained, that the severer methods; which the public believe to be practised in some other institutions, are generally most likely to effect a cure? Mad patients are apt to be refractory and violent, and to require strong coercion. A sound drubbing is said to be of great service. The Emperors of Russia and Austria in vain tried *mild methods* with the first madman of the age; the latter even yielded up his fair daughter into the clutches of the savage, in hopes of taming him. Lately, however, they have adopted an opposite plan of treatment, and Buonaparte may be said to have been removed from the ——— to the ———. \* The experiment has been made with some success of an exposure to a frightful climate; and the Emperors are now trying the effect of a constant exhibition of gunpowder, a specific which the Quakers are well known to hold in decided abhorrence; though it bids fairer to bring this infuriate to his senses than any of those *mild methods* which the Friends would recommend in preference.

In fact I suspect that if the advocates for the mild system of management, had so far prevailed as to prohibit the application of those very severe medicines, *powder and balls*, the great madman would long since have broken loose amongst us, and converted our happy Island into a bedlam. Should he, in spite of the remedies now applying, continue untractable, I trust he will never be able to find a *Retreat*, as I am cruel enough to wish him in some place of confinement where the use of *chains* is not yet exploded.

I am, Sir, &c. &c.

#### A FRIEND TO HARSH METHODS.

\* What a contrast between the abodes of stillness and silence, and the region of bombs and catamarans!

From the *York Chronicle* of Oct. 7.

York, Oct. 6, 1813.

MR. EDITOR,

HAD any doubts remained on my mind of the accuracy of the allegations brought forward in my first letter, they would have been entirely removed by the replies which have been made to it.—The charges I advanced, so far from having been disproved by evidence, or repelled by argument, not only remain entirely uncontroverted, but have gathered fresh strength from the very means employed for their refutation.

Mr. Tuke's letter, which is penned like his book, with considerable subtlety, and is strongly characterised by a spirit of



equivocation, is so replete with pretensions to superior philanthropy, unfounded claims to the use of a milder and more humane system of treatment than is employed in other establishments for the insane, and with injurious insinuations against lunatic institutions in general, (not excepting or exempting *any*, though accused particularly of defaming *one*;) that I apprehend I should be furnished with a sufficient justification of the character I have given of his remarks, by referring to this production alone. I shall, however, add one quotation from his work, among the various passages it contains of a similar tendency: "If it should be thought to afford "satisfactory evidence in favour of a more mild system of "treatment than has been generally adopted; if it should also "prove, which I flatter myself it will, the practicability of introducing such a system into establishments for the insane poor, "whose situation has, in general, been too pitiable for words "to describe, I shall esteem myself peculiarly happy in this "publication."—*Preface, p. vii.*

It is here distinctly stated, that the practicability of introducing a system of mild treatment into these establishments still remains to be proved, which is a direct assertion that such a system has not yet been introduced into *any* establishment of the kind; a sufficient proof that it was the author's intention to *include* a neighbouring institution in his sweeping censure, and fully justifying the assertion I have already made, "that his remarks were as strikingly illiberal as they were grossly unfounded."

Having exposed his insinuations as far as was necessary for my purpose, I shall now take my leave of Mr. Tuke. As I have not the requisite degree of assurance to make a public proclamation of the superiority of an institution to which I profess myself to belong, and am, I trust, incapable of casting either direct or indirect aspersions on an establishment with which I have no connection; and as I have not yet acquired a sufficient share of *modesty*, to intimate to the public that I have monopolized the possession of humanity and active benevolence, we cannot be considered as entering the lists upon equal terms. It is therefore my present intention, without the occurrence of very strong reasons to the contrary, not to enter into any further controversy on the subject.

With respect to the Physician to the Quakers' Retreat, had his Advertisement, however unprofessional in itself, been free from the intimation with which it concludes, I should never have brought it into public notice, and am now very unwilling to press him further on the subject than necessity absolutely demands; but as he has since brought forward a public defence of advertising, I am compelled to trouble you with a few additional remarks.



The previous expenditure of a sum of money, as an excuse for the breach of a professional rule, is, I apprehend, perfectly inadmissible. The venders of quack medicines, who have also expended considerable sums of money in their laboratories and the apparatus of their trade, may give this reason for advertising with perfect propriety. Persons of this description, by adopting such measures, neither take an unfair advantage of any *particular* competitor, nor do any *general* injury to the respectability of their brethren; but a Physician who has recourse to similar practices, renders himself justly chargeable with *both*.

It may be alleged that there is a difference between ordinary practice, and the peculiar line of insanity; but if it be allowable for a regular practitioner to advertise for patients labouring under nervous disorders and insanity, can any reason be assigned why he should not advertise for patients of every description? and this being once admitted, what becomes of the respectability of the profession? Where would be the existing barrier between the man of integrity and science, and the knavish and ignorant empiric? What man of education would enter into a profession which would at once cease to be that of a gentleman? and what man of respectability, already embarked in it, would not feel ashamed to belong to it?

As some difference of opinion, however, may possibly exist upon this subject, among those who are entirely unacquainted with professional matters, I beg leave to refer such of your readers as feel at all interested in the subject, to any of the Members of either the *legal* or the *medical* profession. On a professional point, they may be considered to be the fairest and most competent judges, and I shall be indeed mistaken if they do not unanimously concur in reprobating a practice, which has hitherto been confined to the Empiric and Impostor,

I am Sir, &c.

EVIGILATOR.

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*From the York Chronicle of Oct. 7.*

*To the Physician to the Retreat.*

MY DEAR SIR,

Liverpool, Oct. 4, 1813.

IN my late perusal of the York Papers, I have been much gratified by your *acute* reply to the letter of Evigilator, and by the ingenuity with which you have contrived, under cover of an answer to his charges, to introduce a copy of your own hand-bill, and, at the same time, *so ably* to defend our invaluable privilege of advertising for patients.



I likewise highly approve of your insinuation that there exists a difference of opinion amongst medical practitioners with regard to the treatment of insanity. You cannot take too much pains to impress upon the public a belief that the practice of *mild* methods is entirely confined to yourself; the belief will easily gain currency amongst that class of the community by whom we thrive: and I trust your exertions will be crowned with the success they deserve.

Continue to call your *hand-bills*—NOTICES. It sounds better, and is less liable to criticism. I think some of your old *bills* were better executed; that in particular with the Latin quotation—“*Venienti occurrere morbo*,” which was very much in my own style, and I have no doubt succeeded admirably.

I am afraid, you will have powerful rivals in your present line, in Messrs. DELAHAYDE and Co. but let them boast of their *sudden cures*; *protracted* measures will answer your purpose better.

I need not suggest to you to let no opportunity escape of dragging your name before the public.—By the way, that last edition of the Scarborough Guide was a *capital hit*.

I have no very particular news to send you respecting our friends. DIXON is getting on famously by the sale of his *Antibilious Pills*; and Messrs. CURRIE and Co. are sweeping all before them. There is, however, room enough for us all, and I trust we shall eventually succeed in exterminating the *Regulars*.

I send you six dozen bottles of my BALSAMIC TINCTURE, which I will thank you to dispose of on my account. You will find them quite as saleable as *Well's Gout Medicine*, and *equally efficacious*. I shall, of course, allow a handsome percentage.

Poor Turpin's IMPERIAL ITCH OINTMENT, I am sorry to inform you does not take. *Apropos* of ointments, how have you succeeded with your OINTMENT FOR THE EYES? If you will send me a few score boxes, I think I can dispose of them for you to advantage, among the Guinea Captains. Don't forget to wrap up each box in a copy of your hand-bill.

I had almost forgotten to mention, that the attempts to substitute the word *notice* for *hand-bill* are too often repeated, both in your letter and Viator's, which may lead censorious people to imagine that you have either been laying your heads very close together, or are absolutely one and the same person, and the brilliant wit with which Viator's letter abounds, will give considerable colour to the latter supposition.

Should any thing bring you into these parts, I need not say that I shall meet you with the welcome of a Brother.

In the mean time, believe me,

Most faithfully yours,

S. BRODUM.



*From the York Chronicle of Oct. 14.*

Chester, Oct. 11th, 1813.

SIRS,

I was the widow of the late celebrated Dr. Brodum, whose memory is still as *Balm and Ointment* to my breast. So happy was I in the married state, that I could not rest till I had formed another union.—Judge, Sir, what must be the feelings of dear Dr. Loudhum and myself upon seeing your paper made the vehicle of a scandalous libel, in the form of an old letter of my late dear husband's, but now pretended to have been written only the other day to a Physician in York. The following facts which I request the favor of you to publish, will clear me from the imputation of bigamy, and explain the real history of my late husband's letter.

It is now several years since Dr. Samuel Brodum or *Broadhum*, my much esteemed earlier choice, was attacked by a fatal disorder. *Exhilarating Cordials* only seemed to hasten his dissolution, and I attended his funeral. It desired, I can send you a copy of the *pre-scription* on his monument.—I need not tell you the Doctor was a liberal and untrammelled practitioner. He despised the narrow bigotry of the regular faculty, whom he thought unworthy of his notice; but, whenever any of them ventured to break the shackles of custom and to advertise medicines, Dr. Brodum was ready to hail them as brethren. No sooner, therefore, had the great Hunter announced his *Discovery of the Brazils*, than Dr. Brodum hastened to write him a *letter of congratulation*: the letter led to an intimacy; and my dear Brodum and myself had the pleasure of making an excursion to York, to visit the Doctor, and pay our respects to *Bacchus*.

It now appears that this complimentary letter from a contemporary and friend, which should have appeared in its proper place in the long expected *Life and posthumous Writings*, has come forth into the world in a garbled state; and I cannot but think the friends of both the deceased Doctors will join with me in regretting, that it should have been permitted to appear.

I write in Dr. Loudhum's absence, who desired me to say, he had been sent for either to the Palace or the Deanery. He attends "persons of condition only."

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your Afflicted Servant,

LOUISA LOUDHUM.



*From the York Chronicle of Oct. 14.*

I PERCEIVE by the last Chronicle, that Evigilator is not satisfied with the vindication of myself from the charges which he has thought proper to produce against me. But as he has expressed an intention to withdraw from the controversy, unless circumstances should urge him to continue it; and as the points in dispute have been clearly exhibited, I shall not press my opponent much farther, but, for the present, content myself with a few additional observations on the subject.

I will not follow Evigilator in the track of personal abuse. Happily, my cause does not require it, and it would ill become me to forget that truth, of which my inquiries into the experience and practice of the Retreat have so often reminded me,

"Soft speech  
Is, to distemper'd wrath, medicinal."

Evigilator has asserted, that, if other proof were wanted, my own vindication would be sufficient to justify his charges against me, but not willing to rest himself on this ground, he has produced a quotation from the preface to the "Description of the Retreat," which he appears to think is conclusive evidence in support of his assertions.—The quotation is from page vii. and is as follows: "If it should be thought to afford satisfactory evidence in favour of a more mild system of treatment than has been generally adopted; if it should also prove, which I flatter myself it will, the practicability of introducing such a system into establishments for the insane poor, whose situation has, in general, been too pitiable for words to describe, I shall esteem myself peculiarly happy in this publication."

Here we are completely at issue; and I readily commit myself to the judgment of the public, whether the manner of my vindication, or the terms in which I have expressed myself in the quotation just mentioned, can justly subject me to the charge of *defaming any particular Institution.*

I will only say in regard to *myself*, that I have no personal interest whatever to induce me to extol the Retreat, nor could I derive the smallest possible advantage from the depreciating Evigilator's, or any other Establishment; and not having filled any office in the institution I have described, by which the credit of its management could in any degree be imputed to myself, I had really no opportunity to evince that *modesty* on which Evigilator has so kindly *complimented* me.

That my own judgment in favour of the mild methods used at the Retreat may appear to have a warrantable foundation, I shall close this defence with an extract from an account lately published of the Lunatic Asylum at Edinburgh, which, I am

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authorized to state, comes from the pen of Dr. Duncan, sen. who visited the Retreat in the year 1812, after having seen most of the Institutions of a similar nature in Britain.

"That the government of the insane requires a certain degree of restraint, both for the safety of the individual and of others, no one can doubt; but very different opinions have been entertained with regard to the utmost degree of coercion which is necessary in any case. Now, however, this point may be considered as in some degree settled by experience; the fraternity denominated Quakers, have demonstrated, beyond contradiction, the very great advantage resulting from a mode of treatment, in cases of insanity, much more mild than was before introduced into almost any lunatic asylum either at home or abroad.

"That fraternity have established in the neighbourhood of the City of York, *The Retreat*, as they term it, a building appropriated to deranged members of their own community. In the management of this institution, they have set an example which claims the imitation and deserves the thanks of every sect and every nation. For, without much hazard of contradiction from those acquainted with the subject, it may be asserted, that the Retreat at York, is at this moment the best regulated establishment in Europe, either for the recovery of the insane, or for their comfort where they are in an incurable state."

S. TUKE.

10th Mo. 13th, 1813.

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*From the York Courant of Oct. 11.*

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York, Oct. 9, 1813.

SIR,

OBSERVING that in two letters lately published under the signature of Evigilator, a charge is brought against the Physician to the Quakers' Retreat, of unprofessional conduct in circulating a hand-bill relative to a private Establishment of his own, at Clifton, it occurred to me that this charge should be determined by the practice of the Medical Profession in similar instances. I therefore have inquired whether any other private Establishments for Lunatics have been opened by regular Professional Men in this neighbourhood, and what was the method adopted, I learn that a similar Establishment was opened by two York Physicians about Twenty Years ago, and that it was announced by Public Advertisement.

So far the example appears in favour of the Physician to the Retreat. But then it must be conceded to Evigilator, that one of the Physicians alluded to, might possibly not be entitled to the



appellation of a regular Practitioner; as he had a few months before advertised himself to be the Inventor of a new Purgative Medicine, with the usual information to the public where the genuine sort might be procured, and a caution against counterfeits. Evigilator may also be allowed to doubt how far it was correct in the other Physician to form a professional connexion with the *Inventor of the genuine Brazil Salts*; or to lend his name to an advertisement of a House for Lunatics, in which appears the expression "gentle usage,"—another term for "mild methods;" which latter words are so offensive to Evigilator, that they occasioned his attack on the Clifton handbill.

On the part of the Physician to the Retreat, it may therefore be contended, that in this instance of an Establishment similar to his own, the two Physicians had recourse to advertising. Evigilator, on the other hand, will expose the quackery of the Brazil salts, will deny the Inventor to have been a regular Practitioner, and will infer that the method adopted by the present physician to the Retreat cannot be strictly professional, since it so nearly resembles that of the late physician to the Asylum. After all, the public will judge between both.

Whether the "House of Retirement" founded by means so objectionable in the opinion of Evigilator, still continues in existence, or whether like the Salts from Brazil, it *has had its day*, I have not taken pains to inquire, since it is not material to the purpose. The document itself, which I shall now lay before your Readers, seems entitled to some notice in this controversy.

I am, Sir, Your obedient Servant,  
SPECTATOR.

(COPY.)

### HOUSE OF RETIREMENT, FOR PERSONS OF CONDITION ONLY.

A Family of character and respectability have finished and furnished a genteel House in the neighbourhood of the City of York, for the reception of a few persons who may have the misfortune to labour under a recent or continued derangement of mind. All the inconveniences complained of in houses of private confinement, will, in this place, be carefully avoided; and the friends of the patients will have the satisfaction to see neatness, cleanliness, and GENTLE USAGE, properly combined. It is proposed that the patients shall be waited on by their own attendants, and, if required, may dine in their own apartments. The terms will not be unreasonably extended; and as separate charges are always inconvenient, a quarter's payment will include lodging, board, servants' wages, tea, coal, candle, me-



dicines, medical attendance, and all other expenses, wine and washing excepted.

Letters explaining the age, state of mind, and continuance of the malady, may be addressed to *Dr. Hunter* or *Dr. Beckwith*, Physicians in York, from whom the friends of the patients will receive every necessary information.

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*From the York Chronicle of Oct. 14.*

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Mr. EDITOR,

York, Oct. 13, 1813.

THE cause of *advertising* is not yet abandoned, and the *Courant* of Monday contains an expiring effort, to defend the improprieties of the living by disturbing the ashes of the dead.

On this occasion, it seems only necessary to remark, that *Evigilator* is by no means responsible for the actions of *any other man*, whether *living or dead*; and that the arguments he has advanced on the subject of advertising, not only remain uncontroverted, but are, it is believed, incontrovertible.

No one, I presume, will imagine with *SPECTATOR*, that *examples of deviation from a professional rule*, either destroy the existence of the rule itself, or render it less binding on the members of the profession.

The inconsistency and the impolicy of the writer who labours to degrade the name, under the authority of which he is at the same time seeking to shelter his cause, and the indecorum of speaking tauntingly of one who is no more, are points in *Spectator's* letter to which it is now, perhaps, unimportant to draw the attention of the public, as they are doubtless, by this time, abundantly weary of the controversy.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

OBSERVATOR.

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*From the York Herald of Oct. 16.*

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SIR,

ALTHOUGH no medical man, I have read with considerable attention, the correspondence that has lately occupied your pages, on the subject of the treatment of insane persons. To me the controversy appears, too much like many others, to consist only of charge and exculpation between the parties at variance, when it ought to assume a more important form, as having a relation to the interests of the public at large. The proper management of Lunatics is no mere private concern of



Messrs. Tuke and Belcombe, or of Evigilator and his associate Dr. Brodum; but is closely connected with the welfare of society, whether men are members of the general community, or belong particularly to the fraternity of Friends. What provoked Evigilator at first to attack the calm statements of the writer who describes the Retreat, or the harmless advertisement of the Physician to that Institution, it is not easy to say; but it seems as if he were conscious, that the readers of the work just now referred to, would necessarily be led to compare the Retreat with the Asylum, and to draw conclusions by no means favourable to the latter.

