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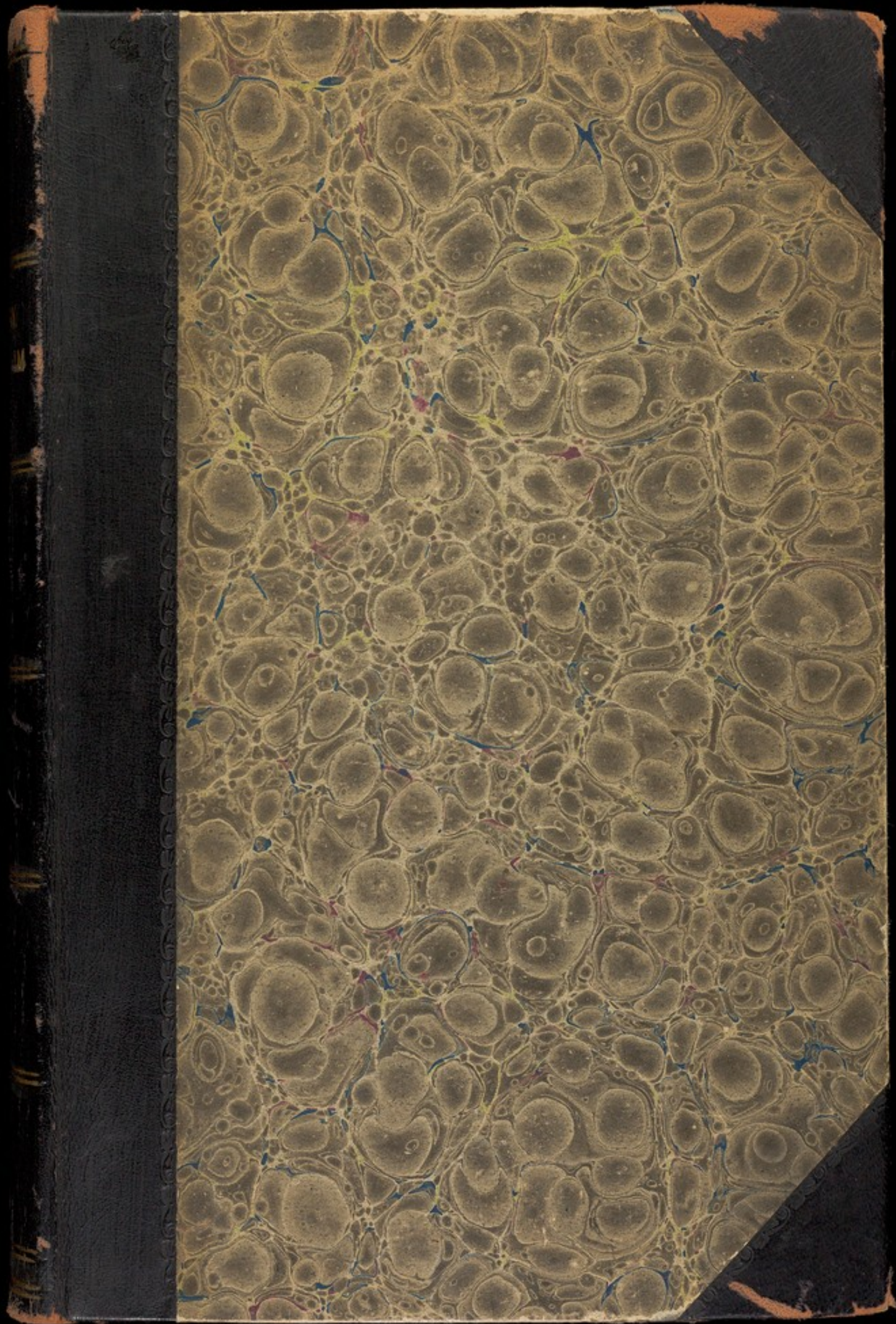
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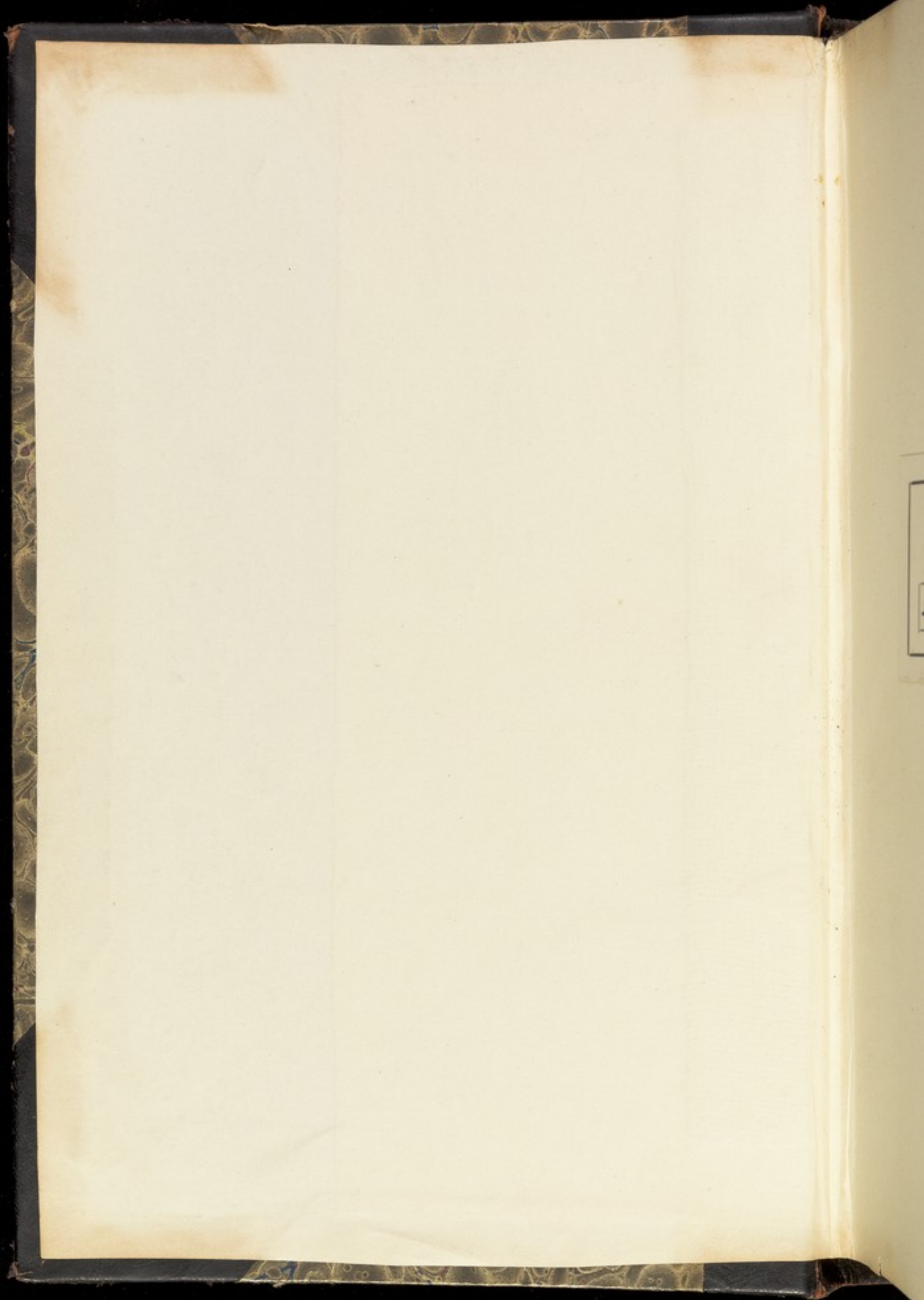
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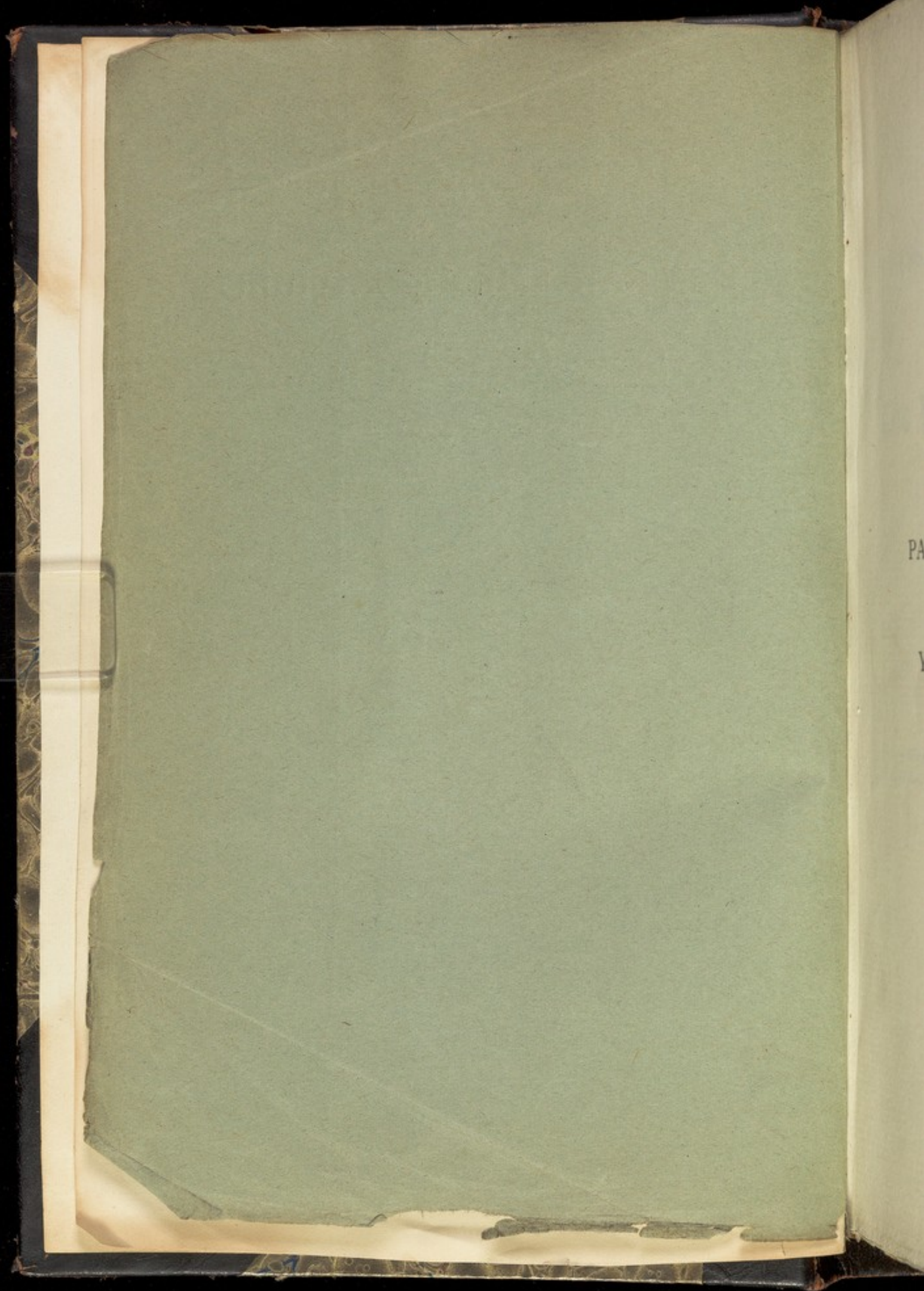
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PASSAGES IN THE HISTORY
OF
The York Lunatic Asylum

1772 - 1901

BY
CHARLES G. MILNES GASKELL.

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OF
The York Lunatic Asylum

1772-1901

PASSAGES IN THE HISTORY
OF THE
YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

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PASSAGES IN THE HISTORY
OF
The York Lunatic Asylum
1772 - 1901

BY
CHARLES G. MILNES GASKELL

Les grands établissements consacrés aux aliénés, sont disposés comme toutes les institutions humaines à dégénérer, et peut-être même plus que tout autre.

PINEL.

WAKEFIELD :
W. H. MILNES, THE RADCLIFFE PRESS,
1902.

PARAGRAPHS IN THE HISTORY

THE NORTH LANCASHIRE REGIMENT

1792-1901

CHARLES OF BRISTOL CARRIAGE

Two pages are dedica
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of the West Riding, a
in their difficult and
late are discharged

DEDICATION.

*These pages are dedicated to Colonel SPENCER STANHOPE, C.B.
and my colleagues upon the Asylums Committee of the County Council
of the West Riding, with the respect which a knowledge of their devotion
to their difficult and important task, and of the ability with which their
duties are discharged must entail and command.*

Annals of the
by Rev. Wm. M.
Letter to the Gover
Observations on
York, 1808.

A letter to the Earl
and the new

Godfrey Higgins

A few free remarks

Corrector, 1814

A vindication of M

Sketch of recent

Relation or History

by Charles A.

Walsgate.

A history of the

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Yorkshire Gazette

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- Animadversions on the present government of the York Lunatic Asylum,
by Rev. Wm. Mason, 1788.
- Letter to the Governors, 1788.
- Observations on the present state of the York Lunatic Asylum,
York, 1809.
- A letter to the Earl Fitzwilliam together with various letters, reports, &c.
and the new code of regulations for its future management, by
Godfrey Higgins, Esq., Doncaster, 1814.
- A few free remarks on Mr. Godfrey Higgins' Publications, &c., by
Corrector, 1814.
- A vindication of Mr. Higgins from the charges of Corrector, including a
sketch of recent transactions by a new Governor, 1814.
- Retaliation or Hints to some of the Governors of York Lunatic Asylum,
by Charles Atkinson, York, 1814. Printed by M. W. Carrall,
Walmgate.
- A history of the York Lunatic Asylum : with an appendix containing
minutes of the evidence of the cases of abuse lately enquired into by
a Committee, by Jonathan Gray. Addressed to William Wilberforce,
Esq. York, 1815.
- Rules and Regulations of the York Lunatic Asylum with a list of the
Governors, &c., corrected to September 13th, 1815.
- Report of Committee appointed to consider of provision being made for
the better regulation of Madhouses in England, 1815.
- 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.
- A complete collection of the papers respecting the York Lunatic Asylum,
published originally in the York newspapers during the years 1813,
1814 and 1815. Nil desperandum. York, 1816.
- Yorkshire Gazettes, February to September, 1861.

- ✓ Description of the Retreat, by Samuel Tuke, with an elevation and plans of the Building. York, 1813.
Edinburgh Review, Vol. 28, 1814. Review of Tuke's Description of Retreat.
Vol. 28, 1817. Lunatic Asylums. Sydney Smith.
- ✓ Report of the Metropolitan Commissioners in Lunacy to the Lord Chancellor. London, 1844.
On the construction and management of Hospitals for the Insane, by Dr. Maximilian Jacobi, with introductory observations by Samuel Tuke. London, 1841.
- ✓ Memoir of Dr. John Conolly, by Sir James Clarke, Bart. London, 1869.
- ✓ Chapters in the history of the Insane in the British Isles, by Daniel Hack Tuke. London, 1882.
- ✓ The past and present provision for the Insane poor in Yorkshire, by D. Hack Tuke, M.D. London, 1889.
- ✓ Reform in the treatment of the Insane, by D. Hack Tuke, M.D. London, 1892.

Cox

Halloran

See also Samuel Tuke's Journal etc.
in the large 2 Vol. edn. privately
circulated.

PREFACE.