Had his prudence been equal to his zeal, he would have allowed his feelings to operate in silence. He has contributed to extend that comparison, which it would have been wise to prevent; and to draw the public attention to the state and treatment of insane persons in general. After entering the field of controversy with so many formidable weapons, it seems cowardly in Evigilator to sound a retreat so early. He had expected perhaps, like another modern warrior, to overawe and outflank his adversary at first onset; but finding the friends of mildness and peace not only maintain their post, but show a strong *corps de reserve*, he has deemed it prudent to march off the ground, and to propose an armistice.

Steering clear of the conflict on both sides, I beg leave, in behalf of myself and my fellow men, all of whom are liable to that tremendous malady, which requires seclusion from society, to propose to Evigilator the following remarks and queries. In answering them, he may as well lay aside his mask, as the public can no longer be deceived by his assumed signature, but are well aware of his being fully qualified to give *official* information on the subject in question.

1. Having read the account of the Retreat soon after its publication, and feeling no such impression from it as that made on the mind of Evigilator, I feel curious to know what other passages in the book, besides that already quoted, struck him as bearing upon the Asylum in an invidious sense?

2. After perusing in the same work the *modes of coercion* employed, the inquiry naturally suggested itself, What are the modes used in the Asylum? And to speak more definitively, Are the patients ever confined *with chains*? And if not, How long has this practice been discarded?

3. The manner of receiving patients at first admission into the Retreat, is described in p. 146. and in other passages. May I inquire what is the mode of treating a newly arrived patient at the Asylum?—Whether they are shut up in a room of seclusion—or if any methods are employed on the part of the keeper or others to intimidate the patient?



4. Are the general principles, in regard to the excitement of fear, the same as at the Retreat, or of a more violent kind?

5. Has there, in the average of any year, been the same small degree of coercion employed in the Asylum, that is stated to be the case in the description of the Retreat?

6. Query—What may be the average number of deaths in a year, month, or week? And what may be the proximate cause of dissolution, generally stated?

7. What are the powers and practices of Governors of the Asylum, in regard to occasional inspection of the condition of the patients? And are Female Visitors ever appointed or permitted to inquire into the state of patients of their own sex?

Evigilator, I have no doubt, can answer these questions without considering himself called on like the Ghost in Hamlet, "to unlock the secrets of his prison-house," or to produce the terrific effects which that phantom's disclosure might create. I merely request him to remember this, that whatever he may conceive, it is no private individual concern which he has thus boldly brought before the public bar; but a matter of general interest, and deeply involving, not only the character of the Institutions in question, but the comfort, cure, and welfare of numerous individuals, obnoxious to the awful visitation of Mental Malady.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

CIVIS.

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*From the York Courant of Oct. 18.*

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SIR,

THE Office of a Reformer is not only one of the most thankless, but in some cases, one of the most hopeless. The hopeless instances are those, in which the parties requiring Reformation, are powerful and affluent, and strongly entrenched behind prescriptive usages and official forms. A man of a public and generous spirit, however, will not be deterred by the appearance of such obstacles; from attempting to improve Institutional arrangements, and meliorate the condition of certain classes of men. I know no description of Institutions, which is looked on with more general jealousy, than those set apart for the reception of insane persons, whether on a public or private plan.

It has long and frequently been suggested, that every establishment of this nature should be occasionally inspected, *without notice given*, by one or more Magistrates, Justices, or Clergymen, appointed for this end, in order to check, and as far as possible prevent those abuses, which too readily occur

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in the management of the unhappy patients; partly arising from the supposed secrecy, with which such abuses are committed; partly from the incapacity of the patients to give due and credible information of them; and partly from the imagined necessity of unkind usage, as occasioned by the irregular conduct of the Lunatic.

Without presuming to act the part of a Luther in the Pope-dom of Insanity, or to equal the benevolent zeal of Howard in exploring prisons of a different kind, I beg leave to bring anew before the public attention, some observations made by a Worthy Individual of this City, about four years ago, on the state of the Lunatic Asylum of York. I think it must appear to any one who candidly peruses them, that this Institution has been greatly perverted from its original destination, as is manifest from the following abridged statement:—

1. That it was originally limited to the reception of *Poor Lunatics*, who had no other support “but what a needy parent could bestow, or a thrifty parish officer provide.”

2. That these *Poor Lunatics* were to be received *from the County of York only*.

3. That though an opening was left for the admission of patients *in moderate circumstances*, the latter were not intended to be admitted to the exclusion of more needy and helpless applicants.

4. The funds intended for the relief of indigent patients, were appropriated to the *extension of the Buildings*; and yet these Buildings when completed, were fitted up for the reception of *affluent patients*.

5. These affluent patients were brought, not from different parts of *Yorkshire only*, but from all quarters of the kingdom; thus making the Asylum of York a receptacle for Insane persons from every County in Britain, instead of limiting it to our own extensive County.

6. A proposal made in the year 1778, that the Physician's Fees, from the number of opulent inmates, should be commuted for, by a fixed salary of £200 a year, was not adopted—thus rendering it the interest of the Physician to exclude indigent Lunatics, and to receive affluent ones.

7. A Fund for the maintenance of *Poor Patients only*, called Lupton's Fund, which was to accumulate till the Archbishop of York for the time being, should think it considerable enough to be brought into use, remained, in 1809, suspended on that determination. Its Annual Income then was understood to be £170 a year. The Governors, it seems, have never encouraged this Fund *as a Body*, and very few of them have assisted it individually, and the subscribers to it to the amount of £20 or upwards, (the sum requisite to constitute a Governor) were



voted to be ineligible in that capacity, on the assumption of their having subscribed not generally, but for a limited purpose.

8. The proportion of *indigent* patients admitted into the Asylum, was computed in 1809 to be *One Ninth* of the whole, which proves how completely the original intention of the Institution has been departed from.

The Author of the Observations judiciously suggests,

1. That Subscriptions should be solicited for an extension of Lupton's Fund.

2. A speedy or gradual diminution of affluent patients.

3. That the Asylum should become the subject of mutual arrangement between the Governors and the Magistrates of the County.

4. That the House should have the benefit of an enlarged medical attendance, as in the case of the County Hospital, and he also infers, from the returns made to the House of Commons, that the Asylum, even on its present enlarged scale, would scarcely be found adequate to the reception of the Lunatic Parish Paupers of this County alone.

Now I beg leave to inquire, whether this Gentleman's suggestions, which evidently have no other object in view, than the restoration of the Asylum to its original purpose, and the procuring of accommodation and medical aid to the Insane Poor, have ever received sufficient attention?—also, whose province and duty it is, to examine into and rectify these things?

When we advert to the facts above stated, there appear substantial reasons why Evigilator should stand forth as the Champion of the York Asylum; but if he will look into the Domestic and pecuniary Economy, as well as into the official management and inspection of its rival, "the Retreat," he will probably find, that there is *there* one main and sole object in view; namely, the comfort and recovery of the Patients of all conditions, without any reference to the emoluments of private individuals.

Some persons may think the controversy on this subject has been unduly extended. I am by no means of this opinion. At any rate we all know who started it. But the truth is, that if the public attention, too often attracted by trifles, can be thoroughly drawn to the condition and treatment of a large, and I fear an increasing portion of their fellow creatures, immured in Hospitals of this description, results might follow, which, however they would baffle the designs of the mercenary, would gladden the heart of the philanthropist, and effect an important revolution in the circumstances of the victims of insanity.

I am, &c.

TROPHIMUS.



*From the York Chronicle of Oct. 21.*

MR. EDITOR,

York, Oct. 20, 1813.

THE double controversy which has lately occupied a portion of your columns, appeared to have drawn to a close, and there did not seem to be any sufficient reason for continuing to obtrude it on the notice of the public. A person, however, with the signature of CIVIS, has had the modest assurance to present himself on the stage, and in the language and authoritative tone of a schoolmaster, to catechise the Physician to the York Lunatic Asylum, respecting the management and internal economy of that Establishment—the method of treating the patients—the conduct of the Governors, &c. &c.

Another writer calling himself TROPHIMUS, has also entered the arena, professing to be influenced by disinterested philanthropy, but evidently impelled by the same motives with his predecessor.

Though the extreme presumption and folly of these persons in attacking a public body, for the purpose of injuring and undermining a private individual, are too glaring and apparent to require pointing out, and might, perhaps, be most properly left to the contempt to which they are so justly entitled; yet, as a Governor of the Asylum, and for the sake of undeceiving the public, I shall so far notice their malignant and slanderous insinuations, as to assert that they are *perfectly and utterly false*.

If the writers are actuated by honest motives, instead of shooting their poisoned arrows in the dark, it is evidently their duty to come forward *in their own persons*, and prove by evidence what they have dared to intimate by insinuation. I now call upon them to do so, and I confidently assure them, that if they will produce a specific charge, at a meeting of the Governors, either of cruelty, violence, harshness, unnecessary coercion, or improper treatment of any sort or kind, or *will even lay before them any just ground for believing* that such practices exist in the Asylum, the Governors will institute a strict inquiry into all the circumstances connected with the charge, and if it be proved, will not only redress the grievance, but will degrade or dismiss *any* officer or servant who may have betrayed his trust, and broken the strict rules laid down for his observance.

If after the above distinct summons, they choose to come forward in the manner I have pointed out, they will at least have an opportunity of proving that their motives are pure, and such as they represent them; but if on the contrary they



refuse to declare themselves, they will stand fully convicted of the basest cowardice and the most malignant falsehood.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A GOVERNOR OF THE ASYLUM.

—♦♦♦—  
*From the York Chronicle of Oct. 21.*

SIR,

York, Oct. 20, 1813.

THE letters of CIVIS and TROPHIMUS are evidently written to operate a diversion in favour of the beaten army—to efface the recollection of their late signal defeat—and to revenge the vanquished, by attacking the victor on fresh ground.

The angry tone of mortification, and the artful stratagem of changing the ground of controversy, would seem to point out that the new combatants are not quite unconnected with the preceding disputes; there are, however, no certain means of deciding, whether they are fresh volunteers in the cause of mischief, or belong to the old corps of *Sappers* and *Miners*.

But whether they belong to the above, or to a well-known regiment of *Guards*, their onset gives every assurance that they will follow the example of their predecessor *Spectator*, who, as it will be recollected, brought disgrace upon the cause he was seeking to support; the stigma he endeavoured to affix upon the memory of another, speedily recoiling on his own head.

“Thus the small jet, which hasty hands unlock,  
 “Spirits in the Gard’ners eyes, who turns the cock.”

Some difference of sentiment, however, is said to prevail upon this point, and many are of opinion that the Governors of the Asylum, on attentively perusing their letters, will vote themselves perfectly incompetent to manage the concerns of that Institution, and place it under the direction of *Messrs. Trophimus and Civis*.

One of these eloquent authors, *himself* writing under an assumed title, and who professes to have read the correspondence with considerable attention, calls upon *EXIGILATOR* to take off his mask, and also informs him that his opponents have not only maintained their post, but have shown so strong a ‘corps de reserve,’ as to have fairly driven him out of the field. On these remarks I refrain from any comments, as poor *Civis* has thrown out an intimation that he is himself subject to visitations of the malady on which he is writing; and I am certain the public will make every allowance for the melancholy state of fatuity to which it has reduced him.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

IRRISOR.



*From the York Herald of Oct. 23.*

IT really appears time to bring the long protracted controversy, unwisely raised by Evigilator, to a conclusion, which, as he declines answering the Queries proposed by Civis, there seems no use in continuing. His evasion of these Queries, and the attempt, by a Governor of the Asylum, to convert them into insinuations and charges, may suit his cause better than they will satisfy the public mind. Private maltreatment is not the subject of these Queries, and therefore the Governor's challenge is misapplied. It is to the system which is supposed to be less mild than that which is practised at the Retreat, that the Queries of Civis relate, and not to any particular case.

Both the Governor and Irrisor assume a high tone, which they may consider as the best disguise of a bad cause. Like a modern warrior of *declining fame*, they claim victory where others consider them defeated. Their self-gratulations will add nothing either to their own credit, or that of their cause. The Asylum has been wrested from its original design; the poor are in a great measure excluded; and the Institution, it is understood, is committed to the care of a Physician and Apothecary, without the interference of any committee or visitors in the internal management. Thus instead of being a public charity, it has become a source of private emolument, and "*hinc illæ lachrymæ.*"

Let the Governors of the Asylum turn their attention to this important subject, and seriously consider whether they are acting the part of good Stewards of the trust reposed in them. It is to them only that the Public can look for a Reformation, and without their interference all altercation is fruitless.

NON-IRRISOR,

*From the York Herald of Oct. 30.*

SIR,

I WAS not much surprised, on receiving your last paper, to find, that Evigilator had judged it inconvenient to give an answer to the few Queries, which on a former occasion I took the liberty to put to him. He is not accustomed to be so *closely* interrogated, especially on subjects so vital. It seems, however, he has retired from the contest, and is now only anxious to avoid the inquisitorial *battery* that is opened against him.



The irritable manner of the "Governor," certainly betrays considerable soreness; he writes like one, whose whole authority is at stake, and with so great an unruliness of temper, as to force from one the melancholy exclamation, would that men might learn to *govern themselves*. He is, however, quite unwarranted in speaking of charges of mal-treatment, none of which I have ever made, nor indeed would it be easy, as he very well knows, for a stranger to make them, from the guarded secrecy observed at the Asylum. It is not, however, to this point, that my Queries were chiefly directed; it is to the general system of management, which has something exclusive and monopolizing in it, both as it respects the description of Patients admitted, and the permission of the public inspection.

I sincerely wish that my Queries had been replied to, for the following reason, *inter alia*, because I apprehend, there is no Institution of the kind in Britain, besides the York Asylum, where there is apparently, so little guard against the serious abuses to which all such Institutions are liable, both as it regards the economy of the funds, and the comfort of the inmates. I could produce regulations, which, if acted upon, are, on these heads, completely satisfactory.—It will be sufficient here to quote respecting one of these, that independently of other judicious arrangements, it is appointed, "that a House Committee, should meet weekly, or oftener, if necessary, and be authorized to admit or discharge patients, to determine the amount of weekly payments, demandable from the respective patients—to superintend the condition of the house and furniture—to hire, dismiss, and pay the assistants and menial servants—to inspect, and allow or reject weekly bills—to pay all demands, not exceeding ten pounds, which cannot be reserved for the consideration of the quarterly meetings—to enforce the observance of the rules and orders—to hear and decide complaints—to correct abuses—and to transact such incidental and ordinary business as may claim immediate attention." Now I beg leave to ask the Governor, whether any similar regulation exists in the Asylum?—and if not, whether I have not produced just grounds for surmising, if not "for believing, that improper practices" may "exist in that establishment."

Some barrier against abuses is provided in many institutions, by the appointment of several medical attendants; but when an establishment is under the sole management of one Physician empowered to take fees of the affluent, unlicensed and unvisited, and not subjected to the legal regulations respecting private mad-houses, is it not probable that notwithstanding the care of the Legislature to prevent frauds and cruelties in such places, the York Lunatic Asylum itself being, as a public Institution, exempted from the restrictions of those Acts of Parliament which apply to private mad-houses, may in future at



least, if not now, become liable to mal-practices; and when we consider the great proportion of affluent patients said to be accommodated in the Asylum, we are almost justified in designating the institution, as was long ago done by a learned Precentor,—“The Lunatic Hotel for persons of condition only.”

In making these and similar remarks and inquiries, I deliberately declare that I am not actuated by a spirit of impertinent curiosity, still less by a malignant disposition, as the Governor charitably supposes. I do it from a conviction that something is due to the public and to former subscribers, on the score of information respecting the management of the Asylum, and the treatment of the insane, and that it would no way deteriorate the interests of that Institution, if some explicit communication were made, not merely in answer to my own questions, but those of Trophimus, of whom no other notice has been taken, except an insinuation respecting his motives, but who has plainly felt, nearly as I do, on this important subject.

Notwithstanding the intimation of Non-Irrisor that it is time to bring the controversy to a close, I cannot feel satisfied without offering these remarks to the public, but if it should be thought necessary to repeat the appeal which has now been made to the justice and humanity of the Governors of the Asylum, or to give any further information respecting its management, it may probably be best done through some other medium than the columns of a newspaper.

I shall therefore, Mr. Editor, take my leave of you for the present, trusting that the impression which the public mind has received will not subside, until the objects for which it has been excited, be fully effected.

CIVIS.

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*From the York Chronicle of Nov. 4.*

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“Nec Deus inversit nihi dignus vindice nodus inciderit.”

HORACE.

“Nor let a God in person stand display’d,

“Unless the mighty strife demand his aid.”

FRANCIS.

MR. EDITOR,

LEST you should imagine that “the wordy war” which still continues to rage with unabated fury between Messieurs the two sons of Æsculapius and their adherents, will be interminable, I take up my pen to inform you and all other peaceable and well-disposed persons, that there will shortly be a cessation of hostilities; and that each individual Hero of the



conflicting bands laying aside his Catamarans, his Bombs, his Shells, and his Proscriptions, will return to his Simples, his Compounds, and his Prescriptions.—The manner in which this “devoutly to be wished for” pacification will be effected, may perhaps raise the doubts of the sceptical; I will, however, tell it you anon, first taking permission to observe, that the pending controversy is of far greater moment to us all, than may possibly be imagined by many, since according to our immortal Bard, we men of England are all mad! This too, the aforesaid sceptical folk may affect to deny; but for my part, when I look abroad in the world and note the complexion of the times, and see how we mortals are all engaged, I am vastly inclined to give full credence to the inspiration of Shakespear’s genius, and to think with him that in very truth we are all mad.