The West Riding County Council in conjunction with that of the East Riding took action in 1898 to secure what they believed to be the original intentions of the founders of the York Lunatic Asylum, and to induce the City of York to make proper provision for their pauper lunatics instead of taking advantage of a charitable institution. I was led in consequence to study the early history of this Hospital, which deserves to be better known than it is. Its influence cannot be over-rated in any account of the treatment of lunacy. The foundation of the Retreat in 1792 by William Tuke and his colleagues belonging to the Society of Friends, is due to it, and the consequent inauguration of a new system which conferred untold benefits on countless sufferers by the introduction of humane modes of treatment. The abuses that prevailed, not by any means exceptional, in the York Asylum which were made public in 1813 and 1814, and the accounts which followed, culminating in the report of the evidence taken before the committee of the House of Commons in 1815, sowed the seed of future reform.

I may be asked why, at a time when the York Asylum under the conscientious and capable direction of Dr. Hitchcock is doing admirable work, do I re-open old sores, and turn attention to an old world story. I will quote in reply Dr. Hack Tuke's words: "I have met with those "who think that the ill-treatment to which the insane were subjected in "former days, whether in the York Asylum or Bethlehem, should be "passed over in silence. But I am strongly of the opinion of Sydney "Smith, when he said in anticipation of such a mistaken feeling, and in "reference to the abuses in this very asylum at York that they should "be 'remembered for ever as the only means of preventing their "recurrence.'"¹ I may be told that any one who desires information can surely obtain it for himself and wade through the flood of angry literature that must have convulsed York even during the hundred days

¹ Reform in the Treatment of the Insane, page 44.

in 1815. That however the student will find no easy task. The best account of the proceedings at the Asylum is to be found in Mr. Jonathan Gray's History of the York Lunatic Asylum printed at York in 1815, which was reviewed in the Edinburgh of August, 1817. Of that pamphlet I have found one copy in the British Museum, another in the Hailstone collection in the library of the Dean and Chapter at York, and two others in private hands. Of some of the publications on the preceding page I can find no trace, and it seems to me clear that a wholesale destruction of them must have taken place. My grandfather and his brother qualified as Governors of the Asylum in 1814, but in neither of their libraries are there any papers relating to the events of that year. Mr. Higgins himself found a difficulty in obtaining a copy of Mr. Mason's pamphlet in 1814. It is desirable also that this generation should know the name of Mr. Godfrey Higgins, of Skellow Grange, "that bold and upright West Riding magistrate" as Dr. Hack Tuke called him in his Address on the past and present provision for the insane poor in Yorkshire, to whose exertions the building of our first County Asylum at Wakefield was mainly due, and who pursued his task undeterred by calumny and the grossest invectives. Mr. Higgins sought distinction in other fields, but it is not by his work on Mahomet, on the Celtic Druids, his Anacalypsis or his Horæ Sabbaticæ that he will be remembered. It was no light task to undertake reforms in 1818. Whatever was, was right. Governors sleepy, incurious and inefficient, did not govern or concern themselves about the management of the institutions over which they presided, and decade was to follow decade before it could be taken for granted that abuses did not exist in hospitals, schools, infirmaries and asylums, "at once" as one writer of the time observes "the honour and disgrace of the nation." It was a praiseworthy motive that actuated the founders of the York Lunatic Asylum in 1772. It is however to be regretted that the classes for whom they proposed to make provision were not more clearly defined. The terms "parish paupers," "indigent poor," "insane persons in low circumstances," have led to wrangling for nearly 130 years, and the City of York has avoided the responsibility of providing for her own needs as

so many other communities have done. She is now however taking steps to remedy the omission, and we may hope that no more quarrels will arise during the 20th century over the administration of the York Lunatic Asylum, but that it will pursue its course full of honour and even of increased usefulness.

I am very conscious of the inadequate manner in which I have performed my task. One qualification alone I may claim for it, that of being connected hereditarily with Lunacy reformers. My grandfather Mr. Wynn passed the important Act of 1808 enabling counties to make provision for their pauper lunatics, and my father was a member of the Committee in 1844 which issued in that year an ever memorable report.

To Mrs. Hack Tuke I have to express my acknowledgments for her kindness in allowing me access to many original documents and letters, and to Dr. Bevan Lewis for the help he has afforded me and the interest he has taken in my researches.

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CHAPTER I.

"Hell might afford my miseries a shelter."—COWPER.

Generalisations are very dangerous, but it is safe to say that up to the end of the Eighteenth century the condition of lunatics was one of hideous neglect and suffering. This was followed by a period of gradual improvement extending over seventy years, while for the last forty we can congratulate ourselves upon an almost universal reign of law and of humanity. Alienist literature contains so large a supply of information that there is no need for me to dwell on these points. I will, however, add a few illustrations to those which Dr. Hack Tuke has given in his comprehensive History of the Insane in the British Isles.

No surprise can be felt at the terrors which were excited in the Eighteenth century by the name of madhouse, synonymous as it was with all that was fatal to liberty and with the vilest cruelty. Smollett, writing in 1748, says—"In England the most innocent person on earth is liable to be immured for life under the pretext of lunacy, sequestered from his wife and children and friends, robbed of his fortune, deprived even of necessaries and subjected to the most brutal treatment from a low-bred barbarian, who raises an ample fortune on the misery of his fellow-creatures, and may, during his whole life, practice this horrid oppression without question or control."¹ Sir Wm. Fownes, sixteen years earlier, writing to Dean Swift, who had consulted him about the proposed establishment of a lunatic hospital at Dublin, and ultimately left £10,000 for that purpose, expresses his apprehension lest their case would soon be like that in England; "wives and husbands trying

¹ Smollett's Works, vol. 6, page 245.

"who first could get the other to Bedlam. Many who were "next heirs to estates would try their skill to render the "possessor disordered and get them confined and soon run "them into real madness."¹

As late as 1815, Mr. Thomas Bakewell, who kept a private asylum in Staffordshire, gives in his evidence before the House of Commons a curious picture of the demoralisation produced by lunacy in family life. In one case a "lady of fashion and fortune" withheld the means of cure from an elder sister in consequence of expense, though that sister's own income was more than sufficient to procure the best means the country afforded. A poor woman died upon the breaking up of the hard frost in 1813, after existing ten years in an old house inhabited by no other person but herself in a state of perfect nakedness without bedclothes; with nothing but straw to lie upon; she was grown double and her body covered over with hair in consequence, as it was supposed, of cold. She was a wife and a mother, and her husband and children were living. In another case a person of very respectable family was packed up into a back garret, while her husband enjoyed every luxury that money could purchase in the house below till her son came of age, when he had her released. "I know another family who have kept a brother for seven years in confinement without any means of recovery, for the sake of his property, though they are all in opulent circumstances. I have known an instance of a son taking measures to prevent the recovery of his father, and several of people in opulence taking measures to prevent the recovery of their own brothers. I have seen evident proofs of disappointment in a wife on the unexpected recovery of her husband, the same in a husband and a mother on the unexpected recovery of a wife and of a son. I have now in the house a woman who has been confined in a dark

¹ Swift's Works, vol. 18, page 108.

garret, without the comfort of a fire, for the best part of twenty years. Her husband confessed to me that he had not seen her for many years. He himself was trading at the rate of a thousand pounds a week by his own confession."

The ordinary conception of the surrounding of a lunatic, current throughout our literature till the end of the 18th century, may be summed up in two words—straw and chains. In Fielding's play of the "Intriguing Chambermaid," acted in 1733, one of the characters says, "Mr. Goodall, you are a poor, distracted wretch, and ought to have an apartment in a dark room and clean straw." Joanna, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, for fifty years slept on straw, and that was sometimes wanting. Crowned heads had no preferential treatment.¹ George III, pointing to his strait waistcoat said, "there is the best friend I have ever had," and it is asserted that he was knocked down by his keeper. One of the most terrible of Cruikshank's engravings is that of Mrs. Sheppard chained in Bedlam, when the novelist makes her say to her son, "If you must take off my clothes, don't dash cold water on my head, it throbs cruelly." Crabbe's description of Edward Shore in 1812 is to the same effect, "But now he spurned the straw in pure disdain: and now laughed loudly at the clanking chain." Jane Eyre was printed in 1847, yet this is Charlotte Brontë's description of Mrs. Rochester: "In the deep shade at the further end of the room a figure ran backwards and forwards. What it was, whether beast or human being, one could not, at first sight tell: it grovelled, seemingly, on all fours; it snatched and growled like some strange animal; but it was covered with clothing and a quantity of dark grizzled hair, wild as a mane, hid its head and face."

"Bedlam's closeted and hand-cuffed charge" were shown in the 18th century as one of the amusements of the town. Up

¹ Wraxall, vol. 5, page 331.

to 1777, £400 a year was raised in this way. As late as 1843 in the Hospital de los locos, in Toledo, the keepers conducted strangers to the cage of the wife of a celebrated Captain General of Catalonia, one of the highest officials in the kingdom. She was permitted to wallow in naked filth and be made a public show.¹ At the Bicêtre "les mauvais plaisants se faisaient un jeu barbare de harceler (les aliénés) ou de les provoquer." Esquirol says the keepers spared neither menaces nor sarcasms to rouse the passions of the patients for the amusement of visitors. In some asylums the drain was open to the cells and the patients were attacked by the rats that swarmed in the sewers; an impression prevailed that lunatics were insensible to cold and, in consequence, no means of heating the cells existed in France. Straw and chains, and to be teased like a wild animal were bad enough, but where the physician came in and applied his curative treatment the unhappy lunatic's condition must have been still worse. Haslam speaks of masters of workhouses who, without waiting for any increased turbulence on the part of the patients, bound, chained, flogged, and deprived them of food according as they discovered the moon's age by the almanack.² At Senavretta at Milan, thunder and rain, darkness and light were turned on in one apartment. It was said that in one monastic establishment in the South of France every lunatic regularly received ten lashes a day. To bleed copiously, administer emetics, apply setons and blisters, leeches and cold douches, and with drastic purgatives to favoriser la liberté du ventre, was the common experience. Dr. Munro, the physician at Bedlam, stated to a committee of the House of Commons that the patients were ordered to be bled about the latter end of May according to the weather; after that they took vomits for a certain number of weeks, once a week; then

¹ Ford's Handbook to Travellers in Spain, 1845, page 852.

² Haslam's Observations on Madness, 1809, page 216

they were purged. This had been the practice, invariably, for years; it was handed down to him by his father and he knew no better practice. Dr. Munro held that the lower classes only should be chained. From 1805 to 1815 Mr. Crowther was surgeon to Bedlam; during this period he was generally insane; he had had a strait waistcoat and was mostly drunk, yet till a week before his death he attended the patients.¹

Van Helmont and Cullen recommended sudden immersion in cold water.² Dr. Cox recommended continued intoxication, and the trial of certain deceptions, such as waking the patient from sleep by imitated thunder or soft music, by signs imitated in phosphorus upon the wall of the bedchamber, and by the appearance of someone in the character of an angel, prophet or devil. Dr. Hallaran, who was physician to the asylum at Cork, and whose practical observations on the cure and causes of madness, published early in the 18th century, are in many respects full of sound sense, speaks in high praise of the circulating swing, an invention of Dr. Darwin. An engraving of this machine is given in Dr. Hallaran's book;³ at first it held four patients but was later adopted for one patient only, being worked by a windlass and capable of being revolved at one hundred times a minute; Dr. Hallaran adding that no well regulated institution should be without this curative expedient, one of whose usual effects seems to have been a smart fever of eight or ten days' duration. One mode of treatment was to chain patients in a well and allow the water to ascend to the level of the mouth, when the fear of drowning terrified them into their senses. Another was to fling patients, bound wrist and heel, into a stream, and it received the sanction of Boerhaave and Van Swieten. A stream was looked upon as a necessary appanage of an asylum. The surprise bath was one into which the patient

✓ Boerhaave

¹ Minutes of Evidence on State of Madhouses, 1815.

² Pinel's *Traité Médico-Philosophique*, page 323.

³ Hallaran's *Insanity*, 1818, page 94.

was cast when he least expected it; a reservoir, a stream or the sea served the purpose. Van Helmont recommended it until the patient lost his senses. Pinel and Esquirol proscribed it; the latter adds: "Je sais qu'il a été funeste: J'aimerais autant qu'on donnât le conseil de précipiter les aliénés d'un troisième étage parce qu'on a vu quelques fous guérir après avoir fait une chute sur la tête."

✓ The arrangement at Charenton was more carefully prepared. A tank six feet deep, ten long and seven wide was constructed in a vaulted chamber. The patient was led down to it blindfolded, made to sit down on the edge and then thrown in backwards. It was Roger Collard who discontinued this treatment.¹

Dr. Willis's treatment was of a gentler character. He was said to be gifted with so penetrating an eye that he was enabled to establish a dominion over his patients which became a principal agent of cure. He claimed that out of every ten patients placed under his care nine recovered within three months after the first attack, a statement which his contemporaries naturally derided. There was little or no clinical teaching of insanity and an almost total neglect of insanity as a branch of medical education by our Universities and medical schools. The first systematic course of clinical lectures Sir James Clark believed was given by Dr. Conolly. The attendants were taken from the lowest classes, broken down excise men or discharged sheriff's officers, if the word attendant can be used. In one asylum three men looked after 250, in another two looked after 164 patients.

The vagrant lunatic was probably far happier than the inmate of an asylum, public or private, and Madge Wildfire's life, though she often wished there was a "het peat down the throats of the lads and lasses who were skirling at her tail," was not one of unmixed suffering. The village idiot was a recognised

¹ Esquirol, *Des Maladies Mentales*, vol. 2, page 225, vol. 4, page 74.

feature of country life, "permitted to wander about in a state of total helplessness and neglect, to the great danger of their doing mischief to others or to themselves."¹ In Ireland, where there were no poor laws, the pauper maniacs roamed about at large, hanging round the houses of "the first noblemen and gentlemen." There were two institutions of a public character in Dublin. When a lunatic was sent there he was tied with a cord to the back of a car and forced to walk the whole distance from his home, with the result that one in five lost an arm from the tightness of the ligature producing mortification, and rendering amputation necessary.

Mr. Matthew Peacock has recently printed an interesting document which belongs to the Governors of Wakefield Grammar School, entitled "Certificates of Alleged Cures of Lunacy," by John Smith of Wakefield in 1615, to which nineteen tags for seals are attached. From this it appears that "Jayne Robertes raged up and down Wakefield in a frenzy and lunacy, night and day, continuing long therein sore distracted, but by the knowledge, industry, paynes, cost and charges of John Smith of Wakefield, was amended and recovered unto her perfect senses." Simeon Crabtree, of Heptonstall, who wandered up and down the fields and country, very troublesome to the country; Mr. Henry Nevill who was possessed of a lunacy, raging up and down; Mr. John Wentworth, of Bretton, also possessed of a lunacy, hunting up and down in the woods, and in the night time with fearful voices to all who heard him; Thomas Hayghe and Henry Hill, both of them wandering up and down the country and fields, and several others were all restored to their right mind by the instrumentality of John Smith whose panacea has, alas! passed away with him. The maniac seems to have been, in the 18th century, an incident of a country walk. When Dr. Currie, of Liverpool, was walking one evening in

¹ Minutes of Evidence, 1815, Report page 15.

the summer of 1780 in Dumfriesshire he was startled by the appearance of a woman, half naked, who bounded into the neighbouring wood. On his return he found she was a maniac known by the name of Susanna, who ranged through the country uncontrolled and was known to take up her nightly residence in the neighbouring woods.¹ Ten more years elapsed before the condition of these miserable victims was to excite attention. Thousands probably had been done to death as witches, thousands had been treated as the vilest of criminals, thousands tortured throughout their life. At last, however, humanity was to assert itself, and towards the close of the 18th century a new era dawned, full of imperfection but, nevertheless, of steady progress. Mr. Lecky, speaking of this period, says: "The combined progress of theological scepticism and scientific knowledge relegated witchcraft to the world of phantoms, and the exertions of Morgagni in Italy, of Cullen in Scotland, and of Pinel in France renovated the whole treatment of acknowledged lunatics."² I do not understand why Mr. Lecky has not coupled the name of William Tuke, of York, with that of Pinel; William Tuke, the pioneer in England of humane treatment, paving the way for the work of Conolly, of Hill, of Charlesworth and of Lord Shaftesbury. I shall have much to say of William Tuke and his foundation of the Retreat near York, in 1792, which to-day, under Dr. Bedford Pierce, sustains the unique reputation it has enjoyed for more than a century.

I also do not understand why Mr. Lecky couples Morgagni's name with that of Pinel, and makes no allusion to Chiarugi. Morgagni was the first pathological anatomist; he was born at Forlì in 1682, died in 1771, and was elected to the Royal Society in 1724. In his great work, "*de sedibus et causis morborum*,"

¹ Life of Dr. Currie, vol. 1, page 54.

² Lecky's History of European Morals, vol. 2, page 96.

in speaking of Celsus' admonition that stripes should be applied in cases of lunacy he says that all this should be within bounds, like a parent who corrects his children, not like an executioner who uses all kinds of violence against his prisoners. The mercies of Wm. Cullen are tempered mercies. Sometimes, he says, it may be necessary (in the treatment of maniacs) to acquire awe and dread even by stripes and blows; the former are much safer than strokes or blows about the head; neither of them should, however, be employed further than seems very necessary and should be trusted only to those whose discretion can be depended upon.¹

The oldest Italian asylum is said to have been built in Rome about 1300, the first Spanish asylum was established at Valencia in 1408, five years after the first lunatics, six in number, were confined in Bethlehem Hospital. In Italy and France and England reform began almost simultaneously. Chiarugi, who died in 1822, published his volume "*Sull' alienazione mentale*" at Florence in 1793, and introduced a system of mild treatment in the asylum there. Tenon, the Duc de Liancourt and Cabanis were all reformers but Philippe Pinel stands out pre-eminent. It was in 1793 that Pinel began his work at the Bicêtre and after two years there, continued it at the Salpêtrière. His *Traité Médico-philosophique* gives a graphic account of the difficulties he met with in seeking to overthrow the system then in force. To substitute kindness and freedom for blows and chains seemed the height of Quixotic extravagance. Before the revolution the ordinary allowance of bread for each lunatic was one pound and a half, which was instantly devoured, the rest of the day being spent "*dans une sorte de délire famélique.*" In 1792 this allowance was increased to two pounds, served out in the morning and at midday, and soup was given in the evening; the result upon the mortality

¹ Wm. Cullen's Works, vol. 2, page 524.

was striking; in 1784 the deaths were 57 out of 110, while in the second year of the republic the deaths were only one-eighth of the total.

When Pinel resolved upon his new departure the female attendants, to the number of forty, gave notice sooner than he was deprived of what they considered to be their right to ill treat their patients.

Three years after the use of chains was done away with at the Bicêtre they were discontinued at the Salpêtrière under Pussin's supervision. Pinel was fortunate in inspiring those who were under him with his views. In 1818 Esquirol presented a report, well worth reading, to the French Home Office on the asylums in France and the means of improving them. In 1817 an order had been given to take the lunatics out of the prisons, where their condition was far worse than that of criminals.

All over Europe the same state of things prevailed. Reil, Andree and Chiarugi gave a deplorable account of the asylums in Germany, in Savoy and in Italy. The patients were bound with chains, lay in their ordure and were exhibited as wild beasts by their keepers. Whips, dungeons, chains were "*les seuls moyens de persuasion.*" In some houses ox hide whips were distributed to the attendants, and the physicians discouraged by the neglect of their complaints gave up their visits. It was no better in Belgium till Mons. de Pontécoulant, in 1803, transferred the lunatics from Brussels to Gheel.

The same problems presented themselves for solution seventy years ago as now. "Why," asked Esquirol, "has the number of lunatics doubled in Paris in thirty years? In 1786 there were 1,009, in 1813 2,000, in 1836 4,000." The answer was the same then as to day. As the asylums improved and the inmates were better cared for, the dread of them grew less and the expectation of life longer. At Bordeaux, Lyons and others of

the chief towns the increase of lunatics synchronised with the reforms introduced into the asylums. One desire of Esquirol has been fulfilled; he hoped to see the use of the words "loges cages, cachots" discontinued in favour of "asiles."

We shall see how step by step progress was made and maintained.

CHAPTER II.

"The best laid ^{schemes} ~~plans~~ ^{of} ^{men} ~~and~~ ^{men} ~~may~~ gang aft a'gley."—BURNS.

On the 7th of August, 1772, the *York Courant* published the following advertisement signed by the Archbishop of York and twenty-four others, amongst whose names are those of Frankland, Topham, Willoughby, Palmes, Milner, Winn, Cholmley, Armytage, Gascoigne, Lascelles, Turner, St. Quentin, and of Hunter, who afterwards became the physician of the Asylum:—"Sensible of the deplorable condition 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, we recommend to the public in general a subscription "towards erecting a public edifice for the reception of such "unhappy people. The excellent establishments of this nature "at Newcastle and Manchester give a noble example for "imitation to this wealthy county."

On the 27th of August a meeting was held and a committee appointed, and the establishment of a hospital for the insane urged upon the following grounds, amongst others. That there existed only four hospitals in the kingdom—Bedlam, St. Luke's, Manchester and Newcastle—and that many persons of moderate circumstances labouring under the terrible misfortune of an unsound mind had no place to retire to but a private madhouse, where their cure stood a great chance of being protracted for the benefit of a mercenary keeper. Archbishop Drummond was in the chair and proposed a subscription for the erecting of a suitable building for the reception of lunatics, being either parish poor or belonging to distressed and indigent families. £2,500 was subscribed, and on the 30th of July, 1773, Mr. Carr (the architect of so many Yorkshire houses) was asked to

prepare a plan. On the 25th of August the plan for fifty-four patients was submitted and approved and a further appeal was made for subscriptions.

In April, 1777, it was determined that no attending physician or surgeon should receive fee or reward, as long as the Hospital continue to receive only paupers, or persons in low or indigent circumstances, agreeable to the original design of the charity. On the 20th of September apartments were opened for the reception of ten patients at 8/- per week each, and a rule adopted that no servant should be allowed to accept any money on any pretence whatever.

On the 21st of September Dr. Hunter was appointed physician. The report of the asylum bearing the date of January 1st, 1788, sets forth what Dr. Hunter calls a remarkable case, obviously for the purpose of advertisement. A sea-faring person, about forty years old, was sent to the Asylum in 1778 having lost his reason two years before owing to a loss he had sustained by sea. For five years and six months he remained "an animal nearly converted into a vegetable," insensible to all around him; but on the 14th of May, 1782, he suddenly recovered his reason, thanked everyone for their tenderness to him, returned to his family on the 28th, and was appointed to the command of a ship in the Baltic trade. Dr. Hunter ascribed the cure to the use of cordials and a generous diet, instead of the evacuants usually prescribed.

In 1778 as all the donations had been spent on the buildings, there was no fund for the maintenance of patients, and Lady Gower, Mrs. Bouchier and Mrs. Bouverie contributed sums of which the interest was £37 a year for the relief of patients only. A reduction fund was thus established but its insufficiency led to a new departure in August, 1784, when it was determined that a limited number of patients of a superior or opulent class should be admitted at a suitable rate of payment in order to

create the means of relieving the necessitous, and the following year Dr. Hunter was "requested to do justice to his own interests by receiving from the friends of such patients the reasonable emoluments of his profession." Thus was a new departure sanctioned, to be followed by far reaching and disastrous consequences.

The physician became supreme, the governors did little or nothing, never interfered with the management of the institution, the keepers intrigued with the patients and all the abuses of old lifted up their heads again.

Dr. Hunter, to do him justice, remonstrated and pointed out that bad consequences might result from the attending physician taking fees and from leaving a discretionary power of such a nature in the hands of any man. The income, however, was insufficient for the needs of the Asylum, and the governors on the 23rd of August, 1788, renewed their request. It was at this juncture that the first dissensions, to be so often repeated, began.

The Rev. W. Mason, precentor of York, Dr. Burgh, Mr. Withers the recorder, and others 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, it was wrong to charge for them the full amount of their maintenance. Dr. Hunter and the governors held that if the payments were reduced the institution would be 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. Their opponents 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 governors, however, did not share the suspicion and the physician's power was more firmly established.

Mr. Mason published, in 1788, his "Animadversions on the

present government of the York Lunatic Asylum," and raised all the contentious points which for more than a century agitated the Asylum. Mr. Mason laid down various propositions: firstly, that it was the primary intention of the nobility, gentry, and others, and one of their principal motives for erecting an institution at York to relieve parish paupers; secondly, that the reasons which actuated the original subscribers were that there was no specific law dealing with pauper lunatics, that there was no better place to receive them than a common workhouse or house of correction, no proper means of accommodation, attendance or medical assistance. "Six years ago," he says, "I sent an orphan youth, to prevent him coming on the parish, to the York Asylum at a cost of £120, excluding apparel. If he goes home, on the first sign of dangerous phrenzy which he may show, his parish will condemn him to a chain in some miserable hut for the remainder of his days." Mr. Mason's third proposition was that it was defensible to relieve parishes from the burden of maintaining their lunatics; his fourth, that the opinion that lunatic parish paupers were less the object of public charity than any others was fallacious, and the admission he made in its maintenance is one which has been pressed into service during the recent controversy. "Were parishes under a legal necessity to relieve their lunatic paupers to the extent of their wants, to afford them medical assistance and other suitable accommodation, then persons in low and indigent circumstances might be preferred in this charity to parish lunatics, but, at present, unless their lunacy extend to outrage and danger their parishes are under no obligation to maintain them but as ordinary paupers." Fifthly, Dr. Hunter's contention that the charity was meant for persons in low circumstances and in the middling rank of life was a fallacious one, though the government of the asylum had proceeded on this assumption. There were only five parish

paupers on the calendar of the asylum, and the weekly payments were exacted with a view to the exclusion of parish lunatics; the weekly payments should be the same of all.

Mr. Mason contended that the payments made on behalf of parish lunatics should be so far lessened that parishes might be prompted to send in their lunatics as a matter of choice, as, unfortunately, no law was in existence to compel them. He attacked the administration and accused it of extravagance. The asylum was "a mansion which ought to have been veiled in perpetual shade, yet was taught to perk itself up with all the effrontery of the villa of a Nabob. The governors, without enquiring whether any other physicians would have given their services gratis, appointed Dr. Hunter and requested him to take fees before the weekly payment of the poorer patients was uniformly and effectually lowered." "No subscriptions," Mr. Mason said, "would have been forthcoming if the object of the asylum had been to relieve the relations of the affluent from the discharge of their obligations." Supposing the original advertisement had run thus: "Mad paupers must be excluded by putting their terms of admission so high as effectually to bar their ingress," who would have supported the movement? One of the objects aimed at was to discourage low class madhouses, yet in 1784, a man who had seen much of the practice of Bethlehem Hospital, who had acted under Dr. Munro, and was possess of many of his prescriptions, was discharged from the York Asylum in order that he might keep a private madhouse.

The governors retorted by passing a resolution expressing the opinion that such governors as possessed good will to the institution would express it better by attending in their places at the meetings, instead of making misrepresentations in public.

Dr. Hunter answered Mr. Mason in a letter published anonymously and entitled "A Letter to the Governors."

Mr. Mason originated a fund called Lupton's Fund (of which we shall hear more at a later period), Mr. Lupton's executor, Mr. Rockett, giving £400 to the charity "to be appropriated *solely* for the maintenance of lunatic parish paupers and other indigent lunatics within the city Ainsty and county of York." It is interesting to note that six years later, at the instigation of the physician, these words were altered by the Governors and that the clause read, "to be appropriated for the maintenance of lunatic parish paupers and other indigent lunatics within the city Ainsty and county of York *only*."

In 1790 the physician to the asylum set up a private madhouse of his own; later, the apothecary followed suit, and York was studded with numerous establishments of a similar nature.

In the following year an occurrence took place destined to exercise a permanent influence upon the treatment of lunacy in England. Mr. Samuel Tuke in his description of the Retreat near York, printed in 1813, thus alludes to it:—

"In the year 1791 a female of the Society of Friends was placed at an establishment for insane persons in the vicinity of the city of York, and her family, residing at a considerable distance, requested some of their acquaintance in the city 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. The circumstance was affecting and naturally excited reflections on the situation of insane persons and on the probable improvements which might be adopted in such establishments."

The result was the foundation of the Retreat by William Tuke, Lindley Murray and other members of the Society of Friends. Meetings were held in 1792 and 1793; twenty acres of land were bought, a house built and opened in May, 1796,

*This was
really in
the same
year:
1790.
H.C.H.*

and three patients admitted in June. What its fortunes were we shall see later.

Mr. Mason and his friends returned to the charge again, but the year 1794 was not one favourable to reformers in any field, and their efforts met only with abuse and discomfiture. The condition of the Asylum went from bad to worse; there were no Visitors though the patients were eighty in number. In 1797 Mr. Surr was appointed steward and Mr. Atkinson apothecary; the Governors fell off in number, the average number of new contributors being only two a year. In December, 1804, Dr. Best was introduced by Dr. Hunter into the Asylum to obviate any inconvenience from his own death or retirement, and Dr. Hunter's letter to the Apothecary contains the following piece of empiricism: "I mean freely to disclose to Dr. Best the manner of preparing the different medicines so successfully made use of in the Asylum, and of which the composition is unknown to every person but myself, you will therefore take notice you keep nothing secret from him." It is an eloquent commentary on the medicines that twenty patients out of 141 seem to have died in 1804.

Dr. Hunter's chief fear was lest Dr. Belcombe, the physician of the Retreat, should be elected as his successor, and happy would it have been for the Asylum had such a course prevailed. In 1809 Dr. Hunter died and on the 19th of July Dr. Best was elected sole physician.

Just before the election took place, on the 10th of June, "Observations on the Present State of the York Lunatic Asylum" were published anonymously.

It should be remembered that in 1806 a select committee had been moved for by Mr. Charles Williams Wynn and appointed to enquire into the state of pauper lunatics in England, and in 1808 an act, called Mr. Wynn's Act, was passed providing that it should be lawful for justices in every county in England

and Wales to take into consideration the propriety of providing a lunatic asylum for the reception of patients within the county. This legislation, however, was not compulsory and utterly failed in attaining the object of its promoters.¹

The author of the "observations" pointed out that the annual income of Lupton's fund was then understood to be £170 a year, that it had received no support from the Governors and had never been noticed in either their annual or quarterly publications. Subscribers of £20 to that fund were not given the privilege of a seat on the governing body on the ground of having subscribed only to a limited purpose. In 1788 the proportion of patients admitted on reduced terms was nearly one-third of the whole, while in August, 1808, it was little more than one-ninth, or twenty-one out of 186. The following paragraph is of special interest today: "It is a satisfactory reflection that one hindrance to an uniformity of sentiment among the supporters of this institution is completely removed by the power given to the magistrates in the recent Act to compel parishes to make an adequate allowance for pauper lunatics in a public hospital. The jarring opinions touching their reception into the York Asylum will long be remembered with concern by those who had the unpleasant lot of being involved in the discussion." A meeting was held at York shortly afterwards to take into consideration the expediency of providing a lunatic asylum for the reception of patients in the county of York but six years more were to elapse before any result followed.