With this view then, of men and things, you will readily believe, Mr. Editor, that I have regarded with no little interest, the passing controversy respecting the treatment of us poor unfortunate maniacs. In fact, so nearly and so deeply has the matter affected me, that it has engaged my every thought and attention—so much so, that meditating the other evening on the subject, I fell into a profound reverie, which somewhat oddly, though most happily, terminated in the following vision or waking dream:—

“Methought I stood upon the near shore of the Stygian Lake, observant of the motley crew whom old Charon was busily employed in transporting to their long last homes. A short respite from his labours being afforded the old man, he was gladly availing himself of the opportunity to rest upon his oars; but the pause was momentary, for just as he was beginning to nod, a stentorian voice from the distant shore, in accents of thunder, exclaimed, “Old Charon, tack about, ply hitherward thine oar, and land us three on the slippery shores of yonder world;” astounded and indignant at the strange demand, the surly veteran, with intonations of deepest rage thus replied, “And who are ye, rebellious, that thus with insulting mockery, beard the Fates, and seek to return whither no soul e’er returned before—and what your purpose?” And now with direful sounds, that shook the wide extended shores, and in one eddying maze whirled the blackened waters, was Charon answered, “insensate brute! knowest thou not the voice of Æsculapius? We, with our premiers, Hippocrates and Galen, to earth are bound—to old Brigantium, there, as arbitrators, to settle and to adjust a dire affray of late arisen among our degenerate sons.”

This hearing and not daring to question the stern command, the trembling boatman quick obeyed, and with full might and main applying himself to his oars, in a trice disappeared in the murky distance. Shortly I saw him returning with three grave and reverend personages on board, attired in suits of laced



Pompadour with full bottomed wigs and constellation-headed canes. By way of Episode I should here observe, that at this time I heard another person in a minor key, calling out to Charon to be taken in and landed with the three Doctors on mother earth. From the year and nay peculiarity of the dialect of this fourth personage, I conjectured him to be no other than the redoubted William Penn, of quaking notoriety, and his errand, I trow, was sharply to have rebuked those of his disputatious descendants who had engaged in the mortal fray of the Doctors. Old Charon however, flatly refused compliance with his request, and with a sneer observed, "Thou gavest me not a *sous* for thy passage from earth, stay where thou art, I wot there be noise enough without thee!"

As the boat approached this terrestrial globe, I could distinctly hear the words "Advertize!" "Hand-bill!!" "De, grading!!!" pronounced in a tone of indignation by one of the trio, whom I fancied to be *Æsculapius* himself, from the decisive manner in which he spoke.—After a short pause I heard from another voice—but in the chastened and subdued accents of conscious inferiority, the terms "peculiar circumstances"—"Difference"—"Non Compos"—"Other Patients"—To this, however, the first speaker seemed in no-wise to assent, for in a still more indignant and decisive tone he said, "Brother, no circumstances can justify ———."

These detached fragments were all I heard, for not a syllable could I for the life o'me catch about "Harsh Measures," or "Mild Methods," though in truth, these were the points concerning which I was most fain to have had some intelligence; nor could I gather that the third personage absolutely *said* any thing, though from certain courteous *hums* and *haas*, that he mumbled forth, it appeared to me that he chimed in with *Æsculapius*."

And here abruptly closed my vision, in the accomplishment of which, Mr. Editor, I would have you to know, that not only I, but all the old women of my acquaintance have full confidence, especially as it fell upon my entranced brain

—"In deep of night when Dreams they say are true."

By the by, I had almost forgotten to mention that as my dream did not hold out till the sacred trio had landed, it is not in my power to inform you how they will travel.—Whether as aeronauts, or in a chaise and four, or how otherwise; but this you may rely on, that ere long they will make their appearance either at Micklegate, or Bootham-Bar, the two principal Roman entrances to your once far famed City, now again about to be brought into note, nay to be immortalized by "The Battle of the Doctors."

But, Mr. Editor, 'tis time to have done, as I mean this letter to be a sort of herald or precursor, to announce the coming of

the mighty Trio,  
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P.S. May we  
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York, Octob

From

Mr. EDITOR  
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York,



the mighty Trio, and as I expect them anon, there is no time to furbish up my narrative; so you must even take it as it will be found, a plain homespun matter of fact statement—without any of your kickshaws of rhetoric, which, as Saint Cobbett has it, are only meant to gull and to deceive.—With cordial congratulations at the coming Peace,

I am, &c.

MISO-EMPIRICUS.

P. S. May we not have an Illumination when the Doctors shall have shaken Hands, and definitive articles of Peace be signed?

York, October 13, 1813.

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*From the York Chronicle of Nov. 4.*

MR. EDITOR,

THE Creature in the Herald who styles himself a Friend to Harsh Measures, should be informed that there is no such Being in existence as a *mad* Papist. The rest of his paragraph concerns me not, tho' I cannot help apprehending that if he and the other paper warriors don't take care of themselves, the little Black Gentleman with an odd Name will soon have hold of them.

Sir, Yours,

A NON-DESCRIPT.

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*From the York Chronicle of Nov. 11,*

YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

IN consequence of the Reports which have been circulated, and the Accusations which have been made against the York Lunatic Asylum, I think it right to apprize the Public, that the next Quarterly Court, or Meeting of the Governors, will be held at the Asylum, on Thursday the Second of December, at Twelve o'Clock, and if any Persons whatsoever, have any thing to allege against the management or treatment of the Patients, they are requested to take that opportunity of bringing forward their charges.

CHARLES BEST,  
Physician to the Asylum.

York, Nov. 10, 1813.



*From the York Chronicle of Nov. 18.*

HONESTUS presents his compliments to *Evigilator*, and will be obliged to him to say under what description of military apparatus the *Advertisement* signed by the Physician to the Asylum is to be classed?—Whether it be intended to act as *Bomb*, or *Mine*, *Catamaran*, or *Torpedo*?

But perhaps *Evigilator* may consider this method which the Physician to the Asylum has taken of *Advertising himself* as only a *Ruse de Guerre*—or that disdaining the unfair mode of *bush-fighting* adopted by *Brodum*, he is trying his skill at a *coup de main*.

*Honestus* would request *Evigilator* to recommend to his friend, if he is really serious, to call a *special meeting* of the Subscribers to the *Asylum* and *Lupton's fund*, for the purpose of taking into consideration, not the misconduct or inattention of the *Physician*, but the total impracticability of his affording proper attention to 150 Patients; not to accuse him of taking exorbitant fees from the Patients, but to discuss the glaring impropriety of his being allowed to take *any fees*; not to censure the individual behaviour of the *Servants*, nor merely to inquire into the *internal economy* of the House, but to reconsider the general mode of *management*, the gross misapplication of the *funds*, and the perversion of the ORIGINAL design of the Subscribers, in converting that which should have been an *Asylum* for the *Poor*, into an *Hotel* for the *Rich*.

As *Evigilator* is such a sworn enemy to *quackery*, he may also prevail upon his friend to throw open the Apothecary's shop, that a just inquiry may be made whether the *nostrums* of his PREDECESSOR now exist there; or if in the rage for strict regularity, the patients have been deprived of these invaluable blessings, confided, it is understood, with so much care, by the *Inventor* to his *Pupil*.—These, and many other topics, may be discussed at this *special meeting*, no doubt much to the satisfaction of the Physician to the Asylum.

*From the York Chronicle of Nov. 18.*

EVIGILATOR appears determined not to meet his opponents on their own ground. He at first appealed to the public, on the subject of the York Asylum; but he now finds it more convenient to retire to his capitol, and magnanimously dares any one to fight him within his own walls. In your last paper,



he appears with his own signature, and challenges any one to produce charges of mismanagement or maltreatment of the patients, at the next Quarterly Court, to be held at the Asylum on the 2d of December.

This is certainly a manœuvre worthy of a General so well versed in *military tactics*. He knows very well that the Institution has not been publicly and expressly charged with maltreating the patients; and that even on the supposition of this being the case, it would be almost impossible for any one out of the House, to bring home the charge with incontrovertible evidence.

The real subjects of complaint are, briefly, that the Institution has been perverted from its original intention; that the means of preventing, detecting, and correcting abuses, which are provided in most other similar establishments, are not found provided for in the present economy of the York Asylum; and that a greater degree of responsibility is vested in the Physician, than ought to be reposed in any man, however honourable.

Let not, therefore, the Governors be misled from the real subject of investigation; but let them revert to the first principles of their Institution: let them restore it to its original foundation: let them establish rules and regulations for the prevention of abuses, similar to those which are generally provided in such establishments. Then, and not till then, the suspicions of the public will vanish; and a confidence will be felt, that, if any cases of mismanagement or improper treatment should occur, they will be detected, be considered with impartiality, and be decided upon with a due regard to justice, humanity, and the real interests of the Institution.

I remain, &c.

MONITOR.

It will be observed, that the charges against the Asylum in the previous papers are chiefly presumptive: the means of preventing and detecting abuses were said not to be provided, and therefore it was at least highly probable that abuses did exist. The general impression on the public mind for many years past, confirmed this presumption; such, however, is the difficulty of substantiating particular charges of ill treatment of lunatics, and the reluctance which is generally felt to expose the instances of this disease, that there seemed but little probability of the Doctor's challenge to produce allegations against the treatment of the patients on the 2d of December being accepted.—At this juncture, the following statement appeared in the York Herald.



*From the York Herald of Nov. 27.*

MR. EDITOR,

THE following statement would have appeared in the Courant of November 8, if the Editor had not shown it before it was published, without my knowledge, to Dr. Best; who came over to me at Doncaster, on November 6. I was induced to suspend its publication till this time on the Doctor's request, and on his promising to publish the Advertisement which appeared in the Papers, calling a Meeting of the Governors on December 2.

When I first wrote the statement for the press, I had never seen the letters which have lately been published in the York Papers respecting the Asylum; nor did I know the name of any one of the Governors or Persons connected with the Institution; but I did not think it proper to conceal the facts publicly sworn to before me; more particularly as Vicars was ordered by me to be sent to the Asylum against his friends' consent, who were afraid that he should receive ill usage there. I examined W. Vicars, in company with a friend, on the 5th of November, and in consequence of a statement given to me by Dr. Best, I examined his body very carefully again on the 8th: he appeared at that time to have a great many yellowish black marks upon him, which had it not been for the statement of the Doctor, I should not have had the least doubt were the effects of bruises. Whenever I have seen him he has been perfectly quiet, except in the case of the assault on the old woman, who had given him very great provocation.

I have inquired of Mr. Branson, Surgeon, of Doncaster, who first attended him; of Francis Moat, who took him and brought him from the Asylum; of his wife and her two sisters, who saw him twice during his confinement; and of his nearest neighbours; and they all agree in stating that they never saw or heard of the least violence, except in the case of the old woman alluded to above. They all agree that he had the black marks on his return from York, a great part of which had disappeared on the 5th and 8th inst. when I viewed him.

I propose to attend at the Asylum on the 2d of December, to afford the Governors any explanation they may wish for, and also to communicate several other particulars too long for insertion in your paper.

I remain, Sir, your humble Servant,

GODFREY HIGGINS,

Acting Magistrate for the West-Riding of the County of York.

*Skellow-Grange, near Ferrybridge,*

Nov. 20th, 1813.



## STATEMENT.

A FEW days previous to the 17th April, 1813, complaint was made to me by an old woman, that William Vicars, of Fisdake, had assaulted her, &c. in consequence of which I granted a warrant to apprehend him, and upon his being brought up, I found he was insane. He being a Pauper, I ordered the Overseer of the Poor, Thomas Leach, to take proper measures for conveying him to the Asylum at York; to which place he was taken on the 17th of last April; and from which he was brought away on the 13th of last October. When I saw Vicars before he went, he appeared in good bodily health, no ways weak or emaciated.

About a fortnight ago, application was made to me, by Sarah, the wife of William Vicars, for an order for more relief from the Overseer of the Poor. I summoned him to the Town's-Hall, in Doncaster, and upon inquiring into Vicars's situation, the following documents marked A. B. C. D. E, were sworn to be true by Sarah Vicars, and the Overseer, Thomas Leach, in the presence of W. Wrightson, Esq. and myself:—

A. Inventory of what cloaths Wm. Vicars took into the Asylum, and also of what he brought back with him.

He took with him a good and nearly new blue coat, a new scarlet silk shag waistcoat, a pair of good velveteen breeches, a new down hat, cost 13s. two pair of blue stockings, never been mended, a pair of new shoes, two new blue and white striped shirts, a short velveteen jacket, another scarlet waistcoat, spotted with black, another pair of velveteen breeches, two neckerchiefs, one of silk, and one of cotton, two pocket handkerchiefs and two night caps.

He brought back with him, one short jacket and one waistcoat, two white shirts, two pair of stockings, an old hat, not the hat he took, and a pair of bad shoes: He has not brought back one article he took with him.

## Bill paid by the OVERSEER.

York, July 5th, 1813.

B.

WM. VICARS,

Bought of JOHN HODGSON,

	£.	s.	d.
4½ yds Dark Cloth, 3s. 9d. ....	0	16	11
2½ yds Stout Cord, 3s. 9d. ....	0	9	5
4½ yds ditto Cotton, 1s. 2d. ....	0	5	3
Pecketing for 3 Coats ....	0	1	10
3½ doz. Buttons, 8d. ....	0	2	4
	1	15	9



## Bill paid by the OVERSEER.

C.	Mr. VICKERS.	£.	s.	d.
Shirts mended .....		0	1	6
7½ yds Cloth .....		0	13	9
2 Shirts made .....		0	2	9
2 pair Stockings .....		0	6	0
		1	4	0

## Bill paid by the OVERSEER.

D.	The Overseers of Fishlake, Dr.			
To the Governors of the York Lunatic Asylum, Oct. 13, 1813.				
Board, &c. of Wm. Vicars, 4 weeks 3 days, 9s. ....		1	19	9
Letter 1s. 9d. Shaving 5d. Stamp 2d. ....		0	2	4
Paid Short .....		0	0	6
Received, Geo. Surr,		2	2	7
Allowing deposit		1	1	0
		1	1	7

E. This is to certify that I was sent for, by Mr. Hopwood, of Thorning Hirst, on Thursday the 14th instant, to examine the state in which William Vicars, of Stainforth, was dismissed from the York Asylum. He had the Itch very bad, was also extremely filthy, for I saw his wife not only comb several lice from his head, but take them from the folds of his shirt neck; his health was so much impaired, that he was not able to stand by himself; his legs were very much swelled, and one of them in a state of mortification. He is now much recovered, both in mind and health, by bark and a generous nourishing diet. Witness my hand this 29th day of October, 1813.

CHARLES MAPLES, Surgeon.

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*From the York Herald of Nov. 27.*

SIR,

I AM informed, by a letter from Mr. Higgins, of Skellow, near Doncaster, dated Nov. 23, that his statement, relative to the supposed mal-treatment of a patient in the Lunatic Asylum, will be published this week. I am not informed whether the counter-statement, which I put into his hands three weeks ago, will appear at the same time, but conceiving that any explanation or defence on my part would be altogether premature



and incorrect, before the matter has been fully investigated by the Governors of the Asylum, I shall for the present content myself with requesting the public to suspend their judgment, and desiring you to insert the following letter.

I am, Sir, &c.

York, Nov. 26, 1813.

C. BEST.

*Copy of a Letter, sent to Mr. Higgins, on the 21st Instant,*

SIR,

York, Nov. 20, 1813.

THE pressure of indispensable occupations during the last and the present week, has prevented me from sending an earlier reply to your letter. When I had the honour of conversing with you on the 6th of the present month, I certainly considered you as most *clearly* and *unequivocally* acquiescing in the proposal I made to you, that you should refer your charges to the consideration of a meeting of the Governors of the Asylum, instead of prejudicing the minds of the public by an *ex parte* statement against the Institution. I stated to you, at the same time, that it was my decided wish and desire, that the matter should undergo a *full* and *complete* investigation, as in the event of the existence of any abuses or improper practices at the Asylum, no person could have so much interest in their correction as myself.

After this conversation, and supposed arrangement, I was in no small degree surprised to receive your letter, which informed me of your intention to publish every thing you knew, or that had come before you on the subject, and, disregarding the jurisdiction of the Governors of the Asylum, to refer the matter to the tribunal of the public.

Before you come to a definitive decision upon this point, I trust you will consider well, how far such a step is compatible with the common principles of equity and justice. I apprehend, that in all other cases of supposed injury, application is first made to the tribunal, whose express business it is to hear the complaint and redress the wrong, and that only in case of the neglect of that tribunal to perform its duty, is it considered as justifiable to appeal to another court.—Should you, however, persist in your intention of publishing your statement, your candour will, I hope, induce you to make a public avowal of your reasons for questioning the competency or the integrity of the tribunal to which you are referred for redress, and to advance sufficient grounds for your implied belief, that the Governors of the Asylum are either unable or unwilling, to acquit themselves of their duty with impartiality and justice.

D



I also hope you will duly consider whether you are not lending your name as a Magistrate to a purpose most foreign to your official situation, and giving force and effect, however unintentionally on your part, to a malicious conspiracy against myself and the Asylum. This suggestion, as you will perceive, is strongly supported both by the internal evidence of some of your documents, and by the *time* selected for bringing them forward.