The population of Yorkshire was at this date 1809 about 950,000, and yet it was imagined that the lunatics, who probably numbered 1,200 or more, could all find room in the York Asylum.² "Where," asks Mr. Hack Tuke, "were they located?"

¹ History of the Insane in the British Isles, by D. H. Tuke, 1882, pages 127 and 128.

² Provision for the Insane Poor in Yorkshire, D. H. Tuke, 1889, page 7.

Some were detained in poorhouses, such as they were, but a large proportion of demented and idiots were with their friends, probably in some outhouse, attic or cellar, or were wandering about, the butt of village ruffians and were sometimes dangerous epileptics. Lastly, not a few lunatics were persons whose malady was unrecognised, and who were in gaols. Undoubtedly, some were executed as criminals."

"I am not mad," cries Meg Merrilies in Guy Mannering, "I have been imprisoned for mad, scourged for mad, banished for mad, but mad I am not."

CHAPTER III.

"The Quakers always seem to succeed in any Institution they undertake."—SYDNEY SMITH.

While the Governors of the York Asylum fought and neglected their duties, their neighbours the founders of the Retreat had steadily persevered in their enlightened policy. Dr. Fowler, Dr. Cappe and Dr. Belcombe had succeeded one another as physicians and it is not surprising that Dr. Hunter's prejudices and antagonism were excited by the methods of treatment they adopted and transmitted to his successor Dr. Best. The buildings at the Retreat were enlarged, the number of patients and subscriptions increased; in 1804 and 1805 the income exceeded the expenditure, and in the years 1808 and 1809 there were 59 patients. In 1812 there were no deaths at the Retreat: the expenses were £2,091, the income £2,352, the debt £2,390 and the assets £9,120.

In the following year, Samuel Tuke, the grandson of William Tuke, published his "Description of the Retreat, an institution near York for insane persons of the Society of Friends, containing an account of its origin and progress, the modes of treatment, and a statement of cases." The book attracted much attention and is well worth reading at the present day, written as it is in an earnest, straightforward, simple style, and full of illustrations showing the cultivation of the author. Sydney Smith, from the neighbouring heights of Foston gave it his benediction in the April number of the *Edinburgh Review* for the year 1814, and informed his readers in patronising terms that Mr. Tuke, a respectable tea dealer living in York had given an account of the Retreat in a manner which the most opulent and important of his customers could

not excel. "Upon the whole," he wrote, "we have little doubt that this is the best managed Asylum for the insane that has ever yet been established. In this instance the Quakers 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 temptation 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."

The details given by Mr. Tuke justified this language. The average number of male patients under personal restraint was only two, while on an average there was not one female patient requiring solitary confinement during the day. New methods had been attempted and justified. Bleeding, blisters, and prescriptions of a similar character received a trial, and were discarded. At Bedlam it was the practice to bleed the curable patients regularly twice a year in June and July. A generous and ample dietary was given, whereas at the York Asylum the lowest class of patients had offal in hash at times and the coarsest parts separated.

It was Pinel's belief, quoted by Mr. Tuke, that insufficiency of food was calculated to exasperate and prolong the disease. If on the one hand the physical side was not neglected, equal attention was paid to the moral treatment of the patients. Neither chains nor corporal punishment were tolerated under any pretext; fear was only to be had recourse to when a necessary object could not otherwise be obtained. To the mild system of treatment adopted at the Retreat Mr. Tuke had no doubt was to be attributed the happy recovery of so large a proportion of melancholy patients. "If

those," he asks, "who are friendly to the terrific system of management could prove that it promoted the cure of insanity, they would have some apology for its discriminate adoption—if on the contrary a statement of the proportion of cures in the Retreat should sufficiently prove the efficacy of mild means, would not those who were adopting an opposite line of treatment do well to reflect on the awful responsibility attaching to their conduct." The idea that an exhibition of strength or an appearance of austerity were necessary factors in dealing with lunatics was only part of that cruel system, probably dictated by indolence and timidity, which had so long prevailed and still prevailed in many receptacles for the insane. These were remarkable words to be written in 1813, and Mr. Tuke has rightly earned the reputation of introducing these great reforms.

The duties and responsibilities of the attendants were now also insisted upon, probably for the first time; they were to consider the degree in which patients might be influenced by moral and rational inducements, and to treat them at the same time as brothers and also as mere automata, to applaud what they did right, and pity without censuring what they did wrong. The patients were to be accorded as much freedom as was possible. Tea parties were given for them at which they were treated with all the attention of strangers: they were allowed occasionally to pay visits to their friends in York, and female visitors were appointed every month by the Committee, to visit the female patients and propose any improvements which might occur to them. The patients were encouraged to avoid indolence and to persevere in steady mental pursuits.

Mr. Tuke did not claim that the managers of the Institution had arrived at a state of perfection in the moral treatment of insanity. "If they have," he says, "made any considerable approaches towards it, their progress has only served to convince them how much more may probably be effected, and

to fill them with regret that so little ingenuity has hitherto been exerted to increase the comfort of insane persons. What a reflection upon human nature, that the greatest calamity to which it is incident should have been frequently aggravated by those who had the power, and whose duty it was to employ means of mitigation. Hence we may derive a practical comment on the observation of the wise Montesquieu, which every one interested in the establishments for the insane ought constantly to remember. C'est une expérience éternelle, que tout homme qui a du pouvoir est porté à en abuser; il va jusqu'à ce qu'il trouve des limites. Qui le diroit? La vertu même a besoin des limites."

✓ In 1892 Sir Arthur Mitchell wrote on the occasion of the Centenary of the Retreat—"The whole work of my life has been coloured by Samuel Tuke's description of the Retreat. It was William Tuke who founded it, but it was Samuel Tuke who made it known to me, and I think I lift my hat as high to the grandson as to the grandfather. Samuel Tuke's book is a presentation of the principles which should guide men in treating and caring for the insane. It is beautifully written, and I find it still delightful and instructive reading."

The publication of the *History of the Retreat* had consequences the author little anticipated. The key note struck, as we have seen, was the advantage of a milder system of treatment than that which was in vogue elsewhere. The Physician of the York Asylum resented what he considered to be an imputation upon himself. Quem Deus vult perdere, inter dementes locat. The fray began on the 25th of September, 1813, and for two years it raged with unremitting fury. As we shall see, letter followed letter in the newspapers, and pamphlet pamphlet until, in the language of one of the writers, "the tocsin was sounded through every town, in every village." Dr. Best, under the name of 'Evigilator,' wrote to the *York Chronicle*

complaining of the highly indecorous and injurious insinuations in Mr. Tuke's book, to which he had not thought it necessary to reply, but he declared that it would be an act of culpable supineness to allow such a statement as that the Physician to the Quakers' Retreat had 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," to pass by without notice. *Hinc omnes lachrymæ!* Such an insinuation was disingenuous, was destitute of foundation; the advertisement was "a torpedo" suggesting that methods of an opposite description were employed at other Asylums in York and its vicinity.

On the 30th of September appeared Mr. Tuke's answer, in which he declared that his remarks were not directed against any particular establishment, and begged 'Evigilator' to point out many Institutions in which the use of chains was entirely discarded. The Physician to the Retreat, Dr. Belcombe, defended his advertisement on the ground that he could not conceive that it could be considered a censure upon any other establishment. I have no intention of going seriatim through the correspondence that followed. Viator, Spectator, Observer, Civis, Honestus, Monitor, and a host of others plunged into the quarrel. Heavy raillery followed vulgarity, and York must have been astonished at the angry passions that were roused. Mr. Jonathan Gray, one of the chief actors in this drama, had no difficulty in showing that the terms in Dr. Belcombe's advertisement, so strongly objected to by Dr. Best, had been anticipated in an advertisement issued by Dr. Hunter, the physician of the York Asylum, when he opened "a genteel house for the reception of the insane." The progress of criticism exasperated Dr. Best: writing as a Governor of the Asylum he declared the insinuations perfectly and utterly false, and that unless his opponents did not bring

forth "specific charges either of cruelty, violence, hardship, unnecessary coercion or improper treatment, they would stand convicted of the basest cowardice and the most malignant falsehood."

On the 10th of November, 1813, Dr. Best issued a notice inviting any persons whatsoever who might have anything to allege against the management or treatment of the patients to take the opportunity of bringing forward their charges at the Quarterly Court to be held at the York Lunatic Asylum on the 2nd of December following.

Both Mr. Jonathan Gray and Mr. Samuel Tuke promptly replied: the former invited Dr. Best if he were serious to call a meeting of the subscribers to the Asylum and Lupton's fund for the purpose of taking into consideration the total impracticability of Dr. Best affording proper attention to 150 patients; to discuss the glaring impropriety of his being allowed to take any fees; 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. The latter summed up his complaints by saying that the York Asylum had been perverted from its original intention, that the means of preventing, detecting and correcting abuses which were provided in most other similar establishments were not provided for in the Asylum, and that a greater degree of responsibility was vested in the physician than ought to be reposed in any man, however honourable.

At this juncture, another actor appeared upon the stage, a very important one, to whose services the highest acknowledgments are due and have been paid by all who have written upon or studied the controversy; Mr. Godfrey Higgins, a West Riding magistrate living at Skellow Grange, near Doncaster. On the 27th of November appeared a specific charge made by

him against the authorities of the York Lunatic Asylum of ill-treatment of a patient. In April, Mr. Higgins had ordered the removal of a pauper, Wm. Vicars, of Fishlake, to the Asylum in consequence of his insanity. Vicars went to York on the 17th of April, and was brought back on the 17th of October. The inventory of the clothes Vicars took with him to the Asylum is worth commemoration. They consisted of a good and nearly new blue coat, a new scarlet 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. All these articles disappeared while he was at the Asylum; on the other hand he brought back the itch with him, these circumstances being attested by the mark of Sarah Vicars, his wife. Dr. Best denied that Vicars had been the victim of negligence and that the Asylum was kept in a state of uncleanness and neglect. William Tuke, on the 27th of November, expressed the hope that all the Governors would attend at the Quarterly Court to be held on the 2nd of December following, at the Asylum, when Vicar's case would be investigated.

On the 1st of December Mr. Higgins appealed to the Governors to do justice on the ground that public investigation was absolutely necessary. Public interest was excited. What would the Governors do? They met, twenty-seven in number, on the 2nd of December; the only witnesses examined were the managers and keepers of the Asylum who denied upon oath the truth of the charges made against them. Four other charges were ignored and the Court passed the following resolution:—

“The Governors having taken into consideration the statement published in the York and other papers 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 the time Vicars remained in the Asylum he was treated with all possible care, attention and humanity." The Governors also regretted the circulation of an ex-parte statement, and adjourned the Court to the following 13th of December, the Archbishop of York having presided over the meeting.

The first round had been fought and the reformers were badly beaten.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE FIRST CAPTURE.

"Ce monde d'égoïsmes adroits et d'ambitions actives, ce monde, il faut savoir y vivre. On y a besoin de succès : réussis. On n'y reconnaît que la force : sois fort."—AMIEL.

Well might Mr. Higgins write that he was very far from satisfied with what had been done. At the Retreat, 26 patients out of an average number of 46 had died in 16 years. In the Asylum, out of 199 patients 24 were buried in one Church alone in 11 months; the deaths at the Asylum were 3 to 1 of those at the Retreat.

Dr. Best's triumph, however, was to be but short lived. The correspondence between Mr. Higgins and Mr. Samuel Tuke gives a graphic picture of alternate hopes and fears. On the 5th of December Mr. Tuke writes, "We have very decidedly the vox populi in our favour, and I am persuaded that the Asylum will now be ruined or reformed; I sincerely hope the latter." On the 7th, "I have been running about the whole day in search of new allies or to ascertain the determination of old ones. To some the expense of becoming a Governor, to others the fear of giving offence, and to others the supposed hopelessness of the case operates as a prevention. There is, however, one gentleman who seems to feel the importance of the subject who is likely to be of most important service, S. W. Nicholl, Esq., a Barrister-at-Law, and, I think, the Recorder of Doncaster. He at present fully purposes coming in as a Governor before the adjourned meeting. He thinks it would be better for none of our family to come in as Governors at present. He believes it would give a handle to those who were inclined to asperse the motives of all who came in on this

occasion; that it would be said it was the Retreat party, and that it might be thought less improper for the others to create a number of new Governors to oppose them. I will not, however, save my purse by this measure, nor will I be idle." Mr. Higgins joined issue with his friend. "I cannot approve the system of making new Governors. I think your family are better out of the way. Pray does not Mr. Nicholl think that the Magistrates are bound to provide a place for the paupers regulated according to the Act of 48, cap. 96?"

Samuel Tuke complains in his reply that everybody is so busy with the foolish illumination he cannot consult his friends, but he clings to his determination to get ten or twelve new Governors to qualify before the next meeting. On the 8th he writes that he has secured ten independent respectable names, and the party of reform was ready for the fray. The *coup d'état* was arranged to take place on the 10th of December at the adjourned Court, and on that day Messrs. Russell, Nicoll, Wellbeloved, Dyson, D. Tuke, Crosby, Jonathan Gray, Graham, Gimber, Rawdon, J. Richardson, S. Richardson, and Thorpe paid the donations that entitled them to become 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." The new Governors forebore to re-open the case of Vicars, believing that Mr. Higgins' remaining cases would prove the necessity for reform. These six cases were those of Martha Kidd, James Wilson, George Arundel, Richard and John Thirkell, and the Rev. J. B. Schorey; and Mr. Nicholl proposed that a special Committee should be appointed to investigate them. Two lists were proposed, and a trial of strength took place, with the

result that Mr. Nicholl's list was carried by a majority of one. "Every step of ground was most determinately contested. Dealtry, a clergyman, spoke of the cases as altogether frivolous and undeserving of attention; and there is little doubt but that this would have been the decision of the meeting if such a number of new Governors had not come forward in the unexpected and disinterested manner they have done. Certainly the foundation stone of reform is laid, and this is a great thing. Who that has not half a soul would not put out his hand to crush this monstrous system of iniquity, and convert a public nuisance into a public blessing?" The Court was adjourned to the 7th of January, 1814, and the Committee met on the 20th, 21st, 23rd, 24th, and 27th days of December.

On the 28th of December the detached wing of the Asylum was burnt to the ground, and the enquiry that was held offered no explanation of the cause of the fire. The physician had been called away to attend a patient at a distance; the steward, who was 82 years old, lived at the lodge, a quarter of a mile away; the apothecary, Mr. Atkinson, was spending the evening out in company with his wife. Two of the attendants were absent, one was old and asthmatic, and one remained to do his duty. Four patients, however, perished. Suspicion was entertained that some of them had been chained, though Dr. Best stated that neither those nor any others were on the night of the fire under any personal restraint.

On the 10th of February, 1814, Mr. Higgins writes to Mr. Tuke. "I am much pleased with your information that there seems to be a disinclination to rebuild. Why not apply the interest of the whole fund to make a limited number of persons above the class of paupers comfortable, and let the County Magistrates do their duty and build two or three proper places for their own paupers at Leeds, Sheffield, and Hull? I would by no means exclude the paupers from the present building till

new buildings were ready." And later on: "I would rather have the good opinion of the friends than all the bishops in England"—a very pious and justifiable wish, which would be endorsed by every student of the bench in 1814.

At the Court held on the 7th of January, 1814, the Committee reported upon the cases of alleged neglect, and in those of Martha Kidd and Mr. Schorey found both were proved. The evidence was of a most realistic character. "Martha," says the Governess of the Poor-house, when she returned home from the Asylum, "could not have been so dirty if she had lain in a fish cart three weeks." Mr. Schorey was a Curate, who died in the Asylum in December, 1812. His wife said that when she went to see him, her husband was pushed or kicked into the room by his keepers. His clothes and body were covered with lice, his back was a mass of bruises, and the attendants insulted her.