I have further to request, that the deposition of the Apothecary at Thorne be taken on oath, before it is brought forward as an authentic document. The publication of this paper in its present form, before the matter has been fully investigated, will hardly, I think, be considered as a fair proceeding, by any candid or unprejudiced person. So far from tending to promote the ends of justice and truth, which are the only legitimate objects in every similar inquiry, it is evidently calculated to counteract and defeat them. It is intended to produce an impression on the minds of its readers, that the situation in which Wm. Vickars was removed from York, was the result of neglect and improper treatment at the Asylum, and not, as I apprehend will be fully proved by evidence, the unavoidable consequence of the lamentable and dangerous illness under which he had recently laboured, and from which he was but then in an early stage of convalescence. It is also calculated to disseminate a belief, that the Asylum at large and its inmates, are kept in a state of uncleanness and neglect; and that due attention is not paid either to the health or the comfort of the patients, the contrary of which notion, as I venture to affirm with the utmost confidence, will be established by the most ample and satisfactory evidence.

As I express so much confidence of being able to rebut these charges, and to bring forward a satisfactory explanation of the circumstances mentioned in your statement, you will probably ask, why I should so strongly object to the publication of your documents? My answer is briefly this—that they are not fitted to further the ends of *justice*, but to raise a most *unjust* outcry against the Lunatic Asylum—that popular clamour, though easily raised, is with difficulty repressed—that numerous individuals who read your charges, will not be at the trouble to attend to their refutation—and lastly, that when the public mind has been poisoned and prejudiced on any particular subject, no subsequent explanation, however satisfactory in itself, can efface the impression which has once been produced.

Should you, after all, decide upon publishing your statement, from which a sense of justice and candour will, I trust, still dissuade you, you are at liberty to make what use you think proper of the paper I put into your hands, explaining, of course, in case of its publication, that it is to be considered merely as a



partial and imperfect explanation of the circumstances, taken down hastily on the spur of the occasion, and as by no means comprising the whole of the evidence to be brought forward on the subject.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

CHARLES BEST.

*It is confidently hoped, that the CASE which has just appeared in the York Herald, with the controversy which has recently taken place, respecting the Asylum, will induce a general attendance of the Governors at the Quarterly Court, to be held on the 2d of December. The following judicious Regulations for the prevention and detection of abuses, in a class of Institutions of all others the most exposed to them, are extracted from the Rules of several respectable Establishments, and are most respectfully submitted to the serious consideration of the Governors of the York Lunatic Asylum, by*

WILLIAM TUKE.

York, 27th of 11th Month, 1813.

"That the Physicians and Surgeons of the Public Infirmary, shall be the Physicians and Surgeons of the Hospital and Asylum: and the Liverpool Parish Poor shall be under the care of the three Senior Physicians of the Dispensary."—*1st Rule of the Liverpool Lunatic Hospital and Asylum.*

"That each Patient admitted, shall come under the care of that Physician, who is the Physician for the week, except the Patient be entitled to reside in the Asylum; in which case, the Patient's Friends shall have liberty, at the time of Admission, to choose any one of the Physicians of the Infirmary to attend the Patient."—*9th Rule.*

"That none of the Male Servants shall be permitted to go into the Female Patients' Apartments upon any account; nor the Keeper, without the Matron, or some Female Servant, (for whom the Matron shall be responsible) constantly attending him."—*24th Rule.*

"That the Officers of the Infirmary be requested to visit the Hospital and Asylum occasionally, and to observe the behaviour of the Keeper, Matron, and their Servants, towards the Patients; to examine into the cleanliness of the Wards and Public Apartments; the quality of the Bread, Beer, and other Provisions; whether they are allowed to walk in the Gardens when the Weather will permit, and whether they be regularly attended by their respective Physicians—also to re-



mark, whether there is cause to infer any damage by fire or insecurity; whether any further improvements can be made, for the greater comfort and convenience of their unhappy Patients, and in particular, that they examine into the Bedding and nightly accommodation of each Patient; for which purpose it is desirable that they occasionally visit in the Evening, and that they enter their Remarks in the Book provided for that purpose."—26th Rule.

These Rules appear to have been copied nearly verbatim from those of Manchester, in which, however, House Visitors are appointed to attend *daily*. It is also directed "that the admission of each Patient shall be signed by four, or more, of the Trustees of the Infirmary," and that "Consultations be held Monthly, or more frequently, if necessary, by the Physicians, concerning the Cases of the Patients, by which experience and knowledge will reciprocally be communicated, in a Disease, of all others the most perplexing and obscure."

*The following is extracted from the Rules of the Nottingham Asylum.*

"That the House Committee shall meet, at the Lunatic Asylum, on every Wednesday, at the Hour of Eleven in the Forenoon, or oftener, if necessary; and be authorized to admit or discharge Patients, not belonging to the third Class; to determine the amount of the Weekly Payments, demandable from the respective Patients: to superintend the condition of the House and the Furniture; to hire, dismiss, and pay the Assistants and Menial Servants; to inspect and allow, or reject Weekly Bills; to pay all Demands not exceeding Ten Pounds, which cannot be reserved for the consideration of the general Quarterly Meetings; to enforce the observance of the Rules and Orders; to hear and decide Complaints; to correct Abuses, and to transact such incidental and ordinary Business, as may claim immediate attention."

*From the York Herald of Dec. 4.*

SIR,

I THINK it my duty to inform the public, that I have presented the following Statement to the Governors, at the Asylum, this day. I am not at present informed, what is the decision of the Court. I shall therefore make no comments, nor give any opinion upon what has passed; but I do most confidently hope, if the Governors have thought it right to come to any decision, that at least, the nature of the evidence upon which that decision is founded will be stated to the public.



However, I care little what is their conclusion, so that it only produce such wholesome Regulations, (the appointment of Visitors, &c. &c.) as may prevent even the suspicion of such things occurring in future.

I remain, Sir, your humble Servant,

GODFREY HIGGINS.

*York, Thursday Evening, Dec. 2, 1813.*

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

I think it my duty to lay before you the following statement of certain facts, which came publicly before me as a magistrate, respecting a lunatic of the name of Wm. Vickars. I have done myself the honour of presenting them to you in person, in consequence of a conference I had some time ago at Doncaster with Dr. Best, and of the advertisement published by him, the result of that conference; and also, in order that I may verify the documents as far as in my power, and be ready to afford you any explanation which you may require.

The object of this statement, Wm. Vickars, was sent to the Asylum by my orders, against his friends' consent; the evidence respecting him was given publicly in the Town's Hall, at Doncaster, and I think I am bound, in justice to myself, as well as to this poor but respectable and unfortunate man, to show that I will not connive at the injustice with which he appears to me to have been treated; his friends at least shall be satisfied, that if justice be not done to him, the fault is not mine. It has been represented to me, that I ought to have sent the statement first to Dr. Best, before I published it. I think otherwise. But it may be well for those who are of that opinion, to recollect that, in consequence of Mr. Peacock's conduct, the doctor had all the opportunity he could require of rendering a satisfactory explanation. He took the opportunity afforded to him, by coming and talking with me at Doncaster, and by giving me a written statement, in defence of the Asylum, which, to say the least of it, is not satisfactory to me.

At the time I first wrote the statement which I sent to the Courant, (see page 37,) I did not know the name of any person connected with the Asylum: I had never read any of the letters which have lately been published in the York papers respecting it; nor have I to this day read more than three or four of them, and I never have had, until this week, any communication, directly or indirectly, on this subject, with any person in the City of York or its neighbourhood, except Dr. Best and the Editors of the two York papers.



I should not have said a word of my own motives or conduct in this affair, had it not been for something like an insinuation contained in Dr. Best's letter (see page 39) of Nov. 20, that I was lending my name as a magistrate to encourage a malicious conspiracy against him and the Asylum; but I hope and trust no one will believe, that I would so far forget myself and the situation I have the honour to hold. No one, surely, will suspect me, of wishing, wantonly, to hurt the feelings of any man, much less of a man like Dr. Best, whom I had never seen, and of whom I had never heard any one speak, but with esteem and respect. He may think it policy to turn the attention of the public to my offences, instead of the offences of the Asylum, but I do not think it will avail him much. I cannot think, that in attacking me, he has taken the best method of defending himself.

By Dr. Best's account, the only difference in opinion betwixt him and myself, seems to be, that *he* wanted a full and complete investigation in private—I wanted one in public. In consequence of the Doctor's journey to Doncaster, I have had a great deal more trouble than I should otherwise have had; but I should have been amply repaid, if my trouble had been ten times as great, by the thanks of numbers, for taking up the cause of their relations and friends. Yet, in several instances, when I have urged them to let me bring forward their individual case, the answer has been, "I can take care my friend shall be ill used no more, but I will not advertise him in all the York papers for a lunatic."

I shall now probably be told, I am raising an outcry again—be it so, but what I say is true. I think no one will deny, that the case of Vickars is a very strong one in its present appearance. Having brought it before the public, I have done my duty, and I shall be very glad, if the gentlemen connected with the Institution can be able to show that they have done theirs, and to convince the friends of Wm. Vickars and the public, upon *unquestionable* evidence, that his case has been mistaken; but I apprehend nothing short of the whole evidence being laid before the public will be deemed satisfactory—less than that will not satisfy me.

Upon the document containing Dr. Best's defence, which he might have published, if he had thought proper, along with mine, I think it right to observe, that it seems to me incredible that any inferior servant of a mad-house should be found so humane as to lend his clothes for six weeks to a lousy and itchy pauper, who, if not lousy and itchy at that time, was so mischievous as, in spite of all restraint, to destroy his own clothes as fast as they were given to him, and for whom the opulent township of Fishlake was bound and willing to find every necessary. I may possibly err in my judgment, but I cannot admit such interested and incredible evidence as the



above to stand in competition, for a moment, with the disinterested and unobtruded evidence of Francis Moat and the two Mapleses.

*I sought* their evidence it was not *offered* to me.

I think it right to correct a mistake which took place in the copying of my first statement in the *Herald*; the words, "except Mr. Branson," ought to have been inserted in the tenth line from the bottom, after the word "agree."

I called on Mr. Branson *twice* on Saturday last, and sent a special messenger over to him on Sunday with a note, to apologize for the mistake, and to inquire whether he recollected any thing more respecting Vickars; he was unfortunately from home, but I received a letter yesterday, to inform me he now recollected that Vickars was sufficiently violent at his house to justify and require a recommendation to the Asylum. I certainly never doubted the man's insanity; I believe Mr. Branson never saw him after his return—Mr. Maples, never before his admission.

The cases of Wilson, Schorey, Kidd, and Thirkeld, appear to me to demand your serious attention.

It really surprises me, considering the general difficulty of substantiating particular charges in regard to the treatment of Lunatics, and the delicacy which generally exists in exposing the instances of this disease, that I have been able to collect such a mass of important evidence in *one day and a half*.

There is one other fact, of which no separate document is laid before you, to which I must call your attention. Since the 1st of January last, 23 or 24 persons appear to have been buried at St. Olave's church from the Asylum. You will naturally inquire whether all the patients who die in the Asylum are interred in this place.

Surely, my Lords and Gentlemen, if you dispassionately discuss the circumstances which I have laid before you, you must agree with me that public investigation into the state of the Asylum, of which you are the guardians, is absolutely necessary; and that the Institution ought to be placed on such a footing, as, by the purity of its principles, the frankness of its proceedings, the wide extension of its doors to the insane poor, might challenge and command the approbation, the confidence, and the continued patronage of that liberal public to whom it is indebted for its origin and support.

GODFREY HIGGINS.

York, December 1, 1813.



*From the York Herald of Dec. 4.*

### YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

AT a QUARTERLY COURT of the GOVERNORS of the YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM, held the Second day of December, 1813.

The Governors having taken into their consideration the Statement published in the York and other Newspapers, respecting the treatment of WILLIAM VICKARS, lately a Patient in this Asylum, and having examined upon oath such Witnesses as were competent to afford information on the same, are unanimously of opinion, that during the time that the said Wm. Vickars remained in the Asylum, he was treated with all possible care, attention, and humanity.

#### RESOLVED,

That whilst the Governors are at all times ready and anxious to promote an inquiry into the supposed existence of any abuse in the conduct of this Institution, they cannot but regret the mode by which an *ex parte* statement of the case, which has this day come under their consideration, has been circulated in several Newspapers previous to an opportunity being afforded to the Governors of a regular investigation of the grounds of the complaint.

RESOLVED, That this Court be adjourned to FRIDAY the 10th day of December instant, at Twelve o'Clock.

RESOLVED, That the Thanks of this Court be given to his Grace the Archbishop of York, for his attention to the business of the day.

ORDERED, That these Resolutions be published in the York and Doncaster Newspapers.

E. EBOR.

*From the York Courant of Dec. 6.*

SIR,

I CANNOT refrain from wishing to call the attention of your Readers for a few moments, to the decision of the Quarterly Court of Governors of the York Lunatic Asylum, published in the last Herald, and which will doubtless also be found in your pages.

It is stated in this publication, that such *witnesses* were examined upon oath in regard to the case of W. Vickars as were

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*competent* to give information. Will the Public believe that these *competent witnesses* were no others than the Managers and Keepers at the Asylum!—The persons suspected of neglect, cruelty, and fraud, say, upon their oath, that they are perfectly innocent, and entirely contradict the facts stated by Vickars' wife and her sister; by Leach, Moat, and the two respectable Surgeons of the name of Maples. Is it possible that upon this mere denial of guilt, by the parties accused, the Governors have formed their opinion, that "during the time Wm. Vickars remained in the Asylum, he was treated with all possible care, humanity, and attention!"

Will not the Public inquire, why the pretended evidence upon which the decision of the Court is founded, is not published?—As the Public have heard the charges, justice to the Asylum seems to demand that they should also hear the vindication. Englishmen are not accustomed to place implicit faith in declarations unsupported by proof. But will it be believed that in this *proper tribunal*, it was not deemed expedient to take down in writing the declarations which were received as evidence. Of course, any cross examination must have been very imperfect.

Let your readers inquire, which of the Governors whose names appear in the advertisement, as having been present when the unanimous declaration was made on the case of Vickars, were actually in the room at the time, or whether several of them had not previously retired in disgust.

The public must remember that there are four other cases of complaint, yet unnoticed by the Court of Governors. Let them not, therefore, imagine that the whole business is decided. What light these cases may throw even upon that of Vickars is uncertain—though, doubtless, the *competent witnesses* in the Asylum, will declare upon oath, that they are as innocent in the cases yet unexamined, as in that of the unfortunate Vickars.

The respectable Magistrate, whose public spirit demands the thanks of his countrymen, can now require no justification for making his appeal to the tribunal of the public. It is to be hoped that every one will read his excellent address to the Governors, in the last York Herald.

I remain, &c.

A HATER OF ABUSES.

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*From the York Herald of Dec. 11.*

SIR,

AS I am informed something more is expected from me relative to the meeting of the Governors of the Asylum on Friday



last, than what I published last week in the Herald, I beg you to state the following particulars—I wish to say as little as I can with propriety.

The Archbishop, the last minute before I came away, told me very politely, that they would detain me no longer, they had no further any occasion for me.

From the resolutions in the Newspaper, I see the Governors meet again on Friday, perhaps they may examine at that time the flagrant cases I laid before them, ready to be supported by the oaths of several most respectable persons in your City. As the Governors have the cases in writing, and the addresses of all the Witnesses, my presence *cannot* be necessary. I hope and trust the Governors will publish the cases, and all the evidence on both sides, in order that the public may be satisfied as to the past, and that they will appoint Visitors, and adopt other proper regulations, to prevent what has happened from recurring in future.

I give my word, I have not written or seen, before publication, any anonymous letters on this subject, and none shall be written or published by me. Any misrepresentations which may be made of my conduct in the Papers, whether anonymous or otherwise, will be treated with the contempt they deserve.

The evidence which I have seen and heard, leads me to a conclusion directly the reverse of that drawn by the Governors. *I am very far from satisfied with what has been done.*

Though some Persons *may* treat my opinion with contempt, yet a few humble paupers, relatives of the Lunatics, *do* wish it to be known. I cannot consent to keep it concealed.

The Magistrates of the North-Riding I am told are building an Asylum for their own paupers. Why are they doing this?

I beg leave to call the attention of the Magistrates of the East and West Ridings to the following facts:

In that most excellent Institution, called the Retreat, belonging to the respectable Society of Friends, 26 patients have died in sixteen years, during which period, the average number of patients has been 46. In the Asylum, containing at the time of the last report 199 patients, 24\* have been buried at one church alone, in the last eleven months; and it was sworn in the Asylum, by one of the interested witnesses, that only a slight appearance of typhus had shown itself in one or two cases.

\* How many of those are poor persons? The deaths at the Asylum appear to be in the proportion of 3 to 1 of those at the Retreat—*ceteris paribus*.



I now take my leave of this subject with a little hope, mingled with much regret at what has passed, and with a consciousness that I have done my duty to the best of my abilities.

I remain, Sir, your humble Servant,

G. HIGGINS.

*Skellow-Grange, near Ferrybridge,*

*December 9, 1813.*

As the Resolutions of the adjourned Court on December 10th were not published, it may be proper to insert here the following extract from the History of the Asylum, pages 33, 34.

“ On that day, Mr. Nicoll and twelve other persons, went down to the Asylum, at the hour of meeting, and paid the requisite donations to become Governors. After some hesitation, as to the point of regularity, (this being an adjourned meeting) they were admitted to act and vote as Governors.

It would be difficult to conceive the surprise, occasioned by this unexpected incursion. Considerable indignation was naturally felt and expressed; but the impartial and dignified conduct of the chairman, (the Archbishop of York) contributed to restrain the meeting within the bounds of decorum. His Grace's efforts were exerted at this and every subsequent meeting, to unite all the Governors in a cordial co-operation for an improvement in the system of the Charity.

Though the Court, on the 2d of December, appeared to have decided erroneously on the case of Vickars, the new Governors forbore to propose any revision of that case, or even to allude to it; conceiving that this would be an unnecessary attack on the measures of those with whom they were now to be associated. They were persuaded, that out of Mr. Higgins's remaining cases, if properly investigated, enough would be proved to evince the necessity of a change of system.

On the first of these cases, therefore, being brought forward, Mr. Nicoll proposed, that instead of an inquiry by the whole Court, a Committee of Investigation should be appointed. Mr. Nicoll's proposal was violently opposed—there were only “ a couple of lousy cases, which might be disposed of in half an hour.”

The Archbishop however, declared himself so decidedly in favour of the Committee, as the preferable course, that the opposition to it was withdrawn, and this mode of proceeding was agreed to be adopted.”



*From the York Courant of Dec. 27.*

SIR,

WITHOUT further apologizing, I beg to inform you, that there has died in the York Lunatic Asylum since its first establishment in 1777, (being a period of 36 years) 246 persons; that the average number of Patients for great part of the time have been 195; therefore compare the number in the Friends' Retreat, say 46, as stated by Mr. Higgins, in the York Herald of the 11th instant, and the deaths as stated also by him, at 26, within a period of 16 years, and it will then appear the number of deaths are *greater* in proportion in the Retreat than they have been in the Asylum.

Why Mr. H. has endeavoured to impose upon the Public, by saying that the proportion of deaths in the Asylum, are as 3 to 1 in the Retreat, I am at a loss to conceive; perhaps the worthy Magistrate will, upon seeing this, condescend again to explain to the *Public* the mode by which he has made his calculation.

There is also another small mistake which he has made, which I beg to bring to his recollection: In the York Herald of the 27th ult. he states that Mr. Branson, Surgeon, of Doncaster, and others, had seen the legs of *Vickars*, the pauper, *after* his return from the Asylum at York; whereas Mr. Branson has since wrote to the Governors of the Asylum, saying that "he never even saw the pauper after he was *sent to York*"; and that Mr. Higgins must have *completely misunderstood* him."

Hoping to have these calculations and mistakes explained,

I am,

With my Public respect,

Yours,

York, Dec. 26, 1813.

A FRIEND TO TRUTH.

*From the York Chronicle of Dec. 30.*

A WRITER in the last Courant, who has, *most unfortunately*, assumed the title of "A Friend to Truth," has given the public the following statements:—1st, That there *has* died in the York Lunatic Asylum since its first establishment in 1777—246 persons." 2d, "That the average number of patients for *great part of the time*, has been 195." And 3d, As an inference from the foregoing, "that the number of deaths are

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I beg to inform your readers, that these three statements are absolutely false, as will appear evident from the following annual account of the number of patients in the house in each year, and the number of deaths. This document has been extracted chiefly from the printed reports of the state of the Institution published in the York Chronicle.

Date	No. of Patients in the House.	Number of Deaths from the opening.	Date	No. of Patients in the House.	Number of Deaths from the opening.
1778	15	1	1796	83	89
1779	23	4	1797	85	101
1780	28	8	1798	96	105
1781	41	11	1799	99	112
1782	32	20	1800	112	120
1783	39	22	1801	127	145
1784	33	22	1802	127	157
1785	43	25	1803	137	165
1786	47	27	1804	141	185
1787	55	30	1805	142	194
1788	68	36	1806	158	210
1789	72	38	1807	166	223
1790	75	45	1808	186	230
1791	70	56	1809	154	247
1792	74	58	1810	174	266
1793	74	66	1811	172	292
1794	80	73	1812	195	310
1795	83	81	1813	199	322

It is evident, from the preceding table, that the number of patients who had died in the Asylum, at the time of the last printed report, was 322: so much for the *first* statement of the "Friend to Truth."

In regard to the *second*, it appears that prior to the year 1800, the number of patients in the house at one time has never been 100; and that the average number from the commencement of the Asylum to the present year, has not been 98. The *average* annual number of deaths will be found to have been as nearly 9 as possible. Let us then examine the *third* statement of the letter writer. The average number of patients in the Retreat, since its establishment, a period of 16 years, has been 46, and in this time the number of deaths has been 26. A very simple arithmetical process, will readily show that the proportion of deaths in the Retreat to those of the Asylum, are

\* These numbers are printed, I presume by mistake, 210 and 222, in the annual accounts of the Asylum.



about as 1½ to 4 1 5th; or, in other words, had only the same mortality prevailed in the Asylum, as has been the case in the Retreat, instead of an average of nine deaths in one year, there would have been only seven in two years. I am aware that a variety of circumstances must be considered, before any just inferences can be drawn from these comparative statements, and I should not have made them, had it not been necessary to correct the flagrant inaccuracies of this pretended "Friend to Truth."

There is another part of the letter we are examining, which, though not absolutely false, is calculated to make a very false impression on the readers' mind, and which, therefore, deserves notice. The writer says, he wishes to call to Mr. Higgins's recollection, another small error which he has made in regard to Branson, the Surgeon of Doncaster, having seen the legs of Vickars, the pauper—Another error indeed! Did this Friend to Truth know, or he did not know, that Higgins had corrected this error, and given a full explanation of it in his address to the Governors on the explanation of Vickars's case, and that this correction and examination were printed in the York Herald, the only paper in which the erroneous statement appeared, on the 11th of December.

You will, I think, agree with me in opinion, that whatever friendship this writer may have for Truth, he has a most unhappy way of showing it: He certainly has not taken much pains to seek her, and I really fear the fact is, that so long a time has elapsed since their last interview, that she has insensibly lost her place in his regards, and they have been transferred to a creature, whose qualities are the very opposite to those of Truth, but who, for purposes not the most honourable, may sometimes assume her name and garb.

If I am mistaken, which I heartily wish I may be, in these reflections, the Friend to Truth will doubtless confess himself a bad seeker, and thank me in your next, for the pains I have taken to bring him to the object of his attachment.

I remain, with respect, &c.

A SEEKER OF TRUTH.

## YORK ASYLUM.

AT an Adjourned Quarterly Court of GOVERNORS of the YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM, held on Friday the Seventh day of January, 1814.

At this Court, the Committee appointed on the Tenth of December last, to investigate certain charges then before the

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Court, reported the several depositions taken by them on the cases referred to their investigation.

The Committee further reported their opinion, that in the case of Martha Kidd, a gross neglect of cleanliness and of attention to the person, is in full proof.

That in the case of the Rev. Mr. Schorey, there has been considerable personal neglect; and that both towards himself and Mrs. Schorey, some of the Keepers have conducted themselves in a very reprehensible manner.

That in the cases of George Arundel, John Thirkell, and Richard Thirkell, and of Mr. Wilson, no sufficient ground of censure has been established.

The Depositions taken by the Committee having been read,

**RESOLVED,**

That the opinion of the Committee on all the above cases, be adopted as the opinion of this Court.

**RESOLVED,** That the Thanks of this Court be given to the Committee, for the great labour and exertion with which they have conducted the Investigation of the Cases submitted to them.

**RESOLVED,** That it be referred to the following Committee, (any five of whom shall have power to act) to make an inquiry into the Rules and Management of this Institution; and to report facts, and their opinion thereon, to the next or subsequent Quarterly Court of the Governors, or to the General Meeting in August, viz.:—

His Grace the ARCHBISHOP of YORK,

THOS. SMITH, Esq. (LORD MAYOR.)

Rev. THOS. PRESTON,

Rev. WM. DEALTRY,

GEO. PALMES, Esq.

SAM. WM. NICOLL, Esq.

BENJ. BROOKSBANK, Esq.

WM. CARR, Esq.

THOS. WILSON, Esq.

HENRY BLAND, Esq.

Rev. JOHN GRAHAM,

Mr. BROOK,

Mr. J. GRAY.

*From the York Herald of Jan. 15, 1814.*

SIR,

LEST any improper inference should be drawn from my silence, I think it right to state to the public, that I am perfectly satisfied with the decision of the late Meeting of Go-



vernors; and am persuaded, that in consequence of the recent proceedings, the Patients are treated with as much *care, humanity, and attention*, as circumstances will admit of.

It gave me great pleasure to be able to second the motion for thanks to his Grace the Archbishop, and the Committee who conducted the late investigation. I now entertain the most sanguine hopes, that in August next, this Asylum will be put upon as good a plan of management as is adopted in any similar Institution in the kingdom. This expectation, Sir, is an ample compensation to me for the anxiety I have felt on this occasion, and for those misrepresentations to which I have been exposed in the discharge of what I conceive to have been my duty as a *Magistrate*.

I remain, &c.

G. HIGGINS.

*Skellow-Grange, Jan. 10, 1814.*

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### YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

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*From the York Herald of March 26.*

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SIR,

HAVING some time ago called the public attention to a case, as I conceived of mal-treatment, in the York Lunatic Asylum, the statement of which, it was alleged, might injure the reputation of that Institution, I thought it my duty, as soon as I could with sincerity, to endeavour to remove any unfavourable impression, which that statement might convey. This I did in a letter of the 10th of January last.

I am extremely sorry that it is now my duty to guard the public from being deceived by the opinion expressed in that letter. Visiting the Asylum early this morning, I discovered, to my great surprise, that the house is yet in the most shocking state. I discovered a number of secret cells in a state of filth, horrible beyond description, and which, in my opinion, it was impossible could be produced by the occupation of one or two patients, in less than several nights. In one of these cells was a chain, with hand-cuffs affixed, fastened to a *new* board in the floor.—These cells were occupied the last night by *women*, the most miserable objects I ever beheld.

Upon inquiry, I find that these cells were kept secret from the two Committees who were appointed to examine the state of the house, &c. and that they were informed as I was, before I discovered the door which led to these hidden cells, that they had seen the whole of the house.



A special meeting of Governors being held about two hours after my discovery, at which, Col. Cooke, of Owston, presided, I was enabled to have these cells examined, by at least 20 of the Governors; but not until all the straw, perfectly soaked with urine and excrement, had been removed, and fresh straw put in the place.—The state they were in, even after this operation, I leave to the Governors to describe.

I shall make no comment upon this statement, except to express a hope, that the public will never rest satisfied till this *Augean Stable* be swept clean, from top to bottom.

Many more extraordinary circumstances connected with this Institution, shall be laid before the public in proper time. I hope the statement of those facts will not fail to procure a full attendance of Governors, at the next Quarterly Court in April.

I remain &c.

March 24, 1814.

G. HIGGINS,

## YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

*From the York Herald of April 2.*

SIR,

A FRESH attempt having been made by Mr. Higgins, to raise a popular clamour on the subject of the Lunatic Asylum, and to excite the indignation of the County against the persons concerned in its management, it seems to be requisite that some notice should be taken of his letter.

I am myself led to reply to it, partly because there is a prevailing opinion that I am responsible for every thing appertaining to the Asylum, and partly from being apprized, by collateral circumstances, that Mr. Higgins's present attack is personally and particularly levelled at me.

There are four sleeping-rooms or cells for females at the Asylum, separate from the main building.—They are of a very sufficient size, entirely lined with wood, and furnished with ventilators, straw beds, blankets, &c. Such apartments form an indispensable appendage to every large building for the reception of Lunatics, and are designed for the use of those unfortunate persons who cannot, with propriety, be permitted to sleep in the galleries with the other patients, on account of their excessive uncleanness or violence.

From the situation and habits of the four poor women by whom they are usually occupied, they are, every morning, at the time of cleaning them out, in an extremely offensive con-



dition. I have no doubt that they were so when seen by Mr. Higgins, though not to the extent described in his letter; and I am convinced they will continue to be found in the same situation, with very little improvement, under every precaution, and contrivance, which it is possible to adopt. I am fully persuaded that the idea of concealing these cells from the knowledge of the Governors, never entered into the thoughts of any individual belonging to the Asylum. No one could have any motive or interest in doing so; and it can be proved, if required, that they had been previously seen by different Governors.

With respect to the chain and hand-cuffs, they have been particularly examined by a Committee of Governors. The locks of the hand-cuffs being entirely filled up, and the hinges obliterated by rust, it is evident, on the most casual inspection, not only that they are incapable of being used at present, but that they cannot have been employed, as far as can be judged from their appearance, for a long series of years. It is quite impossible that this circumstance can have escaped the notice of Mr. Higgins, and yet he has deliberately attempted to disseminate a belief, that this chain and these hand-cuffs are still in use at the Asylum; or, in other words, he has laboured to mislead and inflame the public mind, to the deep prejudice of individuals, by an insinuation, which, at the time he was bringing it forward, he knew to be wholly unfounded.

With reference to the notion of my responsibility, I here judge it expedient to inform the public, however superfluous such a statement may to many persons appear, that if the site upon which the Asylum is built is a damp and improper one—if the plan upon which it is constructed is injudicious and imperfect—if half of the accommodations have been destroyed by fire, and if the remaining apartments are insufficient for the comfort and the security of the patients—if the servants are too few to do the business of the house, or if they at any time neglect to perform it—and, lastly, if there is any thing defective in the general constitution and laws of the Institution, I do not consider myself as responsible for any of these circumstances, or for the evils which may naturally be expected to result from them.

I am, Sir, &c.

CHARLES BEST.

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*From the York Herald of April 2.*

AN Inquest has been taken by Mr. Cowling, Coroner for this City, on view of the body of John Bardwell, otherwise

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THE next  
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York, April

The following  
survivor

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Rev. C. V  
John Dye  
Mr. D. T  
Mr. John  
Mr. Jona  
Rev. J. C  
Wm. Gim  
J. Rawdo  
Rev. J. I  
Mr. S. R  
A. Tourp  
Mr. D. F  
J. Twees  
G. L. Th  
Mr. Wm  
Mr. Wm  
M. Wilse  
R. T. No  
T. Smith  
Wm. Gr  
Rev. Mr  
Rev. W  
Wm. Ch  
C. Dunc  
B. Brook



Chappey, a lunatic, who died in the Asylum, on Tuesday morning last. The Jury returned their verdict, that the said John Bardwell, alias Chappey, died of bruises given to him, by all, or some, or one of three other Lunatics, who were confined and slept in the same room, or apartment with him, during the night of Thursday the 24th ult. but, by which of them it did not appear to the Jury.

### YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

THE next Quarterly Court of GOVERNORS will be held at the ASYLUM, on Thursday the 14th Day of April instant, at Eleven o'Clock in the Forenoon.

JOHN BROOK, Treasurer,

York, April 4, 1814.

*The following Donations have been received by the Treasurer since the last Quarterly Court, viz:—*

	£.	s.	d.
S. W. Nicoll, Esq. ....	20	0	0
D. Russell, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Rev. C. Wellbeloved ....	20	0	0
John Dyson, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Mr. D. Tuke ....	20	0	0
Mr. John Crosby ....	20	0	0
Mr. Jonathan Gray ....	20	0	0
Rev. J. Graham ....	20	0	0
Wm. Gimber, Esq. ....	20	0	0
J. Rawdon, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Rev. J. Richardson ....	20	0	0
Mr. S. Richardson ....	20	0	0
A. Thorpe, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Mr. D. Priestman ....	20	0	0
J. Tweedy, Esq. ....	21	0	0
G. L. Thompson, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Mr. Wm. Hornby ....	20	0	0
Mr. Wm. Tuke ....	20	0	0
M. Wilson, Esq. ....	20	0	0
R. T. North, Esq. ....	20	0	0
T. Smith, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Wm. Gray, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Rev. Mr. Perring ....	5	0	0
Rev. Wm. Smith ....	20	0	0
Wm. Carr, Esq. ....	20	0	0
C. Duncombe, Esq. ....	21	0	0
B. Brooksbank, Esq. ....	20	0	0



	£.	s.	d.
Mr. J. Mason .....	21	0	0
Mr. S. Tuke .....	20	0	0
Mr. T. Procter .....	20	0	0
Godfrey Higgins, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Wm. Marshall, Esq. ....	20	0	0
J. Cooke, Esq. of Camp's-Mount .....	20	0	0
Mr. J. Marshall .....	20	0	0
Mr. J. Catton .....	20	0	0
Mr. J. Wormald .....	20	0	0
Rev. R. S. Thompson .....	20	0	0
R. J. Thompson, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Mr. B. Clarkson .....	21	0	0
Mr. B. Clarkson, jun. ....	21	0	0
Mr. M. Clarkson .....	21	0	0
Mr. T. Marshall .....	20	0	0
J. L. Raper, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Sir Wm. Ingilby, Bart. ....	20	0	0
John Swann, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Rev. T. C. R. Read .....	26	5	0

*The following Donations and Legacies have been received  
by the Treasurer since April last :—*

A Donation from Mr. Wm. Stead, jun. ....	21	0	0
Rev. James Dallin .....	21	0	0
Dan. Gaskell, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Benj. Gaskell, Esq. ....	20	0	0
M. Stapylton, Esq. ....	20	0	0
John Hustler, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Wm. Aldam, Esq. ....	20	0	0
Mr. John Mason, jun. ....	20	0	0
Mr. Cæsar Peacock .....	20	0	0
A Legacy bequeathed by the Will of the late John Dodsworth, Esq. to the Fund called Lupton's Fund. ....	100	0	0

*From the York Herald of April 9.*

SIR,

THOUGH I would wish to avoid raising "a popular  
"clamour on the subject of the Lunatic Asylum," and exciting  
"the indignation of the county against the persons concerned  
"in its management, it seems to be requisite that some notice  
"should be taken of" certain passages in Dr. Best's letter.