On the motion of Mr. Nicoll a Committee of thirteen was appointed to make an enquiry into the rules and management of the Institution and report to the general meeting in August.

The Committee met on the 21st, 26th and 28th of January, 1814, and on the 8th of February, on which day their report was prepared, but owing to the Archbishop's absence their next meeting was deferred until June. In the meantime Mr. Higgins had written to say he was perfectly satisfied with the decision of the Governors, and that he was persuaded that in consequence of the recent proceedings, the patients were treated with as much care, attention and humanity as circumstances would admit of. He entertained the most sanguine hopes that by August the Asylum would be efficiently managed, which would compensate him for his anxiety and the misrepresentations to which he had been exposed. This was on the 10th of January, but a visit paid in March by Mr. Higgins to the Asylum disclosed far worse conditions than had been suspected. The following account is given in Mr. Higgins' letter to Lord

Fitzwilliam dated September 16th, 1814, and quoted in the Edinburgh Review of August, 1817.

"At eight in the morning of the day of meeting, I went to the Asylum determined to examine very carefully every part of it. After having seen, as I was told by Atkinson all the rooms for the reception of patients, being struck with the retired appearance of one door, I ordered one of the keepers to unlock it. I thought I perceived fear and hesitation. I grew warm, it was then opened; I went in and discovered a row of cells, four in number, with a door out of the furthest into the yard. On entering the first cell I found it in a state dreadful beyond description, some miserable bedding was lying upon straw, which was daubed and wet with excrement and urine, the boarded floor saturated with filth, the walls besmeared with excrement, the round air hole, about eight inches in diameter partly filled with it. This cell was about eight feet and a half square, perfectly dark when the door was shut, and the stench almost intolerable. I was told these cells were occupied at night by thirteen women who were then upstairs. I found them in a room twelve feet long by seven feet ten inches wide, with a window which not opening would not admit of ventilation. Except in the first cell there was no bedding but straw which appeared to have been in use a long time as it was absolutely saturated with wet; amongst the straw I observed a chain and handcuff. The Archbishop of York and the Committee of fifteen had previously to my detecting these cells, desired they might be shewn over the whole of the wards and apartments occupied by patients, but the cells in question were not shewn to them. The Committee of five went over the house in the performance of their duty and the same circumstance occurred. Atkinson told me before I had found these cells that I had seen the whole."

Dr. Best wrote to the newspaper to disclaim responsibility

and to protest against such insinuations as those of Mr. Higgins. But abuses continued, as was evident from the fact that a patient admitted into the Asylum was assaulted the following day and died five days later. The steward entered him in the book—died; the body was removed from the Asylum and would have been buried without an inquest but for the intervention of two of the Governors.

The Quarterly Court was held on the 24th of April and a resolution passed, after violent altercation and recrimination, by a small majority thanking Mr. Higgins for his upright, persevering and successful exertions in bringing to light the abuses that had prevailed. The report of the Committee of enquiry showed that all rules and regulations had long been violated with impunity. There were false accounts, false entries in the books, money was paid by the steward to the physician and unaccounted for. The opulent patients were charged at the rate of fourteen shillings, and the surplus, instead of providing a fund for the poorer inmates, went into the pocket of the physician; 125 patients coarsely fed (the lowest class had offal in hash) and badly accommodated were paying nine shillings each. In the winter, the steward's age often prevented him from going out and visiting the Asylum. There was an almost total want of subordination and vigilance among the servants in the absence of a watchful head. In 1813 there were 199 patients under the care of four male and three female keepers, and two of them had to bake the bread and kill the pigs.¹ The doors were not locked at night, and servants remained out all night if they chose; the keepers received £100 a year as perquisites from the upper class of patients and took their clothes when they thought they had been worn long enough. Very few of the patients were allowed hats, and shoes and stockings were often wanting. A hundred of them were shut up together unattended by any

¹ A Vindication of Mr. Higgins from the charges of Corrector, York, 1814, pages 37-39.

one; the lowest paupers and persons of respectable habits, the convalescent and the incurable. There was utter neglect of ventilation and cleanliness and the light in several of the rooms was obstructed by pig-styes and other offices.

Speaking of this time, Lord Shaftesbury said at the presentation of a testimonial to Dr. Conolly in 1852, "Nothing could have been more horrible than the treatment of lunatics some forty years ago. The lunatic was treated without any regard to cure, and regarded as a savage beast who was only to be coerced; and the lunatic asylum was worse than the prison." Dr. Conolly on this occasion after acknowledging how much he owed to Pinel's works and Samuel Tuke's description of the Retreat, added: "Among the bad asylums the York Asylum was the worst." Bad no doubt it was but I see little reason to suppose that it enjoyed any pre-eminence in this respect.

The Annual Court of the Governors was to be held on the 26th of August, and on the 20th Mr. Higgins issued a passionate appeal to the members to attend the meeting.

"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 144 patients whose deaths have been concealed from the public and from you, I call for justice. 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 clean the Augean stable from top to bottom."

CHAPTER V.

"The greatest mystery to me in all the earth is how or why the world was tolerated by its Creator through the good old times and wasn't dashed to fragments."—DICKENS.

Mr. Higgins' letter produced the desired effect, and 80 Governors attended the General Annual Court on the 25th of August. Abuses and incapacity die hard, and a resolution, lost by a large majority, was moved to censure Mr. Higgins.

The rules and regulations of the Committee were adopted, subject to alterations by the Court. It was determined that no officer of the Institution should be eligible to act upon the Committee, that visitors should be appointed, and ladies requested to visit the female wards, that the minister of the parish should be a visitor, that the physician should be paid a salary of 300 guineas and accept no fees or gratuities.

Lord Fitzwilliam was almost the oldest surviving Governor, and both he and Lord Milton took an active part in the proceedings. The latter moved that the physician should be precluded from having private establishments of his own, but the motion was lost by six votes. Mr. Higgins then moved that all the officers' places should be declared vacant and that there should be a new election; he based his demand upon the fact 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. The physician had put into his own pocket those sums which were intended for the support of the poor lunatics, and 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 ten shillings a week. Dr. Best excused himself on the grounds of the practice of his predecessor and the presumed connivance of the Governors, and asked the Court to come to a decision as to whether or not he had misapplied the funds. A motion was therefore made that the physician was not guilty of misapplying the funds of the Institution. Lord Fitzwilliam who had been much shocked by what he had heard supported an amendment moved by Mr. Nicoll "that no criminality attaches to Dr. Best for misapplication of the funds of this Institution," which was carried by a small majority.

The Court was then adjourned to the following day when Mr. Higgins resumed his proof of abuses in which he had been interrupted. A motion was made to declare vacant the offices of steward, apothecary and matron, and carried, a strong protest being made by Lord Milton against the omission of the physician. The result was that Dr. Best's friends claimed a victory and called attention to his correct and disinterested conduct. Mr. Higgins could not acquiesce in this verdict, and on the 16th of September published a letter to Lord Fitzwilliam setting forth all that had taken place since the beginning of the agitation, and the motives that had actuated him in the enquiry he had instituted. This was the signal for further newspaper correspondence and controversy. Mr. Gray returned to the charge in the *York Herald*, "Corrector" published a pamphlet attacking Mr. Higgins, Mr. Nicoll vindicated Mr. Higgins and fresh light was thrown upon the abuses of the Asylum.

The adjourned general Court was held on the 7th of October, when an election of an apothecary, steward and matron took place to fill the vacancies which had been declared at the previous meeting, and a new set of attendants was introduced. Mr. Atkinson, the former apothecary, who seems at a later date to have kept a private asylum of his own, did not bear his

dismissal with equanimity, and Lord Fitzwilliam must again "have held up his hands in great agitation" as he did at the annual meeting, when he read the pamphlet entitled "Retaliation, or Hints to some of the Governors of the York Lunatic Asylum." It is full of virulent abuse of Mr. Higgins, "the grand lunatic reformer, who convulsed with mania has traduced him." Sometimes the apothecary breaks out in verse,

Says Hig to At, "You tell a lie."

Says At to Hig, "Oh no, not I."

"Perhaps," says Hig, "you'll say it's me?"

"Oh yes, Oh yes, so let it be."

sometimes he quotes French, Latin, Italian, while his invective and style are amazing. "The Governors threw a sable condolence over my afflictions and covered them with an opiate garment. They forced me rudely into the hearse with one hand and with the other sprinkled hyssop and poured their lachrymatories over my corpse. They tickled my vanity with a black feather and perfected the solemnity of the ceremony by the mournful accordance of the lamenting plumes. They have deprived me and my children of bread."

Such a scene of personality and madness was, he asserts, exhibited at a meeting of the Governors as ought to have induced him in duty to have called in the keepers and jacketed straight one half of them. We hear no more of the "bounds of decorum:" dirty slander, fulsome adulation to Lords whom like the boa constrictor one Governor first slobbered over with his lubricatory tongue and then gorged, should not restrain him from vindicating his character. An error in the entry of patients might happen to any one and so on. For seventeen years this pamphleteer had been an officer of the Asylum. *Ex uno disce alios.*

At the meeting of the Court on the 14th of December, 1814, the reports presented showed that progress was on foot, and that new brooms were doing their duty, the need for the new

brooms being emphasized by the following circumstance. The Committee required the late steward Mr. Surr's quarterly book of accounts relating to the patients and sent the new steward to obtain them. Mr. Surr said he knew nothing about the books, then refused to give them up, then admitted that he had burnt the whole of them excepting the book for the quarter just expiring. This was, on the old steward's part, a deliberate act, as the books that were burnt were those in which the actual receipts were entered. Another set was ultimately produced which contained an account of the weekly payments made to the steward for the patients; but instead of the sums really received smaller sums were in many instances inserted, the difference being paid to the physician.

It is not surprising that at the end of the year the physician of the Asylum threatened Mr. Hargrove, the editor of the *York Herald* with an action for libel. The editor replied that what he had done, he was ready and no doubt able to vindicate.

"Give my compliments," says Mr. Higgins to Mr. Tuke, "to Jonathan Gray and tell him I would like him to write a history of the Asylum and to get Hargrove to add it as an appendix to his new edition of Drake's Eboracum. I think upon a little reflexion, the fact of burning the books, though not quite so atrocious, is as complete a job as burning the building. I believe they had both the same object."

Early in February, 1815, Mr. Jonathan Gray published his history of the York Lunatic Asylum, which is an admirable summary of the proceedings on which I have commented, and concludes with the following passage.

"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 had 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. 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 and 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."

Even as late as June, 1815, another case of neglect seems to have occurred, but the Governors thought further exposure would no longer be of use.

In May, however, complete publicity was given to all that had taken place when Mr. Godfrey Higgins and Mr. Bryan Cooke gave their evidence before a select Committee of the House of Commons, which on the motion of Mr. Rose had been appointed in April to consider of provision being made for the better regulation of madhouses in England, and to report the same with their observations thereon.

On the 4th of May Mr. Higgins wrote to Mr. Samuel Tuke "I this day finished my examination before the Committee of the House of Commons on the abuses of the York Asylum. I daresay few persons believed me on the 2nd of December, 1813 when I told them that the papers might be wanted in the House of Commons. I think I dare hardly venture to York any more,

I have hit the sole physician, sole visitor, and sole committee, so hard. But what could I do? I must answer the questions put to me and those questions will speak for themselves. When I told the Committee that the physician was also sole visitor and sole committee you never saw men so surprised in your life. I overheard Mr. Smith of Norwich say he could not conceive how the Archbishop could say last session in the House of Lords that he thought a new Act of Parliament was unnecessary when he must have known all these things stated by me. Lord Robert Seymour hid his face with both his hands, and said, shaking his head "*fiat justitia, ruat cælum.*" I have seen all the public places for lunatics in London and I have no doubt that a great reform has taken place.

The new Bedlam is a great awkward building, but magnificent, and with plenty of money and attendants and visiting may do well enough considering how matters have been heretofore."

Dr. Best was also examined: he was asked what the functions of the Governors had been; did they inspect the Asylum? Not regularly he replied. Being asked to define inspection he said the Governors walked round or nearly round or about the Asylum; they examined the beer and the bread; they had a repugnance to enter the rooms where the patients were confined. The physician, steward, apothecary and matron had the complete management and superintendence of every concern respecting the patients, without any inspection whatever of the Governors otherwise than that which had been mentioned. Dr. Best about this time vanished into space as in the Asylum report of the 19th of August, 1815, Dr. Wake is entered as the physician, a post he still held in 1839.

At the annual Court of Governors held on the 25th of August, Lord Fitzwilliam in the chair, the members present felt themselves justified at last in singing their own praises,

believing that after so many storms they had reached smooth waters. They resolved that in point of humane treatment of the patients and general order and cleanliness of the house, the York Asylum was scarcely excelled by any similar institution in the kingdom; contemplating the great improvements that had been made, they acknowledged their great obligations to Mr. Godfrey Higgins to whose zeal and perseverance the origin of these improvements was mainly to be ascribed, and they appointed a Committee, two of the members being Mr. Gray and Mr. Samuel Tuke to consider the question of additions to the buildings.

The past however was not to escape observation. In 1816 Mr. Nicoll published a complete collection of all the correspondence that had taken place regarding the York Asylum; in 1817 Sydney Smith drew attention to it in the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*, and the House of Commons obtained further particulars in regard to its condition. The names of Samuel Tuke, of Godfrey Higgins, of Jonathan Gray and of Mr. Nicoll should be remembered as those of men who conferred an inestimable benefit upon their fellows, and brought about a revolution in public opinion.

The correspondence that took place between Mr. Samuel Tuke and Mr. Higgins throughout the years 1813, 1814, and 1815, and from which I have made quotations shows how grave they felt the issues to be and how great the difficulties were that had to be overcome in bringing home to the public the abuses that prevailed. It was only inch by inch that the old gang of Governors who resented all interference or criticism were driven out of their stronghold. Luckily the four men I have mentioned above were equal to the task, high-minded, cautious, dogged typical Yorkshiremen, of whom we may well be proud and whose success may spur their descendants to similar efforts where they are needed.

The field of Godfrey Higgins' activity was a large one; his feet were set in a large room. He took a keen interest in politics, and was no doubt regarded by many of his contemporaries as a dangerous person. "The salaries of all persons from the King that sits on the throne to that of the old woman who sweeps the steps of the palace ought to be reduced." He was in favour of the abolition of the Irish Church, of flogging in the Army and Navy, of triennial parliaments, electoral reform and the ballot.

In November 1831, the political Union of Huddersfield was anxious to bring him into parliament for the West Riding and he replied saying he was too proud to seek: he must be sought; he would neither stoop to seek a vote in the dirty alleys of Leeds or York, or the gilded palaces of Wentworth or Harewood. The political Union of Halifax also asked him to stand for their borough, and his answer looks as if Cobbett had had some influence upon his style. The Corn Law and the Fund Law he declared were bastard brats of hell-twins: they had been born together, had lived together, and they must die and be damned together.¹

Mr. Higgins died on the 9th of August, 1833, æt 62. His obituary notice in the Annual Register speaks of his opinions both in religion and politics as levelling and destructive, but of his personal manners as mild and courteous.

Another of the protagonists in this drama, Mr. Jonathan Gray, deserves more than passing mention. His father, William, who died at the age of 94, in the year 1845, had taken an active part in the foundation of the Yorkshire Reform Association and exercised an important influence among his contemporaries owing to his high character and business capacity. Mr. Jonathan Gray, the grandfather of Mr. Edwin

¹ Address to the Electors of the West Riding by Godfrey Higgins, Esq.,
G. Smallfield, Hackney.