Dr. Best says, speaking of the cells for females: "*They are of a very sufficient size, entirely lined with wood, and furnished with ventilators, straw beds, blankets, &c.*"

Larger rooms, better ventilation, or a more frequent cleansing of these cells, might have prevented the effluvia which pervaded them, when they were visited by the Governors several hours after the filthy straw had been removed. The expression "*straw beds*," is scarcely applicable to *loose straw* covering the floor as in a stable.

The Doctor proceeds:—"I am fully persuaded that the *idea of concealing these cells from the knowledge of the Governors, never entered into the thoughts of any individual belonging to the Asylum.*"

If the idea of concealment had not "entered into the thoughts of any individual belonging to the Asylum," yet it is certain that when the Committee of Rules and Management were conducted by the Physician, Apothecary, and Keepers, through the building, (some of them having particularly requested to see the cells,) they quitted the Asylum under a full persuasion that every part of the building had been submitted to their inspection.

"With respect to the chain and handcuffs, they have been particularly examined by a Committee of Governors."

This statement is calculated to induce a belief, that there has been a regular investigation by some Committee, within whose province the cognizance of the facts properly came. There are only two Committees now in existence; the one is, the Committee of Inquiry into Rules and Management, who might have been convened upon this occasion, but were not so. The other is the *Fire Committee*, whose province was to provide a remedy against the inconveniences which that emergency had occasioned. This is the Committee alluded to as having particularly examined the chain and handcuffs. *Individually*, as Governors, they were competent to investigate the circumstance; but as the *Fire Committee*, they had no authority.

As to chain and handcuffs, if they still continue in use, it is in contradiction to the statement of all the individuals belonging to the Asylum. It seems fair to believe, that they were intended by Dr. Best to be discontinued; and that the chain and handcuffs which were unknown to the Doctor, until discovered by Mr. Higgins, and which prove to have been replaced in the floor within the last six months, may have ever since been hidden from view by the neglected mass of filth and ordure, described in Mr. Higgins's letter.

Admitting, however, the use of chains to have been *bona fide* relinquished, or at least directed by the Physician to be so, it was highly necessary to have adopted some other mode of coercion, sufficient to prevent the violent patients from injuring



either themselves or each other. Yet on the occasion of the fire, it was in evidence that not one of the 180 patients, was confined by straps, a strait waistcoat, or any other personal restraint; and a pauper patient lately received mortal wounds on the day after his admission, from two unrestrained furious patients\*.

Dr. Best's letter concludes with stating various instances in which "he does not consider himself as responsible."

1. *"If half of the accommodations have been destroyed by fire."*

It would certainly be unjust to blame any individual connected with the Asylum as answerable for the fire. Yet still it was an unfortunate coincidence in its results, that the Physician was above 30 miles distant, in attendance on a patient; that the Apothecary and Housekeeper were gone out to keep Christmas; that two of the four male servants were also making merry with their friends; and that a third, who was troubled with an asthmatic complaint, could not bear the smoke which filled the building. Thus it happened, that though the only remaining male servant exerted himself to the utmost in rescuing the patients, four of them were unavoidably burnt to death; or, as the Steward's book records it, they died†.

2. *"If the remaining apartments are insufficient for the comfort and security of the patients."*

The Governors declined the offers of accommodation from the Nottingham Asylum, and the Quakers' Retreat, on the statement of Dr. Best, that the patients could be sufficiently accommodated in the remaining buildings.

3. *"If the servants are too few to do the business of the house."*

The Physician is the proper person to represent this to the Governors. If he have done so, and the representation have been neglected, the consequences are not chargeable on him. At present, however, the number of servants continues the same as when the Asylum contained 200 patients, and before "half of the accommodation had been destroyed by fire."

4. *"Or if they (the servants) at any time neglect to perform it."*

The Physician may reprimand or discharge them, or report their conduct to the Governors. It seems particularly his duty not to overlook, still less to palliate, "a gross neglect of clean-

\* He was admitted on the 23d, and assaulted on the 24th ult. and he died of his wounds on the 29th. His body was removed from the Asylum, and would have been buried without an inquest, but for the intervention of the Rev. J. Graham and Mr. Catton, two of the Governors.

† In the same book, a "flighty" patient who disappeared and was never again heard of, or accounted for, is entered as "removed."



liness, and of attention to the persons" of patients, which lately appeared "in full proof."

5. "*If there is any thing defective in the general constitution and laws of the Institution.*"

In most charitable Institutions, the medical attendants are not responsible for the constitution and laws. But in the York Lunatic Asylum, where allowed practice has given the Physician extraordinary powers, and where his suggestions and recommendations appear to have been uniformly adopted by the Governors, it follows that the responsibility for defects in the constitution and laws must, in a considerable degree, attach to the Physician.

The Governors, from the commencement of the Institution, seem to have placed a full confidence in their Physician, and have been ready to mould their constitution and laws agreeably to his suggestions.

Should it be objected, that a responsibility has been imposed on the Physician, beyond what is exacted from the Physicians of other charitable Institutions, it may be answered, that his emoluments have been in proportion; and that the admission of opulent lunatics, which was intended solely to provide a fund for the relief of the poor, has answered no other purposes, during the administration of the late, and that of the present Physician, than their own private emolument, and the cheap maintenance of their private patients.

It appears "superfluous" particularly to allude to the unfavourable insinuations against Mr. Higgins, which are scattered through the letter. The public are convinced, that if there be any prospect of a reformation of the defects and abuses which are now admitted to exist, they are chiefly indebted for it to the independent exertions, and the firmness of Mr. Higgins. Candid allowances will be made not only for some warmth of indignation, which may have been excited in the detector of abuses, but for some feelings of irritation operating in the minds of those who have been supporters of the old system.

### A GOVERNOR OF THE ASYLUM.

### YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

AT a QUARTERLY COURT of GOVERNORS of the YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM, held the Fourteenth day of April, 1814.

RESOLVED,

That it appears to this Court, that when the Committee of Rules and Management were conducted through the Asylum



on the 28th of January last, the four Cells for Female Patients, recently discovered by Mr. Higgins in a state of extreme dirt and neglect, were not shown to them.

That the Chain found in one of the four Cells above referred to, was in that state of rust and decay, that it could not have been used for a considerable length of time.

That it is the opinion of this Court, that Mr. Higgins is entitled to the Thanks of the Governors, for his upright, persevering, and successful exertions in bringing to light the abuses which have prevailed in this Institution.

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*To the GOVERNORS of the  
YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.*

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MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

AS the abuses which are now not denied to have existed in the York Lunatic Asylum, will probably be laid before Parliament in the ensuing Session, it is unnecessary to say much about them.

Let me however briefly remind you, that it appears from the reports of your Committee, that large sums of money arising from the Admission of opulent Patients have not been applied, according to the original intention, to the relief of the poorer classes; and that the Lunatic Poor, who have been confided to the care of your officers and servants by the Magistrates, have been neglected and abused. It does not however appear that any of the persons, who have thus abused your confidence, or betrayed their trust, have yet been dismissed from their situations, or even censured for their misconduct.

Under these circumstances, I hope you will not fail to attend at the General Meeting, which is fixed for Friday in the ensuing Race-Week, at Eleven o'Clock in the Forenoon.

I think it now both my right and my duty to call upon you, to do justice to the Institution and the Public, and I feel confident, I shall not call in vain.

In the name of all those persons, whose violent deaths are so stated in your books, as to disguise the facts from you, I call for justice\*.

In the name of *one hundred and forty-four*† patients, whose deaths have been concealed from the public and from you, I call for justice.

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\* The number of casualties in this house cannot be known, because, when a man's brains are dashed out, he is entered in the Books, *died*: and when a patient has disappeared, and can never afterwards be heard of, he is entered, *removed*.

† See the printed Report of the Committee, page 13.



I call upon you to clear the house of every individual, who has neglected his duty or abused his authority.

I call upon you to cleanse the Augean Stable from top to bottom.

I have the honour to be,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

GODFREY HIGGINS.

*Skellow-Grange, Aug. 1814.*

## YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

*From the York Chronicle of Aug. 25.*

SIR,

FROM the nature of the letter published by Mr. Higgins, in the York Herald of Saturday last, it is not to be doubted that decided steps will be taken by the Governors of the Asylum, at the approaching Meeting on Friday.

Should the facts to which the Governors are referred, be found to warrant the contents of that letter, *justice demands* that the suggestions therein contained, should be acted upon without hesitation, in regard to every Officer and Servant of the House.—Should it appear that the charges are not warranted by the facts to which reference is made, it follows as a matter of course, that suitable notice will be taken of conduct, on the part of the accuser, which it would, in that case, be impossible to designate by appropriate expressions.

In either event, whether the guilt be affixed on the accused or on the accusing party, justice will not be complete, in circumstances of such enormity, unless some ulterior measures be resorted to by the public at large, or by the Magistrates of the County.

I am, Sir, &c.

August 23, 1814.

Y. Z.

*From the York Courant of Aug. 29.*

AT AN ANNUAL COURT of GOVERNORS of the YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM, held at the GUILDHALL, in the CITY OF YORK, the 26th Day of August, and by Adjournment the 27th Day of August, 1814.

*His Grace the ARCHBISHOP of YORK in the Chair.*

The Report made by the Committee, of such RULES and REGULATIONS as appear to them expedient for the future Management of this Institution, having been laid before this Court:



RESOLVED,

That the Rules and Regulations of the said Report be adopted for the Government of this Institution, subject to such alterations as this Court shall determine on.

That the Rules and Regulations, as now altered and adopted by this Court, be printed and distributed.

That no criminality attaches to Dr. Best, for misapplication of the Funds of this Institution.

That until a Committee for General Purposes shall be appointed, the present Committee of Rules and Management shall exercise the powers vested in the Committee for General Purposes by the new Rules and Regulations.

That the Offices of Steward, Apothecary, and Matron or Housekeeper, be declared Vacant on the Seventh Day of October next, and that the vacancies be then filled up.

That the Cordial Thanks of this Court be given to the Committee of Rules and Management, for their laborious Investigation of the Affairs of the York Lunatic Asylum, which has led to a great Reformation in the Management of that Institution.

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*From the York Herald of Sep. 3.*

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WE congratulate our readers on the general results of the late meeting of the Governors of the York Lunatic Asylum. We hear that it was very numerous and most respectably attended, and that Earl Fitzwilliam and Viscount Milton expressed, in strong terms, their astonishment and regret at the abuses which have existed in the management of the patients, as well as of the pecuniary affairs of the Asylum.

The thanks of the Community at large, as well as of the Governors of this Charity, are due to the Committee, who have so laboriously investigated into its state, and who, we understand, have produced a new code of laws for its future management, calculated, as far as laws can be, to prevent the recurrence of those disgraceful and frightful evils, which it has required so much courage and perseverance to expose and remove.—We trust, that in future, the management of the York Lunatic Asylum will make it equally honourable and beneficial to our county.

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*From the York Courant of Sep. 12.*

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IT must be matter of great and general consolation to the Public, but more particularly to the friends of the unfortunate



Lunatics confined in the Asylum at York, to hear, that after a most scrutinizing and minute investigation into the direction, management, and treatment of the Patients in that Institution, only *two* instances of neglect or ill-treatment have been proved against the Servants and Keepers of the Establishment.

*Report of a General Quarterly Court, held Aug. 7th, 1814:*

"That in the case of MARTHA KIDD, a gross neglect of cleanliness and of attention to the person is in full proof."

"That in the case of the Rev. Mr. SCHOREY, there has been considerable personal neglect, and that both towards himself and Mrs. SCHOREY, some of the Keepers have conducted themselves in a very reprehensible manner."

"That in the cases of GEORGE ARUNDEL and others, no sufficient ground of censure has been established."

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*From the York Herald of Sep. 17.*

SIR,

AN article having appeared in two of the York Newspapers, relative to the late investigations at the Asylum, ingeniously calculated to mislead the judgment of the public, I request you to give a place to the following remarks:—

1. The "scrutinizing and minute investigation" was far from being confined to the conduct of "*Servants*," and "*Keepers*."

2. The cases, in which no sufficient ground of censure was established, were few in number.

3. Several Members of the Committee, and other Governors, had more cases in store, had they been solicitous to substantiate the charge of misconduct, farther than was requisite to demonstrate to the Governors, the absolute necessity of a radical change of system.

4. I am perfectly convinced, that the respectable majority of Governors, whose humane hearts and disinterested minds have felt the results of the late investigation, and who have honourably concurred in effecting a renovation of constitution and management in the Asylum, derive their "*consolation*" not from a review of the *past*, but from their anticipation of the *future* condition of that Institution.

5. I would gently hint to the author of the article alluded to, that he would best show his prudence, and his regard for the parties more or less affected by the late investigation, not by provoking a public discussion of the past History of the Asylum, but by permitting the subject to go quietly to rest.

I am, yours, &c.

A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE.



*From the York Herald of Sep. 17.*

MR. EDITOR,

IT must unquestionably, as stated in the *Courant of Monday*, and the *Chronicle of Thursday*, be a source of great consolation to the friends of Patients confined in the York Lunatic Asylum, to find that a severe investigation has produced but two cases of negligence or disorder in the servants and keepers of that Institution—and those friends must have heard, with no slight degree of surprize, *that all those servants, whose conduct has thus borne the test of inquiry, have been discharged from their respective situations—the superior ones by a numerous general meeting, the inferior by the committee of inquiry itself.*

Perhaps some of your intelligent correspondents may furnish me with answers to the queries which follow:—

Was a gentleman of the name of Wilson ever confined in the York Asylum?

Were two guineas per week paid for his board and medical attendants?

Of this sum did the House receive 14s. and the Physician 28s.?

Was Mr. Wilson removed from the Asylum by his friends, on a gradual and alarming change in his bodily health?

Was such change attributable to a deficiency of that personal attention, for which the stipend he paid was an ample compensation?

Was this proved to be the case by his speedy recovery on the restoration, at his own home, of that care to which he had before been accustomed, and which his health required?

Is there, in the above case, any charge against the Institution as ill conducted, or can it be said that such case is evidence of funds misapplied?

Were there, after the unhappy accident of the fire, 13 female patients confined in one small chamber not more than 13 feet long or 8 wide?

Was such chamber ventilated—and was it, or was it not, constantly heated by a fire?

Was such confinement continued for three or more months?

Had any, and which, of the servants and officers of the Asylum, any knowledge or superintendence of such confinement?

During such confinement, had, or had not, offers been made to the Asylum from the Quakers' Retreat, and also from the Lunatic Asylum at Nottingham, of receiving such patients as the remaining buildings were insufficient for?



Were, or were not such offers rejected, and under what circumstances or on what ground?

Were the two cases substantiated before the Committee considered by such Committee as accidental or insulated, or were they deemed evidence of the general state and conduct of the Institution?

Was it not the opinion of the Committee, when those two cases were closed, that all further examination was superfluous?

Had not a Member of the Committee many other cases in his hand, which he deemed it unnecessary, in the existing circumstances, to produce?

INVESTIGATOR.

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*From the York Herald of Sept. 24.*

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"Sullen, methinks, and slow the morning breaks,  
"As if the Sun were listless to appear,  
"And dark designs hung heavy on the day."

DRYDEN.

MR. EDITOR,

THE public must feel themselves greatly indebted to the good intentions of those paragraph writers, who, having been foiled in their attempts to destroy the character of the Physician to the Asylum, by charges which have been proved to be groundless, are now anxiously desirous of appealing from the honourable and the disinterested verdict of the Archbishop of York and the Governors at large, to the more delicate, and the consequently more liberal investigation of a Newspaper controversy.

After partial statements, which have insidiously conveyed praise to Lords and humble Commoners, by whom such praise must be contemptuously disclaimed, the accusation of INVESTIGATOR in your last Herald, excites in my mind sensations widely different from those of approval.

In order to refute his inquisitorial charges, allow me in return for his queries, to inquire, if the severe scrutiny to which Dr. Best at the general meeting voluntarily and boldly submitted, did not lead to a perfect conviction on the mind of every gentlemanly observer, that the conduct of that officer had been peculiarly correct, and that his unsolicited resignation of some of the emoluments which his predecessor enjoyed, as proved at that meeting, had been *nobly disinterested*.

His continuance in office, with a recently voted salary of Three Hundred Guineas, is a proof that the Governors consider his honour to be unblemished.



The case of Mr. Wilson, to the display of which the eloquent pen of Investigator is so triumphantly directed, had been already, after lengthened discussion, discarded by the resolution of a quarterly court, when it was re-produced at the general meeting with a vehemence and a zeal which commanded the attention of the auditors, and which only subsided on the complete subversion of the accusation—for, that this accusation was *subverted* is evidenced by the immediately subsequent resolution, "THAT NO CRIMINALITY ATTACHED TO DR. BEST."

Now, Sir, is it to be endured by the independent Governors of the Asylum, which with its present almost perfect code of regulations, rises in the luxuriant promise of surpassing all similar establishments; that the officer to whose skill and humanity, after rigorous inquiry, the Governors confide the lives of their patients, shall be perpetually tortured by anonymous assailants, who, under the pretence of public justice, may perhaps, endeavour to effect the purposes of private malice.

That the facts proved against the other officers of the Institution, are perfectly free from that enormity of crime which we were led to expect, must be evident to every unprejudiced reader of the resolutions of the quarterly courts; and however lenient might have been the exercise of the boasted powers of certain Members of the Committee, or other public accusers, those charges which, when demanded at the general meeting, they did not think proper to deduce, cannot now be honourably alluded to as proofs of crimination.