Gray, the present able Under Sheriff of Yorkshire, was born in 1779, was Under Sheriff during the great Yorkshire Contest of 1807, Solicitor to the See of York, and in 1819 projected and established the *Yorkshire Gazette* to which he contributed many articles; he was one of the most prominent and active citizens of York until his death in 1837. He was an effective speaker and writer.

An account he printed of a visit to the Netherlands and to the field of Waterloo in August, 1815, is graphic and entertaining. The service at Canterbury was slovenly performed, the sermon was indifferent, like an operation by a surgeon out of practice. At the hotel at Bruges the bagmen were of the coarser order, they might even have been from Saddleworth. The heights around Hougoumont are not so high as the situation of the Quaker's Retreat at York. The passage across the Channel was no child's play in the packet of those days. Drenched to the skin from head to foot when Mr. Gray arrived in eight hours at Dover from Calais, he found the Custom house shut, his luggage could not be landed, and five shillings were charged for each passenger being put on shore in a small boat, another charge being made for "expedition" at the end of twelve hours for the luggage. Mr. Gray also published accounts in the *York Chronicle* of visits to the Continent in 1818 and 1835. He saw the Duke of Wellington as he passed through Calais and the great man did not check his critical faculties. "The Duke" was about five feet seven inches high, had an enormous nose and appeared stiff as if he wore stays. Mr. Gray was ever loyal to his own city and county. York was his *jus et norma* for the purpose of all comparisons. The hills on the road to Amiens were like those between Tadcaster and Leeds. At Paris, linen would keep clean twice as long as at York; at Reims he was reminded of Walmgate; the approach to Cologne was like that to Hull from the Humber; the Red House at

Trèves was as old as the Manor House at York; Mayence was less stirring than York on a Sunday; the Jura resembled Hambleton or Garrowby; looking at Mont Blanc from Chamounix you were too near, it was like looking at York Minster from Dr. Simpson's. Travellers at this date, as a rule, filled their letters with extracts from guide books, but Mr. Gray's descriptions, illustrations and independence of thought stand out in pleasant contrast. He could get no animal food at Paris and starved on soup and eggs. The travellers met with great civility, save that the children occasionally called out "Goddam." Prices were everywhere very low—seven francs for supper, wine and rum, and beds for two—he gives us an instance. Americans were rare birds even in 1835. Their dialect he criticizes as quite indescribable.

Mr. Gray visited Charenton and also the asylums at Frankfort and Antwerp in 1818. The highest payment of patients at Charenton was £54 and the lowest £27. The number of patients was 430—280 men and 150 women; chains had not been used in any of the three lunatic establishments of Paris for 20 years. At Frankfort no chains were in use. At Antwerp "there were strong iron belts to go round the waist and iron handcuffs fastened to the belts; footcuffs also of leather attached to each other by iron chains."

CHAPTER VI.

"There is no class of Institutions with which men are less inclined to interfere than with those for the Insane."—SAMUEL TUKE.

For successive years the House of Commons collected overwhelming evidence showing the need of alteration of the laws regarding lunatics and asylums, and over and over again passed bills whose fate it was to be thrown out by the Lords. Twenty years after the passing of Mr. Wynn's Act only nine out of the 52 counties in England and Wales had taken advantage of their powers and opened asylums for their pauper patients.

One of the earliest counties to move was the West Riding. In April, 1815, Mr. Higgins wrote to Mr. Tuke that it was the unanimous wish of the Magistrates at the Quarter Sessions to accede to the proposal to build a place for their pauper lunatics, and that they had proceeded as far as it was in their power according to law; indeed Mr. Higgins believed a little further: there was but one opinion upon the subject.

"Our new asylum for 150 patients is to be built near Wakefield. We have found what I think a most admirable situation; the building will front the north on the brow of a hill by which means the Courts, &c. will be at the back of the buildings, and by being on the side of the hill falling to the south will have a fine view across the valley for many miles round. Dr. Crowther, of Wakefield, has offered to attend our new asylum gratis; this is a good example."

In November, 1818, the Wakefield Asylum was opened for 150 patients, and for many years it had the advantage of Mr. Higgins' supervision. Here Dr. Ellis first introduced labour among the lunatics, an experiment which was attended

with marked success, and was adopted in many other asylums at a later date.¹

Regular employment was insisted upon by Pinel as a "base fondamentale," following a precedent that had been set at Saragossa, where "les fondateurs ont voulu retrouver une sorte de contre poids aux égarements de l'esprit par l'attrait et le charme qu'inspire la culture des champs," and holding that insanity was nearly always incurable among the nobility who disdained manual labour. Out of 531 patients at Hanwell in 1836, 431 were constantly employed.

The course of the West Riding Asylum at Wakefield however did not always run quite smoothly. Dr. Crowther who was for seven years its physician, brought forward a strong indictment against the incapacity of the Magistrates and the Medical Directors, Dr. Ellis and Corselli. The asylum in the absence of the Director was left in the care of two young ladies: the director was absent from his duties for weeks together, sometimes travelling, sometimes hunting. He acted as apothecary, steward, surgeon and treasurer; the justices neither watched the directors, nor entrusted their responsibilities to local visitors. Out of 200 magistrates for the West Riding, only two were capable of performing the duties required, they never consulted the physicians of whom they were jealous and afraid, and hushed up facts which were to the detriment of the asylum; the domestic and moral management of the institution was grossly neglected. Such were some of the accusations brought by Dr. Crowther, who like all his contemporaries paid a high compliment to the Retreat at York, saying that it was morally better managed than any other in the British Empire. In 1834, he petitioned Parliament setting forth the reforms he considered vitally necessary, the chief being increased supervision and inspection.

¹ Tuke's Construction and Management of Hospitals for the insane, page 29.

It was only here and there that there was improvement, and we shall see from the report of the Metropolitan Lunacy Commissioners in 1844, how much remained to be done.

Writing in 1827, Sir Andrew Halliday said that St. Luke's was only fit to become a prison for confirmed idiots. The condition of the pauper lunatics in Middlesex was hideous, and a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to report upon them. In the following year, 1828, Lord Ashley supported the Lunatic Asylum Regulation Bill, which gave counties further powers to build asylums, and was carried.

As in all other fields progress was not commensurate with the sanguine hopes of philanthropists. There were few enlightened magistrates like Godfrey Higgins and his colleagues and accommodation was but slowly provided for the insane poor.

There was no trustworthy information for many years concerning the number of lunatics in the kingdom. In 1810, it was imagined that only one in 7300 of the population of England on the census of 1800 was insane. In 1820 the proportion was estimated at one in 2000, in 1828 at one in 1558, in 1829 at one in 769, taking the population at 12,700,000. In 1836, a return showed that there were 13,667 pauper lunatics and idiots within the parishes of England and Wales, or nearly one in each thousand of the population. Mr. Samuel Tuke commenting upon this return in 1841, and assuming that these lunatics reported to be chargeable to their parishes were drawn from one-half of the whole population arrived at the conclusion that one out of every 500 of the inhabitants in England and Wales was insane, which is not far from being the proportion in the West Riding at the present day. On the first of January, 1901, the total number of Lunatics, private, pauper and criminal, in England and Wales was 107,944, or 33.27 in each 10,000 of the population.

Between 1816 and 1823, asylums were opened at Lancaster,

Stafford, Gloucester, and in Cornwall. In 1820, the Lincoln Lunatic Hospital was opened and here it was that Mr. Tuke's system attained a further development. Under Mr. Gardiner Hill and Dr. Charlesworth non-restraint was gradually adopted from the year 1821, and in 1831 the last vestiges of the old system died away. The example set at Lincoln was followed elsewhere, Dr. Conolly was born in 1794 and spent seven years at school at Hedon, but we must not claim that it was owing to the education he received in this county that any foundation of learning was supplied to his keen and active intellect, destined to play so important a part in the reform of the treatment of lunacy. According to his own account the schoolmaster who was the vicar of the parish never gave him any assistance in his studies except by blows on the head.

It was in 1839 that Dr. Conolly assumed the direction of Hanwell and his first act was to get rid, within four months, of the 600 appliances of mechanical restraint which were employed in the coercion of the 800 lunatics who were confined in the Asylum. During ten years no hand or foot by day or night was bound: his difficulties however were great, and he had, like his predecessors, to contend against abuse and misrepresentation.

During the greater part of the time we are considering there is little in the annals of the York Asylum that calls for comment. The days of pamphlets and newspaper correspondence were over. Efficiency had succeeded neglect, cleanliness dirt; the death-rate had greatly fallen; the visitors did their duty and the Governors could appeal to the public for their support "on their own personal observation."

In 1816 the weekly payment of patients in indigent circumstances was diminished. In 1817 the parish paupers of the city and ainsty and county of York were taken in at eight shillings a week. In 1819 the Committee observed that

contrary to the fears that had been entertained, the West Riding Asylum for pauper lunatics had tended very little to lessen the number of patients in the Institution. In 1830 there were 114, in 1821 130, in 1828 179 patients. Increases were made to the buildings, and in 1822 the income exceeded the expenditure by £600.

In 1827 the Committee complained that a prejudice against an institution of this nature seemed to exist in persons in higher life, and added that surely where no needless exposure took place and where a vigilant system of superintendence and inspection secured the ease, comfort and well-being of patients beyond what could be hoped in any private receptacle, the York Asylum might justly claim a preference.

In 1833, no Rivers Board being in existence, a large drain was cut to the River Foss to remove the Asylum sewage which had given rise to numerous complaints. There were still vacancies for opulent patients who did not sufficiently take advantage of the Institution.

In 1838 apathy and indifference seem again to have become conspicuous. The visitors did not visit and the attendance at the quarterly meeting was so meagre that no Court could be formed. "It was not to be concealed but ought to be stated most openly that a deserted house could not flourish." It was in 1839 that the Committee first made a trial of the effects of field labour, having learnt that such a practice was in vogue and successful elsewhere.

CHAPTER VII.

*The Doomsday Book of all that concerns Institutions for the Insane
in 1844.*—D. H. TUKE.

The report of the Commissioners who sat in 1843 and 1844 is a magnum opus and gives us a comprehensive sketch of the condition of the lunatics at that period. The treatment of the lunatic from the beginning of his disease to his final discharge from the Asylum, the benefit he derived from medical treatment, the management of workhouses and of all the various asylums, their resources and arrangements, their abuses and defects, the Magistrates' reports, the frequency and efficiency of their visits were all points which engaged their attention and on which we have definite information for the first time.

The Commissioners visited 166 lunatic asylums which they divided into five classes: County asylums, of which there were only 17 paid for wholly out of County rates, established under Mr. Wynn's Act; secondly, County asylums united with Subscription asylums of which there were 11; two military and naval hospitals; 99 public hospitals or other charitable institutions into which category the York Lunatic Asylum fell, and lastly 37 houses licensed by the Metropolitan Commissioners, a class which included the licensed parts of four workhouses. These together with the Hospital of Bethlehem constituted all the asylums in England and Wales in 1843 which were expressly recognised by law.

The total number of lunatics and idiots chargeable to unions and parishes was estimated to be 16,821 out of a population of 16,480,082, while the total number of the insane was over 20,000.

In the York Asylum there were 157 patients of whom 52 were paupers, and it is mentioned by the Commissioners as

one of those hospitals where the patients were kindly and judiciously treated, and, as far as their circumstances would permit, comfortable.

In the County asylums the system pursued was that of dispensing with mechanical restraint in every case unless either the cure or the security of the patient or others was considered to render it necessary. Very different, however, was the condition of many of the houses visited. The licensed part of the House of Industry at Kingsland, near Shrewsbury, contained 80 to 90 lunatics who were nearly all fastened to their beds at night by chains to their wrists. At West Auckland, five men were restrained by leg-locks and two were wearing in addition iron handcuffs and fetters from the wrist to the ankle; they were all tranquil. One woman was leg-locked by day and chained to her bed at night. Chains were fastened to the floors in many places and to many of the bedsteads. At Wreckhenton, near Gateshead, and Kingsdown House, near Bath, chains were in use. Plympton, in Devonshire, was a villainous place. One woman was lying in a hole in the middle of the airing court in a strait waistcoat, without covering to her head or anything to shelter her from the broiling sun; 21 patients were chained to their beds at night. "Sickening" and "shocking" are the terms applied in the report to the condition of the cells and some of their occupants.

The Commissioners stated that in every public and private asylum in the Kingdom which was well managed, bodily restraint was not permitted except in extreme cases and under the express sanction of a competent superintendent. Of the Retreat at York they spoke in high praise: the patients were tranquil, cheerful and clean, and apparently enjoying every comfort of which they were capable. At their second visit no one was under mechanical restraint and there had been no one so restrained for nine months.

Half a century had gone by since the first reformers had begun their work and gradually it was bearing fruit. But the subject was still a new one little understood in many quarters, and it is obvious that Lord Ashley and his colleagues were desirous of using as far as they could the materials at hand. They acknowledged the debt due to the Justices in whose hands was not only the management of the County Asylums, but also the disposal of all the pauper lunatics in their respective counties. The report, however, teems with instances of their laches. In some cases they paid hardly one visit in the year; one licensed house had not been visited for two years and a half. They expressed approval of houses which the Commissioners declared to be entirely unfit. They clung to their authority, and were impatient of criticism. The Chairmen of the Court of Quarter Sessions at Derby and of the County of Durham, took no notice of the Commissioners's representations, and repeated remonstrances produced little or no result in many cases. The justices paid no attention to the state of mind of the lunatic in reference to his fitness for liberation, to the provision of employment, to the character of the medical reports, to the quantity and quality of the food, the rates of payment and the attention bestowed upon them by their parish officers. "Much indeed remained to be done in order to render many of the existing asylums proper or sufficient receptacles for the insane."

Malversation of funds, improper discharge of patients still insane, inadequate accommodation and attendance, (in the Batty Workhouse there were nine insane females under the care of one feeble woman over 90 years of age) the need for independent visitors, were all points insisted upon by the Commissioners.

Badly as England was equipped with fitting accommodation for its lunatics Wales was in a far worse plight. With 1177 pauper lunatics the Principality had but one house licensed for

36 patients besides the asylum at Haverfordwest, which was in a disgraceful condition. No less than 1010 were boarded with their friends or elsewhere, with the result that might have been expected.

The Dean of St. Asaph speaks of having seen one secured in a dark and loathsome shed lying extended upon straw, as the space did not admit of his standing erect, in indescribable filth; of a second fettered and manacled, basking in the public street; a third was led about the streets and to church in the restraint of a strait waistcoat; a fourth was chained like a wild beast in an outhouse for 15 years. Many, as in earlier times, rambled about the country, a danger to the public. The state of the Welsh lunatic at the time of the report was piteous, nor in 1851 and 1853 had much improvement taken place. Scotland was no better, and as late as 1857 the condition of the insane was a disgrace and a scandal to the authorities concerned.

The Commissioners drew up 25 suggestions in their report for the amendment of the law, wise and temperate in their scope which formed the foundation of the bills that were brought in the following year, and became law on the 4th and 8th of August. "They have been well called" says Dr. Hack Tuke,¹ "the Magna Charta of the liberties of the insane."

The Commissioners recommended that the provision for the insane poor should be compulsory, that the number of patients in any asylum to be erected hereafter should not exceed 250, that in populous counties separate provision should be made for chronic cases, that all pauper lunatics confined elsewhere than in asylums should be periodically visited, and that periodical reports should be made upon their condition; that no person certifying as to a patient's insanity should sign an order for his confinement; that every county and public asylum or hospital should have a resident medical officer, and all asylums

¹ Tuke's History of the Insane, page 188.

be subject to official visitation; that a full statement be published annually by every county asylum of all receipts and disbursements of its property, sources and amount of income, and the application of the same.

To us now these suggestions seem very simple, but they constituted a revolution in the administration of the Asylums, and thousands have reason to bless the result of Lord Ashley's unwearied efforts. 1845 marks the establishment of a permanent lunacy commission, and the beginning of the Code of Lunacy Law under which we work at the present day.¹

¹ Tuke's History of the Insane, page 451.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SECOND CAPTURE.

"Fas est et ab hoste doceri."

Early in the year 1861, public attention was again called to the York Lunatic Asylum, where the second capture was to take place. The Lord Mayor of York made an application to the Governors of the Asylum to receive the pauper lunatics of the city owing to the inability of the North and East Riding Pauper Lunatic Asylum to accommodate them beyond March, 1862, and on February 5th, a meeting was held at the York Lunatic Asylum to consider the request.

The case on behalf of York was argued with skill by Mr. George Leeman, the Lord Mayor, who contended that the object of the Institution, shown in its rules, its petitions and other documents was to provide for the "relief of lunatic parish paupers and other lunatics in indigent and distressed circumstances, and for the admission of only a limited number of patients in easy circumstances, with a view to assist in the maintenance of the poorest classes." Lupton's Fund, he pointed out, originated in a donation by the executor of Mr. Thomas Lupton, in 1789, to be appropriated solely for the maintenance of lunatic parish paupers and other indigent lunatics within the city, county and Ainsty of York. Why should York be put to expense of building an asylum as long as there was room enough in the Bootham Hospital without damage to the objects of the founders?

The Governors who were 150 in number in 1815, had dwindled down to scarcely 50, and in favour of the Lord Mayor's application, Lord Zetland, Mr. Roundell of Gledstone, Mr. Gaskell of Lupset and the Mayor of Doncaster had written

letters. On the other hand, Mr. Watson declared that it was impossible for the institution to receive the number of paupers from the city with its present extent of accommodation. In 1844 the pauper lunatics had been removed, and for what reason? The five patients in the first class paid £758 a year, the profit from which was appropriated towards the maintenance of more indigent patients, who being above the class of parish paupers would otherwise be thrown upon the support of their poor relatives. The city had 26 paupers to maintain, a number which might be largely increased, whereas there was not room in the asylum for more than 13 or 14 beside their present number.

Mr. Holtby contended that the admission of the paupers would be an advantage. There were 140 patients in the hospital, and it was arranged to receive 170.

Mr. Ware declared that in Mr. Lupton's will there was no mention of pauper lunatics, and the admission of the city lunatics would introduce a divided authority. Since 1844, the rule had prevailed that they were not objects of this charity.

Ultimately the motion of the Lord Mayor "that having regard to the original design of the institution and of the fund called 'Lupton's Fund,' and also to the practice in pursuance thereof, which has been continued since the year 1778 to a very recent period, this Court is prepared to entertain the proposal of the Council of the City of York for the reception of the pauper city lunatics into this establishment, on terms to be agreed between the Governors and the Council, and that a deputation of three Governors be now appointed to meet three members of the Finance Committee of the Council to discuss such terms and report thereon to the next Court," was put to the vote, and 14 Governors voted for the motion and six against.¹

¹ Yorkshire Gazette, Saturday, February 9th, 1861.

The deputation of these three governors did not report until the middle of June, when a court was again held at the Asylum. The report was to the effect that no agreement had been come to between the Governors and the Finance Committee of the York Council, as the latter held that the principle of admission of paupers had already been conceded by the governors, which the latter denied. "Accordingly, the present quarterly court is made special for the purpose of receiving this report and determining what steps shall be taken." The Lord Mayor complained of the action of the deputation; the meeting in February had settled the principle of admission, and the details alone required settlement.

In 1841, 78 patients received benefits from Lupton's Fund, in 1860 36 only: although the fund increased the number of its recipients diminished, and the money had gone into the general funds of the institution towards the maintenance of the more affluent patients.

In the course of 20 years £20,164 had been spent out of the funds of the Institution in land and improvements and alterations of the building. He did not quarrel with the policy, but surely it was not unreasonable to ask that the small number of city paupers should be accommodated on fair terms. The Lord Mayor hoped that the decision arrived at in February would not be reversed, and he moved the confirmation of the motion carried at that meeting.

In the discussion which followed it was on the one side argued that the hospital was a pauper lunatic asylum, and that the intention of the founders, and of Lupton's Fund was to provide an institution for paupers, while on the other it was pointed out that the opinion of the Lunacy Commissioners was strongly against such a course, that if paupers were received the Governors would be departing from the real objects of the trust and this they had no right to do. There was a difference

between 'insane poor' and paupers; the recipients of Lupton's Fund were poor and medium patients: the asylum was a county and not a city institution, there were 90 patients in the asylum reduced from a respectable position in life to indigence paying 13s. a week and under, and association with paupers would increase their malady.

There were other considerations besides saving the City rates: if the richer patients were removed the indigent poor whom they supported would have to be removed. Why should the policy arrived at 17 years before by which the paupers had been removed, be abandoned and a new departure sanctioned?

The Lord Mayor modified his motion and proposed that the deputation appointed on the 5th of February be instructed to meet a deputation of the City Council, to see if there were any terms upon which the city pauper lunatics could be admitted into the Asylum, and report to the annual meeting in July. This was unanimously carried.¹

Little did the unsuspecting Governors know what would be their position at the annual meeting in July: if they had ever heard of the capture of their asylum in 1815 they had now forgotten it. They might have pressed and recorded their views in June but in July it was too late. The Lord Mayor had overreached them.

Shortly before the Chair was taken, on July 10th, a letter was received from the Yorkshire Bank by Mr. Ware, the treasurer, containing donations of £20 each from the following twelve members of the York City Council: Aldermen Evers, J. Meek, junr., Hollon, Wood, Anderson, and Watkinson, and Councillors Dove, Wetherley, Colburn, Craven, Turner, and Wade, who, as new Governors, became entitled to vote at the meeting.

The first business of the meeting was to receive the report

¹ Yorkshire Gazette, June 22nd, 1861.

of the deputation appointed to meet the Committee of the City Council. At last they had formulated their views, belated as they were. The resolution submitted was "that in the opinion of this Court it is inexpedient to enter into a contract for the reception of the whole of the pauper lunatics of the City of York." Mr. Swann in moving this resolution rehearsed the arguments against the admission of the paupers, laying stress on the opinion of the Lunacy Commissioners who had said shortly and distinctly that it was most undesirable to admit the parish paupers, as it would be entirely destroying the character and usefulness of the Institution, and have a tendency to drive away the wealthy patients. The ratepayers of York were not competent judges in the matter.

The Lord Mayor, who knew he was now master of the situation, deprecated the notion that York sought to gain its end by compulsion; he had an easy task before him in showing the vacillation of the Governors, their sympathy with his original proposal proved by a majority of 14 to six at their meeting in February, and as to his coming to the meeting with his friends to carry out his views he appealed to the precedent of 1815, and also to the fact that the same course had been adopted at the last meeting to enable Mr. W. E. Duncombe to take the Chair.

One fifth of the patients in the Asylum belonged neither to the City nor the County of York. York had taken an interest in the Asylum, had subscribed to it, and had a right to a voice in its management. It had cost £60,000 or £70,000 and the ratepaying people wished to have the benefit of the building and establishment.

As for the opinion of the Lunacy Commissioners these very gentlemen had prepared the Act of Parliament enabling the subscribers to a lunatic asylum to enter into agreements with the councils of cities and magistrates of counties for the

reception of pauper lunatics. The unwillingness to enter into a contract with York on the ground that such a course would be prejudicial to the rest of the county, the Lord Mayor, fortified by his big battalions, characterised as fudge and bosh. York must not be put to the expense of erecting a private asylum so long as there was room enough in this without damage to the other objects of the founders.

Mr. Hincks, Mr. Gaskell, the Mayor of Doncaster, Lord Zetland and Mr. Roundell, had expressed their approval of the admission of the York paupers, and he begged to move as an amendment to Mr. Swann's resolution that "this Court having regard to the object for which the institution was established, and the practice of receiving and maintaining pauper lunatics for a period 70 years . . . is of opinion that the City of York has removed every objection which can be reasonably entertained to the application to receive their pauper lunatics; this court therefore resolves that in pursuance of the statute 16 and 17, Vict. c. 97, and of 18 and 19 Vict. c. 105, an agreement be entered into for the reception of the city pauper lunatics, and that a committee be now appointed of seven governors to take all necessary steps to carry out such an agreement, and that in the meantime it be an instruction to the quarterly committee to receive the York pauper lunatics as and when vacancies occur."

An important point was raised at this juncture by Mr. Ware, the treasurer, but ignored, who said that under the act 16 and 17 Vict. c. 97, it might be necessary in any contract for the reception of the lunatic paupers that all the subscribers should be concurring parties. Section 4 spoke of the major part of the subscribers as sufficient for making the contract therein contemplated (but not intended to be adopted by the meeting). Section 42 required the approval of the subscribers to the contract referred to therein, which as he apprehended might

mean all the subscribers.

On the voting taking place the amendment was supported by the Lord Mayor, the Hon. and Rev. Stephen Lawley, Messrs. Husband, Walker, Pearson, Charlton, Thompson, Wilberforce, Richardson, R. Ellis, T. Ellis, Cooper, Williams, Thomas, Hodgson, Day, Bellerby, Gibson, the Town Clerk and the Lord Mayor's 12 stalwart henchmen, a total of 31. Against the amendment there voted Messrs. Swann, Agar, Mason, Hobson, Ware, Watson, Swann, junior, W. Clough, W. Proctor, Bellhouse, the Rev. J. H. Phillips, Rev. E. H. Brooksbank, the Rev. Mr. Brooksbank, junior, Messrs. Jones, Peart, S.W. North, Mr. Alderman Richardson, and Mr. Councillor Richardson; total, 18.

The "coup de main" was a complete success, and the asylum was captured again. Precedents there seemed to be no lack of for the invaders, as Mr. Swann admitted during the debate that he and a number of other governors had qualified to remedy a great abuse.¹

At the quarterly meeting in September, the committee reported that it had been agreed that the York City paupers should be received at the weekly sum of 12/3 a head for the term of five years, subject to notice of revision by either party at the end of two years. An agreement had been prepared accordingly, approved of by the Commissioners in Lunacy and by the Secretary of State for the Home Department. The committee recommended that additions to the asylum should be made to accommodate 15 men and 15 women with their attendants, at a cost of £1700.

4/8 out of the 12/3 was settled as the amount to be paid in respect of the building accommodation of the city paupers, leaving 7/7 as the cost of maintenance to be paid by the Guardians; the charge in 1778, being 8/-; in 1814, 9/-, which

¹ Yorkshire Gazette, July 13th, 1861.

included everything, while in 1832, there were 62 patients for whom 6/- per head was paid. An amendment to postpone the erection of the new buildings was negatived and the report of the committee was received and adopted.—(*Yorkshire Gazette*, September 21st, 1861).

CHAPTER IX.

"Whereas thou hatest to be reformed."

For a certain time the much vexed question of the admission of the York city paupers slept, and the Governors of the Asylum must have thought that it was settled, at least, for their lives. On March 15th, however, of the year 1881, at the annual meeting it again cropped up in consequence of the two reports which had been made by the Lunacy Commissioners at their periodic visitations of the asylum of February 7th and July 26th, 1880.

The original agreement in 1861, was approved of for a period of five years, and there had been no renewal. A fresh agreement was drawn up by which the payment of twelve shillings and threepence was increased to fourteen shillings and was forwarded to the Lunacy Commissioners and was submitted by them to the Secretary of State.

The Commissioners though they approved as we have seen in 1861 of a similar agreement, had by this time changed their minds and were disposed to compel the city authorities to erect for themselves a separate lunatic asylum or to withdraw the paupers and place them in the North Riding Asylum, and so allow the York Asylum to be used exclusively for private patients. On the 5th of February, 1879, the Home Secretary's approval was sought, but in the following year, Mr. Cross gave only a limited approval for the term of one year to allow the Council to provide for themselves an asylum as suggested by the Commissioners.

A change of ministry took place and in February, 1881, a memorial was sent to Sir Wm. Harcourt, setting forth the facts of the case, with the result that the Secretary of State assented to an arrangement for the maintenance of the York city paupers for the remainder of the period of five years from February.

The Secretary of State disregarded the very strong expression of opinion by the Commissioners, Messrs. Bagot and Nairne, dated July 26th, 1880. — "There is not," they said "we understand, any existing statutory contract for the pauper patients who are resident here and who are chargeable to the city of York. We are informed that the Secretary of State has refused his sanction to a renewal of the contract which expired in May last. We cannot refrain from expressing the hope that this may lead to the entire withdrawal of pauper patients, who shall be provided for elsewhere, and the devotion of the entire resources of the hospital to the care and treatment of patients of the private class whose circumstances will not admit of the payment of more than moderate charges."

On the 8th of March Mr. Phillips and Mr. Williams and other Commissioners returned to the charge. "In the wards of this hospital are now 114 private and 53 pauper patients, and they are associated to a considerable extent with each other at meals and otherwise. The paupers are all chargeable to York borough. Their presence here, we must say, is discreditable to the Town Council of York, and a standing reproach to the Governors of the charity. There was a time," added the commissioners, "not further back than 1861, when the Governors of this hospital plainly acknowledged it to be their duty to adhere closely to its charitable object and therefore deliberately refused to admit the paupers chargeable to the borough into the hospital on the express ground that such admission would be detrimental to the charity, but evil influences ultimately prevailed in their councils."

The constituents of discord were again in the crucible. and as we shall see the Commissioners in succeeding years stuck to their guns. But the chairman of the annual meeting in 1881 had no difficulty in showing the inconsistency of action or inaction that had characterised the authorities.

In 1861 Commissioners and Secretary of State had sanctioned the admission of the city paupers. Mr. Cross it was true opposed it, but Sir Wm. Harcourt knowing the views of the Lunacy Commissioners sanctioned the agreement submitted to him. The Chairman characterised the criticism of the Commissioners as insolent and unjustifiable, especially their assertion "that the patients were not, as in other hospitals and public asylums visited by the Committee or any members of the Committee in the wards, but this duty was delegated to ladies and gentlemen, who having no official responsibility visited and reported to the Committee."

The quarrel was a very pretty one, and the conduct of the Governors was impugned much as it had been 66 years before when Mr. Godfrey Higgins gave his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons.

In their report of May 4th, 1895, the Lunacy Commissioners wrote:—

"In this County Hospital are 79 private patients, and 68 paupers chargeable to York city. The presence of the latter in the wards still we regret to say cripples the County charity, but the County appears to be content therewith. There are 21 vacant beds, which doubtless could be filled if a different policy prevailed to that which has ruled since the Committee represented York, rather than the County which subscribed to create the Hospital."

A report of March 16th, 1897, says: "We find the Hospital in excellent order. We may be permitted to hope that the time is not far distant when it will cease to receive pauper patients, and that all its accommodation will be appropriated to and filled by paying patients. The galleries now devoted to the pauper patients are very well adapted for private cases, for whom moderate charges, say 15s. to 30s. per week can be paid; and of such there are now in the public asylums of the County

far more than enough to fill the room which would be vacated by the paupers."

On the 29th June, 1898, the Commissioners say: "The York Lunatic Hospital continues to receive the pauper lunatics of the city and remains the only registered Hospital which receives pauper patients. When visited during the year there were vacancies for 40 patients due probably in some measure to the reluctance of friends of private patients to utilise the benefits of an institution where private and pauper patients are in association, and partly to the high initial rates which are charged on admission."