That the Committee declined the offer of the Quakers' Retreat, is a fact which excites in my mind no suspicion on the motives for their refusal, but the honour of the Committee requires not my defence.

It may safely rest under the protection of that able Member of it, who after his laborious investigations, now relaxes his mind by skirmishing in the Herald, and kindly recommending a cautious prudence to the friends of the "PARTIES WHO MAY BE MORE OR LESS AFFECTED" by a public discussion.

As a disinterested Governor, I will not from motives of timid prudence, restrain the voice of truth in the just defence of either a superior or an inferior officer, much less in the defence of that Institution which can never attain its merited exaltation, if the Managers in general, or its Physician in particular, are to be anonymously assailed with a constant repetition of insidious clamour.

For the purpose of promoting peace among the various parties in York, and to remove the animosities of conflicting interests or disappointed intrigues, I call upon you, Sir, and the other Editors of Papers, as you value your present estimation among your fellow-citizens, to refuse the insertion of

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attacks upon the Asylum or its officers. **UNLESS THEY ARE SANCTIONED BY THE OPEN SIGNATURE OF THE WRITER**; and on this condition, if Investigator in his real person, to which I am an utter stranger, demands it, I will substitute my own name, however unimportant, for that of

Your humble Servant,

York, Sept. 19, 1814.

ARISTIDES.

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*From the York Herald of Oct. 1.*

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*¶ We do not think it very decorous for a writer, who himself assumes a fictitious signature, to call upon us to refuse all essays which have not the real names of the writers affixed. We are "open to all parties, and partial to none," but we conceive the practice which Aristides recommends would be prejudicial to the interests of society, if adopted generally, and we do not see why an exception should be made in favour of the Asylum. The multitude of our Advertisements obliges us to decline the paper of THEMISTOCLES,*

ED.

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MR. EDITOR,

HAD my wishes prevailed, the affairs of the Asylum once settled, had been no more discussed—but there is a restless spirit abroad which, by assertions, insinuations, and charges, precludes all hope of oblivion, all possibility of repose. When the past state of the Asylum becomes a subject of *congratulation*, can those Committees, can those Governors who have again and again reprobated such state, remain silent? When "dark designs" are insinuated, and the purest conduct is attributed to a spirit of intrigue, are not the calumnies to be repelled?

It is most obvious that throughout the long inquiries of the Asylum Committee, no disposition hostile to Dr. Best appeared—his name was scarcely mentioned in that Committee, his conduct never alluded to, with the exception of a few questions respecting the general powers of his office, and his general mode of executing those powers. In the various quarterly meetings the same reserve took place, with one exception, a reference to his letter to Mr. Higgins—yet *Dr. Best was the first officer and sole superintendent of the Asylum, all was under his management and control—he was at once physician, visiter, master—and this at a period when abuses were at their height.*



Was this cabal, was this intrigue on the part of the Committee and the quarterly courts, or was it an unexampled and almost incredible forbearance? I am not considering what would have been the result of an inquiry into the conduct of Dr. Best, as sole director of the Asylum, I am stating that no such inquiry did in fact take place. I am contending that had faction, had cabal existed, such inquiry was an instrument too obvious, too important, for a moment to escape attention.

At the late general meeting a similar conduct was observed: Mr. Higgins moved that the offices of the Institution should be declared vacant—he did not precede his motion by a charge against any—he professed to criminate none—great evils he said had existed—it was necessary to resort to the Governors at large, who would declare, by future re-election or rejection, what officers had, and what had not deserved the confidence of the Court. Into one specific point, and one only, was inquiry made by Mr. Higgins, the misapplication of the Asylum funds: this inquiry was apparently forced on him, and with this all reference to Dr. Best's conduct closed; *yet Dr. Best was first officer and sole superintendent of the Asylum—all was under his management and control—he was at once physician, visitor, and master—and this at a period when abuses were at their height.* I again demand, was this faction, or was it forbearance?

If the letter of Aristides extorts from me what shall either pain or offend the Physician to the Asylum, it is Aristides, and Aristides alone, to whom the pain and offence must be attributed. It is not the malignity of enemies, but the injudicious efforts of friends, by which that gentleman suffers; so long as his friends *will* indulge themselves in unwarranted attacks, and *will* assume untenable positions, repulse must follow the one, discomfiture the other—and to use his own phraseology, whilst the combat is amongst others, it is himself who becomes the victim.

From each weekly payment of 15s. Dr. Hunter took 5s.; for each patient of the highest class, he paid the house 10s., reserving all beyond that sum to himself—if, for example, a Lady paid three guineas per week, the house received 10s. the physician 53s. Dr. Best has added to the house receipts, in the first case, 1s. per week, in the second, 4s.—and this conduct is called by Aristides, “nobly disinterested.” If what the physician has paid over to the house, has been “nobly disinterested,” what he has retained to himself must be accurately, strictly, correctly his *due*, nay, the larger sums received by Dr. Hunter, must have been the *right* of Dr. Best; it must be a *right* we relinquish, before the epithets “nobly disinterested” can be justly ours.

Let us hear what have been the opinion of others on this point, that of Aristides is already known. It was moved at

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the late general court by Mr. Stapylton, not as Aristides would have moved, that Dr. Best be thanked *for the noble disinterestedness of his conduct*, but in more humble terms, that no blame attaches to Dr. Best—or to that effect—still referring to misapplication of funds—this modified praise seemed highly unpalatable to many, and an amendment was loudly called for. Mr. Nicoll then proposed that “*no criminality* attached to Dr. Best”—from this proposition, two noble Lords and several highly respectable gentlemen declared their dissent. What then, would their conduct have been—what their astonishment—what their indignation—had the bold proposition of Aristides been advanced!

On Mr. Stapylton's motion, it was said by the highest character in the meeting, that he had been an *old* Governor, and might, by implied assent, have been supposed to sanction the practice: had he been a *new* Governor, he believed he should have voted the other way.—Very few ideas of “*noble disinterestedness*” had been impressed on a mind which could thus speak. Mr. Nicoll, in making his motion, commented on the gross impropriety of the distribution between Dr. Best and the Asylum, but declared, that under the practice so long acquiesced in, such distribution could not be deemed *criminal*.

To be *not criminal* in the misappropriation of funds, considerably differs from their being “*nobly disinterested*” in their relinquishment. Aristides asserts that Mr. Wilson's case was discarded by a quarterly court, and *subverted* by the general one. No vote of censure was passed on this case by the Committee, and it has never since undergone discussion, it has been cursorily mentioned and no more. Censured or not censured, I demand an answer to my question—*Was Mr. Wilson's health giving way for want of due attention?* I will also ask, with all the lights *now* thrown on the subject, does the Committee still consider this case as implicative of no misconduct?

Aristides, with great prudence, omits all mention of the 13 female patients, for months confined in what can scarcely be denominated more than a light closet.

I here, and I hope for ever, take leave of Aristides—but though unwilling to wield it, my pen is not worn to a stump, nor is my last drop of ink exhausted—if he seeks it, we may meet again—as to *his* real name, I feel neither curiosity nor care, and shall not, at his bidding, come forward with my own. Yet, unconscious of wrong, I ask no protection from concealment—if I have mis-stated facts, I will retract the mis-statement—if I shall hereafter find that I have unjustly accused, I will then most willingly, in my own person, apologize for the errors or injustice of

INVESTIGATOR.



*From the York Courant of Oct. 3. (Monday)*

SIR,

THE exposure by Mr. Higgins of abuses in the York Lunatic Asylum, having occasioned an influx of new Governors, and thus happily led to an overthrow of the old system, and the adoption of wholesome regulations for the future management of the Asylum, the past might have been suffered to remain in oblivion. But some stubborn supporters of the old system having plausibly insinuated, that only two insulated cases of abuse could be established; thus impeaching not only the conduct of those who have been most active in promoting the late result, but the proceedings of the Court and Committee in their removal of Officers and Servants; the real facts ought not to be concealed from the public.

Your Correspondent, Investigator, has submitted some queries, which I shall therefore proceed to answer:—

Mr. Wilson was confined in the Asylum, at a payment of two guineas per week; but instead of this sum being received by the Steward, and carried to the credit of the Institution, the Physician received the two guineas per week, and only paid over to the Steward, the sum of fourteen shillings, in part of the two guineas; putting the remaining one pound eight per week in his own pocket. This circumstance was wholly unknown to the Committee at the time when they decided that there was no ground of censure in Wilson's case.

This case however is by no means an insulated one; since it appears by the Report of the Committee, that before the Fire, there were in the Asylum 16 or 17 affluent Patients, whose admission was sanctioned by the Rules, solely to provide a fund for the assistance of the poorer Lunatics; but this benevolent intention was frustrated; only fourteen shillings per week for each affluent Patient being accounted for by the Physician to the Steward.

It is also a fact, that one of the Patients entered in the Steward's book as paying fourteen shillings per week, or thirty-six pounds eight shillings per annum, was actually paying to the Physician three guineas per week, or one hundred and sixty-three pounds thirteen shillings per annum; of which sum only thirty-six pounds eight shillings was received by the Steward, and carried to the credit of the Institution, in payment of the Patient's board, lodging, &c. Each parish pauper was at the same time charged twenty-three pounds eight shillings per annum; half of which sum would have provided him better accommodations and attention in a workhouse.

It would here be injustice not to state, that notwithstanding this gross misapplication of the funds of the Institution, the Governors at the late General Meeting were almost unanimously of opinion, that no criminality attached to the Physician on that account. The system of abuse had been carried on to



even a greater extent for more than twenty years previous to his appointment. There was reason to believe that when the deviation from the Rules was first begun, a considerable number of Governors connived at it, and "commended" the late Physician for having "done wisely." There was also reason to believe, that on his death, a considerable number of Governors were anxious to prevent a reformation in the system, and to promote its continuance for the benefit of his successor.

Under all these circumstances, however contrary the practice was to the Rules, (which only authorize the receipt of "moderate and reasonable" professional fees from the affluent) can it be wondered that the new Physician should be led to consider the *rules* as obsolete, and the *practice* as having received at least the *implied* sanction of the *Governors at large*?

No express sanction however can be proved to have been given, nor did these transactions ever come to the knowledge of the Governors as a body. The public should be aware, for the honour of the Institution, that many of the Governors were in no degree implicated; and a noble Earl who has been a Governor from the original foundation of the Charity, who has regularly attended the Annual Meetings and audited the Accounts, and who now exhibits a more intimate acquaintance with the state of the funds and resources, than perhaps any other Governor, came forward at the late Meeting with all the feelings of an honest and honourable mind, to declare that he had been totally deceived; and to express his surprise and indignation at the discovery.

Too much has been said of the general blame which attached to the body of the Governors; there is surely a wide distinction between those who may have erred in a remissness of inspection, and too implicit confidence in their Officers and Servants; and those, if any there were, who connived at and promoted the application of the funds of the Charity to the private use of an individual.

With respect to the smallness of the number of cases of gross neglect proved before the Committee, the fact is, that they who preferred the charges, pursued the same course as is uniformly adopted in Courts of Justice. When *one* capital charge is fully proved, it is not usual to waste the time of the Court by bringing forward others. If the servants were fully proved to be guilty of "gross neglect" in the case of only one patient, and if those who might have been expected to notice the situation of a poor object covered with filth and vermin; almost "stripped of raiment; wounded and half dead," could "pass by on the other side," and satisfy their feelings under an idea that they, individually, were not responsible, it did not require the multiplication of instances to convince the Governors, that other pauper lunatics, equally helpless, must have been exposed to similar neglect.



Sufficient cases were established to lead to the present change of system and management; and to the establishment of guards against the recurrence of similar neglect. Amongst these may be reckoned the regular appointment of a Committee, and of Visitors; and the abolition of fees and perquisites, both to Officers and Servants, from those higher classes of patients for whom the poor appear to have been neglected. One of the new Rules adopted at Earl Fitzwilliam's suggestion, particularly calls the Physician's attention to the state of the persons and apartments of the patients, in respect to cleanliness and comfort.

"Sullen, methinks, and slow the morning breaks,  
As if the sun were listless to appear,  
And dark designs hung heavy on the day."

This *most apposite* motto introduces the letter of Aristides, which was first inserted in the Herald, and having been approved of, *was honoured by a republication after five days in the Chronicle.*

Aristides complains of malicious attempts to destroy by "unfounded charges" the character of an individual, whose conduct has been "peculiarly correct," and "nobly disinterested."

Does Aristides recollect that at the late General Meeting, a gentleman who had formerly been an eminent practitioner in a particular branch of medicine in the Metropolis, though he was the principal advocate for the Physician of the Asylum, yet expressed, in very strong terms, his doubts as to the *professional regularity* of that mode of remuneration, which Aristides considers "peculiarly correct."

Aristides has quoted *in capitals* part of a well-known Resolution of the Governors:—

**"NO CRIMINALITY ATTACHES TO DR. BEST:"**  
but he has suppressed what follows:

**"FOR MISAPPLICATION OF THE FUNDS OF THIS INSTITUTION"**

If Aristides is sincere in believing that the Individual alluded to is injured by malicious charges, let him move the two following Resolutions at the adjourned General Meeting.

1. *That great criminality attaches to Mr. Higgins, (and any other names who may be thought worthy to be added,) for unguarded and malicious charges against the Physician.*
2. *That the Physician commands our admiration and thanks for his "NOBLY DISINTERESTED" and "PECULIARLY CORRECT" application of the Funds of this Charity.*

A GOVERNOR OF THE ASYLUM.



*From the York Chronicle of Oct. 6.*

SIR,

MR. JONATHAN GRAY, who is named to me as the Author of an anonymous Letter in Monday's Courant, in his allusion to that of Aristides, which I acknowledge, and which I believe he supposed to be mine, reproaches me with my arguments at the General Meeting of the Governors of the Asylum—and unguardedly insinuates that I am guilty of a disgraceful inconsistency of conduct.

With a wish to contribute my disinterested endeavours towards the prosperity of that Institution, I proposed, with deference to elder Governors, and with marked respect to the Committee, that a FIXED SALARY to the Physician should be arranged, in preference to the payment of Three Guineas per head, as suggested by the Committee, and in preference to Voluntary Fees, as recommended by Earl Fitzwilliam. As this plan, when I gave notice of it at the preceding Quarterly Court, had no other advocate, and as, when I delivered my arguments in support of my Proposition, I had reason to expect, that there would not be a single voice in its favour, I felt in some degree elated, when a large majority adopted what I humbly conceive to be the strongest Pillar of the present almost perfect constitution of the Asylum.

But does Mr. Jonathan Gray suppose, that to prove my abhorrence of the late defective Code of Laws, it was requisite, that I should endeavour to consign to an unjust persecution, an Individual who was guiltless in the Corruptions of that Code, and who had prior to any attack, without solicitation, resigned a large Portion of those Profits to which I affirm he "had a right" by long established usage, and the open acquiescence of the Benefactors at large?

Aristides did not, as Mr. J. Gray erroneously supposes, assert, that the "mode of remuneration" was peculiarly correct; but that the conduct of the Physician "was peculiarly correct."

I, Sir, was not "the principal advocate" of Dr. Best: His Defence was in the open and candid display of his integrity, which advocated his cause to the breasts of nearly a hundred Governors, who, as Mr. J. Gray fairly acknowledges, "almost unanimously" voted in his favour, and his PRINCIPAL DEFENDER was the ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, whose dignified Generosity of Feeling would not permit him to give a *silent vote*, and whose brilliant Example in the acknowledgment of general error, ought to have produced a greater tendency to general oblivion.

Aristides is accused by Mr. Gray of suppressing the last part of this well known and frequently published Resolution concerning "Criminality," but if the Context be referred to,



as Wilson's case is immediately antecedent, it will be plain that Brevity and Propriety of Expression required the omission of the words "Misapplication of Money."

I beg now to hint to my friend, Mr. Gray, for I shall be sorry if he will not allow me to use that Title, that it is some deviation from "PROFESSIONAL REGULARITY," to attack, without open signature, the conduct of any Individual, or any set of Governors; and that instead of supporting the Queries of Investigator, it would become him to advise that anonymous Assailant to *restrain his Ardour*, or by manfully showing himself in substance, and not in shadow, afford an opportunity for *my easy refutation* of his Charges, instead of that possible *legal Discussion* which his last Query concerning the Health of Mr. Wilson may appear to deserve.

But let us hope that at the Meeting on Friday, Good Humour and Harmony will be the general order of the Day, and that every Governor will then recollect, that the Prosperity of this Charity is inseparably connected with the reputation of its justly accredited Physician.

I repeat the request of Aristides, that the Editors will not, as they value their own estimation, admit into the York Papers ANONYMOUS ATTACKS ON the Asylum or its Officers.

MARTIN STAPYLTON.

*Helmsley Lodge, near York, Oct. 5, 1814.*

*From the York Herald of Sep. 17.*

SIR,

*(See errata) Jan. 14, 1815*

A WARM contest respecting the Asylum at York has now subsisted for 15 months—it began *anonymously*, by a friend of the old system, who designated himself "Evigilator"—By the partizans of that system it was then vigorously continued; by "Evigilator" himself, aided by "S. Brodum," "Observer," and "A Governor of the Asylum." "A Friend to Truth" next appeared, grossly mis-stating the proportion of deaths to admissions\*. "Y. Z." then strongly recommended Mr. Higgins to the county, as an object of its tremendous justice. A nameless paragraph proved the past perfection of the Asylum government.—"Aristides," in succession, blew the

\* This reference induces me to state a curious and important fact. There has not been one death in the Asylum since July 14, 1814, (this day six months.) The number of patients in that time has varied from 103 to 104. In the preceding year there were 33 deaths, which was nearly 1 in 5 of the average number of patients—for the preceding five years, the annual number of deaths was about 1 in 8 of the average number of patients. This statement must satisfy the public, that reforms conducive to the health of patients were wanted, and have been obtained.



blast of war—and last, not least, “Corrector” stepped forth, in all the fearful dignity of a pamphlet.—Here, Sir, the campaign closed—the enemy threw away his arms, declared them unworthy the warfare of a noble spirit—and protested, if he fought again, which he had much rather let alone, new swords, bucklers, and breast-plates, should be sent for from Sheffield—with the owner's name neatly engraved on each article.

In more serious earnest, Sir, is it to be permitted to a party who anonymously commenced a contest—who anonymously, for the most part, carried it on—and who conclude with as coarse anonymous personalities, as could well flow from *mouths genteel*, to call for names! Yet this, that party *now* does—and he who *now* withholds his name, is a liar, a coward, or an assassin!—Denying, at all events, *their* title to demand a name, I will assert, that the privilege of bringing forward a name to the world, or of withholding one from it, has been adopted by all parties, on all subjects and in all discussions—if to withhold a name were in itself wrong, it is sanctioned by universal practice—to complain of it is a mere trick of controversy—an attempt on the pity of the public, when appeals to its justice can no longer be supported. This privilege, like all other privileges, may be abused—whether it is in this contest abused or not; and if abused, by whom, is the true question.

The first attack of Evigilator appears purely personal—as far as one of the two characters adverted to is concerned, there can be no doubt the second Evigilator is a counterpart of the first. S. Brodum could only be written with a hope of giving pain, and holding up to ridicule—abuse seems the great object of “A Governor of the Asylum.”—“Y. Z” has no purpose but calling down the public vengeance on Mr. Higgins—nor “Aristides” any other, than an assertion that individual malignity against the Physician to the Asylum, is the true object of pretended reformers.

In every contest, personality must, in some degree, intervene—where incidentally necessary to elucidate the points discussed, it is unavoidable—where itself the end and aim of the discussion, it is odious: let the writers on both sides be reviewed—on the one side, it will appear persons only were in contemplation—on the other, measures—and so strictly has this rule been adhered to, that when by the reforming party, *persons* were unavoidably alluded to—they have been introduced with cautious reserve—mentioned in terms of strict decorum, and speedily dismissed for topics less offensive—yet, as a last expiring effort of attack, and when all other means of defence had failed, this very party, whose forbearance had been exemplary, are denominated libellers—and actions and informations are talked of: are not gentlemen aware that the defendants' box, in a court of justice, is very spacious—that it has room for all—and that themselves have been at sufficient pains in bespeaking places? I will go further—in deserving



them. I have but to name the letter signed "S. Brodum" in proof of this—that letter is introduced in no important public discussion—in support of no facts useful to be established—it is a wanton attack against an eminent medical practitioner, and its aim is to hold him out to the world, as a nostrum monger and a quack—a colleague of the Brodums, the Daffys and the Velnos of the day. I will then ask these gentlemen themselves, how we are to designate that writing which is an anonymous attempt to wound the private feelings, and to injure the public character.

And now, Mr. Editor, I hasten to a close—I trust no more to resume my pen—successive attack has called for successive defence—we were first informed that the past state of the Asylum was a subject of congratulation—a few queries showed the extent of past blessings. The world was next assured, that malignity to the Physician was the basis of our efforts—unexampled forbearance towards that Physician was the answer given and proved. That we were anonymous libellers, was the next charge—that we wrote anonymously in common with our adversaries, and after their example set—that if there is libel, amongst *them* it is to be found—this letter will sufficiently evince.

After having driven the enemy from the field, we now rest on our arms—prepared for attack, but not courting it. In this resolve, the recent clamour has no part—our object is attained—and angry discussion has been our necessity, will never be our choice. Willing as we are to be at peace—that fine flow of epithet which seems to spurt indigenously from the soil, will have no effect in preventing the discharge of duty, should fresh occasions arise. If called on, "Civis," and "Spectator," and "Monitor," and "Investigator," will still write when they like, and as they like, will still publicly and openly speak—as the friends of reform have heretofore publicly and openly spoken and written. By the temper of their writings, they have shown they feel no malice—and by the tenor of their speeches, they have evinced they have no fear.

Thus far they have never been personal—but a change of system may be called for—the peace of the Asylum must be preserved—its committee-room is not for successive generations to exhibit the manners of a bear garden—and should they still be found to *speak* in vain, they may find themselves compelled at length to *act*.

EUMENES.

*From the York Herald of Sep. 3.*

SIR,

I AM aware that an intention has been manifested, of shutting the public press against any statements on the subject of

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the York Lunatic Asylum; although the press has been the engine of whatever reformation may have been accomplished in that Institution.

As the absent Governors, and that part of the public which has interested itself in the state of the Institution, may wish to have a correct account of the events of the present week, I shall trouble you with a simple statement of facts.—On Monday evening, the Committee of the Asylum, being in want of the Steward's quarterly books of account with the patients, sent Mr. Pyemont, the new Steward, to wait upon Mr. Surr (the late Steward) for the books; Mr. Pyemont returned twice without them, and with an unsatisfactory answer from Mr. Surr.

The Committee, on their return from the Asylum, called on Mr. Surr for the books; but he *peremptorily refused to deliver them up, or to give any account of them.* The Committee then told him he would be compelled to deliver them up. The Committee reported Mr. Surr's conduct to the quarterly court, stating their opinion, that these books were the property of the Institution, and submitting that Mr. Surr should be required to deliver up these and all other books, papers, and accounts of the Institution, which were, or ought to be, in his possession.

The quarterly court deputed Mr. Brook, the treasurer, to make a formal demand of the books. Mr. Brook returned, and reported to the Court Mr. Surr's answer, viz.: that AFTER THE COMMITTEE LEFT HIM ON MONDAY NIGHT, HE BURNT THE BOOKS. The proceeding adopted by the Court on the occasion, was a vote of *disapprobation of Mr. Surr's conduct.*

### A GOVERNOR OF THE ASYLUM.

*From the York Herald of Dec. 17.*

SIR,

AT the Asylum Meeting last Wednesday, a Governor brought forward a motion for putting down all anonymous publications. *This* (it was most happily remarked,) *was Don Quixote fighting with the wind-mills.* It was somewhat extraordinary, that the mover himself admitted he had lately made an effort himself in the anonymous line; but he confidently alluded to an honourable friend, whose hands were yet unstained. That gentleman, however, confessed he was the author of Y. Z. Both had wholly retired from the practice.

It is true, when an anonymous writer has arrived at Y. Z., he appears to have exhausted the alphabet, but still he may *try back* for fresh game. When a worthy Baronet's hares



have run through the alphabet of plumpers, and have arrived at *Mr. Y. Z.*, tally o!—you'll find the next hare at *A. B.*

The mover of the resolution against the freedom of the press, discovered a fearful apprehension lest the *burning of the books* should find its way into the papers. But really this is too grand a winding-up of the drama, to be kept out of sight. Had the argumentative *Corrector* been present, he would have allowed this to be no *indelicate disclosure*, since it proves to mathematical demonstration, that this very conflagration has sealed the fate of *Mr. Higgins*.

We may imagine he would have spoken thus:—"Those, my Lord, are the blessed effects of '*His Worship*,' Mister Higgins's reformation. The reformation began in the ides of last December with burning the patients; it has terminated in the ides of this December with burning the books. *Mr. Higgins*, my Lord, began the reformation,—*Ergo*—*Mr. Higgins* burnt both books and patients. And therefore, my Lord, on the authority of the 'ancient history' of Job, and the last edition of '*Blackstone*,' the inclination of my mind certainly would be, to commit him for trial at the next North-allerton Sessions as an incendiary; and let him depend upon it, the Bench will show him no mercy."

ANOTHER *Y. Z.*

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*From the York Herald of Dec. 24.*

SIR,

I LAST week acquainted you with the demand made by the Governors of the York Lunatic Asylum upon their late Steward, for the Quarterly Books of Account. His answer was, that he had *burnt all the books*, except one Quarterly account ending Dec. 1814, which he delivered to the Treasurer. The proceeding adopted by the Quarterly Court, relative to *Mr. Surr*, was a vote of disapprobation.

The following circumstance occurred, at a Meeting of the Committee last Monday. In consequence of some further inquiry, *Mr. Surr* produced a set of *Quarterly books for the last sixteen years*. The books produced have been occasionally inspected by the Governors: *they appear to contain an account of the weekly payments made to the Steward for the patients*; but instead of the sums really received, *smaller sums* are in many instances inserted, the difference being paid to the Physician. The other set of *Quarterly books*, which still continues to be burnt, is that in which the Steward entered his *actual receipts*;—and it is by a comparison of the two sets of books that the difference would appear.

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There seems reason to believe, that if the burning story had not been implicitly credited, and if prompt measures had been immediately taken by the Court of Governors, all the books would have been recovered.

### A GOVERNOR OF THE ASYLUM.

*From the York Herald of Dec. 24.*

I RECEIVED the following letter on Thursday last from Dr. BEST, sent to intimidate me from that course which it is my duty as the Editor of a Public Paper to pursue, I give it therefore to the world, annexing such a comment as I trust will preclude all future attempts on my fears:

*To Mr. Hargrove, York Herald-Office.*

*Sir,*

*I have only this Afternoon seen your Paper of Saturday last, which contains a Letter, the tendency of which is obviously injurious to me.*

*It is I presume unnecessary to apprise you, that as the Publisher of various libels against me, you are already completely in my power.*

*I merely write this to give you notice, that if one syllable shall appear in any of your future Papers in allusion to me, which may admit of an injurious or even an offensive construction, my next communication with you will take place through my Attorney.*

*Lest you should be misled by this notice, you are desired not to consider this letter as conveying any intimation of an intention on my part, to overlook the past, on condition of your abstaining from injuring me in future.*

*I am, &c.*

*Castle-Hill, Wednesday Evening,  
Dec. 28, 1814.*

*C. BEST.*

The abuses of the York Asylum have been long before the Public—they demanded full, free, and open discussion—they have obtained it—and their rectification has been the result—Of this discussion the York Herald has been an instrument; as of the free and fair discussion of public abuses it ever shall be—beyond this I have not gone—and short of this, no methods of intimidation shall induce me to stop—I have shown no partiality.

To Dr. Best and his friends equally as to their opponents, this paper has been open—and if offensive personalities have



on either side been indulged, no man can hesitate to say from which party they have proceeded. To Dr. Best I have no ill will—through this paper as a medium, he has neither been libelled nor abused. The situation he holds in the Asylum has frequently and necessarily brought him forwards; never as an object of designed attack; if at any time, in a light grating to his own feelings, it is, because truth was offensive. I have only to add, that what I have done, I am ready, and I have no doubt, able to vindicate.

EDIT,

*\* From the York Herald of Dec. 31.*

MR. EDITOR,

HAVING asserted in my late "Vindication of Mr. Higgins," that Dr. Best was publicly censured for his letter to that gentleman, I have been charged with wanton and wilful falsehood. Wholly unmoved by virulence of language, which is disgraceful to those only who adopt it, I yet find the charge demand some notice—misapprehension exists—the public is of opinion that explanation is called for—and I readily yield that to public opinion, which private violence could never have extorted. Mr. Higgins' letter respecting concealed cells is well known—in answer to that letter, Dr. Best says, that "he Mr. Higgins," "has laboured to mislead and inflame the public mind to the deep prejudice of individuals, by an insinuation which, at the time he was bringing it forwards, he knew to be wholly unfounded."

Such expressions towards a Governor of the Asylum by one of its Officers, for what that Governor had said, it was deemed, in the discharge of his duty, were considered by many gentlemen as forming a ground for censure—they determined accordingly to come forwards on the 14th of April, and of this Dr. Best had notice.

The mode adopted, was one which they considered at once mild towards Dr. Best, and sufficiently vindictive of Mr. Higgins' conduct and letter. A motion was brought forwards by Mr. Nicoll on their part, "that it is the opinion of this Court, that Mr. Higgins is entitled to the thanks of the Governors, for his upright, persevering, and successful exertions, in bringing to light the abuses which have prevailed in this Institution."

In making the motion, Mr. Nicoll at first said little, either in the way of preface or explanation, but on some gentleman's

\* This letter was occasioned by a violent attack, in the December Quarterly Court, on the Author of a Pamphlet, entitled "A Vindication of Mr. Higgins."

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observing, that a censure on Dr. Best appeared to be intended, Mr. Nicoll declared—such was his object—he then read parts of Dr. Best's letter, commented on them, and fully avowed the true construction had been put on his motion, *he did intend thereby to censure Dr. Best.*

Mr. Alderman Wilson then said—he thought Mr. Higgins entitled to the thanks of the Asylum Governors, but not at that particular time, but he still more should object to the motion, as it was meant as a censure on Dr. Best—Thus explained, thus commented on, and thus construed, the question was put and carried.

Sir William Ingilby, the Chairman, before he declared the numbers, called to Dr. Best, and asked if he meant to vote on this occasion? Dr. Best declared he did, and his vote was taken accordingly. If doubt existed, would not the Chairman's question have done it away? It is a common rule of construction, that every proposition is to be taken in the sense of the proposer—that this vote was proposed as a censure, and was adopted as such, is wholly free from doubt—and all that can be said in opposition is, that the censure, though explicitly avowed, was not explicitly recorded—that it was not so, was meant as an act of kindness to Dr. Best, of which kindness the world sees the requital.

Further explanation must be wholly needless—if there is an unprejudiced reader who can now look on the expression of my pamphlet as erroneous, I am sure there cannot be one who will accuse me of wilful error.

#### A NEW GOVERNOR.

*From the York Herald of June 17, 1815.*

MR. EDITOR,

AT the Quarterly Court of Governors held at the Asylum, on Wednesday, the case of Ann Thedwin, who had been sent from the House in a state of Filth, on the 12th of April last, was fully inquired into and perfectly ascertained. But it was determined by a majority of the Governors present, that it is *now* better, that any instances of neglect or mismanagement that may occur in that Institution, shall not be made public, as the exposure of such facts can no longer answer the purposes formerly designed by it.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

AN OBSERVER.



*From the York Herald of August 26.*

AT an Annual Court of Governors of the YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM, held at the Asylum, on Friday the 25th day of August, 1815.

*Earl FITZWILLIAM in the Chair:*

*Resolved Unanimously,*

That this Court feels, with the highest degree of satisfaction, the very great improvement which has taken place in every department of this Institution, since the General Meeting in August last, by which they have no doubt, that in point of humane treatment of the Patients, and the general order and cleanliness of the House, the York Lunatic Asylum is scarcely excelled by any similar Institution in the Kingdom; and this Court returns thanks to the Committees, Visiting Governors, and Ladies, for the attention to the Duties which they have so humanely undertaken, and so judiciously and zealously performed.

This Court contemplating the great improvements made in the state of the House, feels a pleasure in acknowledging its great obligations to GODFREY HIGGINS, Esq. to whose zeal and perseverance the origin of these improvements must in a great measure be ascribed.

*Resolved Unanimously,*

That a Committee be appointed to take the state of the Asylum Buildings into their consideration, and to report their opinion respecting any alterations, additions, or improvements therein, and the means of the Institution to accomplish them, to a Special Meeting of the Governors.

*Resolved Unanimously,*

That the said Committee do consist of seven; and that B. Brooksbank, Esq. Rev. T. C. R. Read, Rev. W. Dealtry, Mr. Samuel Tuke, Mr. J. Gray, D. Russell, Esq. and the Rev. R. S. Thompson, compose the said Committee.

*Resolved,*

That the Resolutions passed this day be printed in each of the York Newspapers.

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

The Chair being taken by the Rev. Robert Croft,

*Resolved Unanimously,*

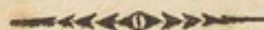
That the cordial Thanks of this Meeting be given to the Right Hon. Earl FITZWILLIAM, for his very able and patient attention to the Business of the Day.

FINIS.



## A LIST OF PAMPHLETS

PUBLISHED IN REFERENCE TO THE FOREGOING PAPERS.



- A Letter to the Right Honourable Earl Fitzwilliam, together with various Letters, Reports, &c.; and the New Code of Regulations for its future management, BY GODFREY HIGGINS, Esq.* ..... 3 0
- A few free Remarks on Mr. Godfrey Higgins's Publications, &c. BY CORRECTOR* ..... 0 6
- A Vindication of Mr. Higgins from the Charges of Corruptor; including a Sketch of Recent Transactions, BY A NEW GOVERNOR* ..... 1 0
- Retaliation; or, Hints to some of the Governors of the York Lunatic Asylum, BY CHARLES ATKINSON* ..... 1 0
- A History of the York Lunatic Asylum; with an Appendix, containing Minutes of the Evidence of the cases of Abuse lately inquired into by a Committee, &c. BY JONATHAN GRAY* ..... 4 0
- The Rules and Regulations of the York Lunatic Asylum, with a List of the Governors, &c. corrected to 13th of Sept. 1815.* ..... 1 0
- JUST PUBLISHED,

The EVIDENCE taken before the COMMITTEE of the HOUSE OF COMMONS, respecting the Asylum at York; with Notes and Observations. and a Letter to the Committee, by G. HIGGINS, Esq. price . . . . . 2 6



CONTAINED IN REFERENCE TO THE FOREGOING PAPERS.

## Page.

70, for Sept. 17, read January 14, 1815.

76, line 32, for Evigitor, read Evigilator.

78. for Sept. 3, read *December 17, 1814.*