In spite of the expression of such definite opinions by the Commissioners it was long before the County moved in the matter. At last however action was taken, and early in 1898 the Chairman of the West Riding County Council brought the subject before the General Asylums Committee and a Sub-Committee was appointed to enquire and report as to the York Lunatic Asylum at Bootham.

The Sub-Committee met on the 13th of April and resolved that the clerks do confer with the clerks of the Council of the two other Ridings with a view to collecting information and arranging for a joint private meeting, and that the attention of the Bootham Asylum Authorities be drawn to the reports made from time to time by the Commissioners, and that all possible information on the matter be obtained. Messrs. Dixon and Horne drew up accordingly a memorandum in which the following points were submitted for consideration. The contract entered into by the York City Council with the Governors of the York Asylum and renewed with the sanction of the Home Secretary would expire in February, 1899.

1. Though chargeable paupers were originally included as being within the objects of the Charity *it was on the express ground*, as declared by the advertisement, *that there was no*

particular provision by law for lunatics.

2. *The contract entered into between the Governors and the Corporation did not receive the sanction of the general body of subscribers.*

3. The Lunacy Act, 1890, does not sanction the reception of paupers into Lunatic Hospitals except under old agreements, it being contrary to the present policy of the Legislature to permit such reception.

4. York can therefore more properly fulfil its legal obligation to provide for its paupers by entering into an arrangement with one or other of the three adjacent Ridings, as was done long since in the case of other Boroughs.

5. The admission of the paupers is contrary to the general interests of the Institution, which is meant primarily for needy private patients, the law now having made other proper provision for pauper patients.

6. The County Councils of the three Ridings and other asylum authorities of the County, viz:—the old Quarter Sessions Boroughs of Leeds, Doncaster, and Pontefract, had the same right to ask for their paupers to be maintained in the Hospital as York had, but the Hospital is, of course, wholly inadequate for the general body of pauper lunatics, and under these circumstances it would seem to be only just that York should in like manner provide for the maintenance of its own paupers; evidently the past action of York has tended to prevent a considerable proportion of the private patients of the rest of the County from obtaining the benefits of the Institution.

7. The Home Secretary has now given his sanction to an agreement with the North Riding County Council for the reception of 75 York paupers in the new Asylum at Middlesborough for one year, and it would seem that now at all events the time has arrived for finally terminating the agreement between the York City Council and the Bootham Governors.

This can be done apparently without inconvenience or loss to the Corporation, and to the great advantage of the Institution and of a necessitous body of persons throughout Yorkshire.

8. If, notwithstanding the Agreement with the North Riding County Council, York City Council retained the power to send its paupers to the Bootham Hospital, it is probable that nothing effective would be done by the Governors in the direction of carrying out the policy indicated by the Commissioners in Lunacy; whereas if the paupers were removed and the initial charge reduced it would seem that the West Riding Asylums Committee might properly consider some arrangements for the transfer to Bootham of certain of the Paying Patients in the West Riding Asylums.

The Sub-Committee met again on the 28th of September, when the Clerks reported that they had written to the Clerks of the Council of the North and East Ridings as directed by the Committee, with the result that the East Riding County Council had instructed their Finance Committee to confer with the representatives of the West Riding County Council, but the North Riding County Council had taken no action in the matter, and it was resolved,

That it be recommended to the General Asylums Committee that the Sub-Committee be empowered to take such steps as they may deem advisable to secure the termination of the arrangements for receiving all or any of the Paupers of the City of York at the York Lunatic Hospital.

That the Sub-Committee be authorised to negotiate for the reception at the York Lunatic Hospital of such number of the Private Patients now in the Asylums as they think fit.

That the Sub-Committee meet the representatives of the East Riding County Council on Friday, the 7th day of October next, at York, and confer as to the whole question.

A meeting consequently was held at the Station Hotel,

York, on the 7th October, 1898, of representatives of East Riding County Council and West Riding Asylums Committee, there being present, C. G. Milnes Gaskell, Esq., in the chair, Sir Charles Legard, Bart., T. N. F. Bardwell, Esq., T. W. Calverley Rudston, Esq., when it was resolved that the Clerks do write to the Clerk to the Governors of the York Lunatic Hospital with a copy of the Memorandum now submitted, and urging upon them the final termination of the Agreement for the reception of the York paupers.

That the Clerks do also raise the question of the reception in the hospital of some considerable number of the private patients now in the West Riding Asylums; the initial charge being reduced to a sufficient extent. At the same time asking for adequate representation of the County Councils on the Governing Body, the existing regulations being revised with this object.

That the Clerks do also write to the Commissioners in Lunacy and the Home Secretary with a view to securing, if possible, that no renewal of the existing agreement with the York Corporation shall be granted.

That a friendly communication be addressed to the Corporation of the City of York seeking for their concurrence in the course proposed on behalf of the two Ridings.

That C. G. Milnes Gaskell, Esq. (Chairman of the West Riding County Council), and Sir Charles Legard, Bart., (Chairman of the East Riding County Council), be appointed a Deputation to approach the Home Secretary on the subject, should this course appear desirable.

On the 8th of October the Clerk to the Governors wrote to the Clerk of the Peace for the West Riding stating that they had decided on the preceding Tuesday not to renew the agreement with the York Corporation for a further period of 5 years, but to ask for a renewal for one year to enable the

Corporation to make satisfactory arrangements. Meanwhile 20 of the paupers were being transferred to the North Riding Asylum leaving only 40 at the York Asylum.

A correspondence took place between the clerks to the different bodies concerned, and the representatives of the two Ridings urged upon the Home Secretary the great importance of the final termination of the agreement for the reception of the paupers belonging to York city.

On the 6th of December a conference was held at the York Asylum, five of the governors, two representatives of the East Riding, and the Chairman of the West Riding County Council being present.

Mr. J. Bellerby, acting as Chairman of the committee of governors stated that he could assure the East and West Riding County Councils that the agreement for the maintenance at that institution of pauper city lunatics would not be renewed for a longer period than until the 6th of February 1900, as his committee was willing only to renew the contract for one year, from the 6th of February, 1899, when the term of five years expired in order to enable the York Corporation to make necessary arrangements.

On the 19th the Clerk to the Governors wrote that it was not considered that the admission of the York city paupers had been to the disadvantage of the institution, nor according to the opinion of Sir Roundell Palmer in contravention of the objects for which it was established.

Another year went by and on the 1st of December, 1899, the Clerk to the Governors wrote to say that they had been asked by the Corporation to renew the agreement for two years until the city asylum was built and became ready for occupation. The Corporation had found a site which had met with the Commissioners' approval and had entered into a contract to buy it for £12000. The North Riding refused to take the York

city paupers any longer, and the York Asylum was their only refuge till the new asylum was built. There was still vacant accommodation for poor paying patients at the York Asylum, but the committee was not desirous of accepting those that were incurable or very troublesome.

The report of the asylum issued in December, 1900, shows that the management is entirely in the hands of the citizens of York. Out of 41 governors 33 live in York, and with the exception of Lord Feversham there is no representative of the county at large whose subscriptions built the asylum in the first instance. On the lists of the visiting governors and the committee only one name appears which is not connected with the city of York. The report shows a high rate of recovery, viz: 55 per cent on admissions for 1900, the average rate for the past 20 years being 52·47.

On the 20th of November the number of patients was 137, of whom 49 were York paupers. More than half the patients paid less than half-a-guinea a week, the average weekly cost of maintenance being £1 9s. 5½d.

It is satisfactory to think that the long controversy extending over 120 years will at last be closed. We have seen that so early as 1787, Mr. Mason based his appeal for the admission of the paupers into the York Hospital on the ground that there was no state provision for them, no obligation on the part of the community to house and tend them.

That plea can no longer be advanced, and it seems only fitting that an institution belonging to the class of hospitals founded by the subscriptions of private persons should be put to the most useful purpose of which it is capable.

The plans for the new York City Asylum, with which the Lunacy Commissioners expressed themselves as generally satisfied, have recently been approved by the Secretary of State. The Asylum is designed to accommodate 362 patients with an ultimate increase to 486.

CHAPTER X.

*Honour aright the philosophic thought,
That they who by the trouble of the brain
Or heart, for usual life are overwrought,
Hither should come to discipline their pain.*

—LORD HOUGHTON.

I have endeavoured to show what far reaching effects resulted from the establishment of the Retreat and the enquiry into the condition of the York Asylum in 1813 and 1814, and how, indirectly, our system of county asylums sprang from these causes into being. The West Riding, as we have seen, was one of the first districts that provided accommodation for its lunatic paupers.

The Wakefield Asylum was opened in September, 1818, to accommodate 350 patients.¹ One enlargement, however, followed another; in 1871 the number of patients was 1,494, in 1889, 1,354, and on the 31st of December, 1901, 1,654.

The Wadsley Asylum was opened in August, 1872, and was originally built to hold from 750 to 800 patients. Here, also, successive alterations took place; on the 1st of January, 1889, there were 1,616 patients within the building, on the 31st of December, 1901, 1,620. In October, 1888, the third West Riding Asylum was opened at Menston. In January, 1889, it held 167 patients and on the 31st of December, 1901, 1,461.

The Clifton Asylum near York, for the North and East Ridings, was opened in April, 1847, and was built for 150 patients. Some of the York Asylum pauper patients were removed to the new asylum, and the Committee of the former expressed a hope in their annual report that their institution might, ere long, be relieved from the care of the greater part, if not the

¹ Return for House of Commons, 1877.

whole, of those paupers—30 in number—who remained in it.¹ There are now 689 patients. In 1865 the increase of patients made the provision of another asylum at Beverley necessary. This asylum was opened in 1871 and contains 459 inmates. The present Hull Borough Asylum at Willerby was opened in December, 1883, and contains 556 patients.

In 1889 the administration of pauper lunatic asylums was placed in the hands of the County Councils, and the steady increase of lunacy has placed a heavy responsibility upon the West Riding authorities.

During the last ten years the average annual increase in the asylums has been 122, and in the workhouses five, an aggregate annual increase of 127. The population of the geographical West Riding in 1891 was 2,445,033 and in 1901 2,750,329,² an increase of 305,296, which would justify a total increase of some 600 lunatics during the ten years. There has been, however, as we see an average annual disproportionate increase of more than 60 lunatics a year for whom provision has had to be made.

In July, 1898, the purchase of Storthes Hall and 629 acres of land for the purposes of an asylum was approved at the price of £43,250, with the object ultimately of providing accommodation for 2,062 patients. An acute hospital was begun at Wakefield in February, 1897, and finished in August, 1900, for 200 patients. An epileptic block, also in connection with the Wakefield Asylum, has been built to hold 102 patients, and cottage homes for 72 patients are in course of construction. The female cottage home is completed with accommodation for 36 patients.

On the 26th of April, 1899, Stanley Hall, near Wakefield, was secured with 48 acres for £9,200 to accommodate 70 imbecile boys and was opened in July, 1901.

¹ Past and Present Provision for the Insane Poor in Yorkshire page 14

² Census, 1901. Preliminary Abstract, pages 16 and 17.

In January, 1898, the erection of an asylum for private patients at Scalebor was authorised, the present total estimated cost of which is £125,163, to accommodate 210 patients. This asylum will be opened in the summer of the present year.

The total number of pauper lunatics in the West Riding in January, 1889, in the three asylums of Wakefield, Wadsley and Menston was 3,079. To-day the number is 4,735 and in workhouses 943, a total of 5,678; an increase of 173 over the previous year in asylums and 61 in workhouses. The number in the whole of Yorkshire including those in workhouses and with friends and elsewhere in 1889 was 5,879, to-day it is 7,967.

Speculation is useless upon the causes of the increase of lunacy, whether real or apparent. Growing confidence in the administration of the asylums, in the certainty of the welfare of the patients, the longer expectation of life, the increase of drinking, of dislike of burdens, all perhaps play their part.

It is curious that in a great industrial community like the West Riding the ratio of pauper lunatics should be so low in proportion to the population compared with the rest of England and Wales. In 1888 the ratio of pauper lunatics for the whole of Yorkshire was one in 560 of the population, in Wiltshire one in 271, and in England and Wales one in 384, and in Durham one in 668.¹ In 1891 in the West Riding there was a ratio of 18.96 per 10,000, in England and Wales one of 27.02, or a differential ratio of 8.06; in 1896 the differential ratio stood at 9.37, in 1899 at 9.65, while the statistics for 1901 show the West Riding ratio of pauper lunatics, including criminals but excluding private and non-County patients per 10,000, to be 20.68, and that of England and Wales to be 30.51 or a differential ratio of 9.83. Can the reason for this low proportion be, as has been suggested to me, that in the West Riding there

¹ Past and Present Provision for the Insane Poor of Yorkshire, page 43.

is less anxiety about the means of subsistence, more assured employment, and a more regular mode of life, or is it due to the existence of a more keen witted race in the North? Table XV, Appendix A to the 55th report of the Commissioners in Lunacy gives 7.1 as the ratio per 10,000 of the yearly average of agricultural labourers and farm servants in each group admitted into asylums in the five years 1895-1899 to the whole population in each group at the census of 1891, while the ratio of those engaged in the woollen and worsted manufacture and cognate trades for the same period is 5.7. It would, however, ill become me with my equipment to trench upon such a field as is suggested by these considerations. The falsification of so many early prophecies may well make us cautious in our inferences and generalisations.

May we reasonably hope that we have reached the highest point in the present ratio of lunatics to the population, and that a gradual decline may be anticipated? Some years ago Dr. Bevan Lewis expressed the opinion that "there is a large borderland class who are practically insane." This must remain the recruiting ground of the asylums, and the area can be restricted only by the improvement of the physique and the morale of our fellow citizens. Drunkenness, anxiety, insanitary environment, hereditary taints have much to answer for, and many years must elapse before these conditions cease to be factors in the inducement of mental disease. We have, however, much to congratulate ourselves upon. Slowly, very slowly, a great reproach has been taken away from us. The York Asylum of 1813 has gone for ever; the Huddersfield workhouse and the Montrose asylum of 1857 are things of the past. Ireland can no longer supply such cases as were tabulated in the report of the Commissioners of 1878, and it is only now and then that such evidence as was given in *Regina v. Hutton* shows that abuses may still exist. Lunatics live

now in the light of day, and enjoy luxuries which are unattainable by the average middle class household.

The cost per bed in the construction of an asylum is yearly on the increase. The average cost per bed of the 420 inmates of the Wakefield asylum in 1844 was calculated at £111, at Hanwell £160, at Lancaster £170, at Chester £184 and £292 on the first cost of erection in 1829. Menston, with accommodation for 1570 patients, gives a cost per bed of £284, while Scalebor will cost £596 per bed for the accommodation of 210 private patients.

There is little hope, I fear, of a reduction in these figures though careful classification may do something. The cost of building has increased at least 25 per cent. during the last ten years, while the work done has not improved in quality. Sanitation is not a cheap luxury; the expert of to-day tears to pieces the plans and devices of his predecessor of yesterday, if indeed he does not rend the recommendations and suggestions of his own contemporaries. Buildings grow apace; "while in the last 40 years the asylum population has nearly quadrupled, the insane inmates of workhouses have increased but little and those in private dwellings scarcely at all."¹

The Lunacy Commissioners have since 1856 constantly deprecated the intolerable burden placed upon the ratepayers by the erection of such expensive buildings as our present County and Borough asylums, and hold that the authorities should exercise greater control, and "while securing adequate comfort and brightness and cheerfulness of aspect, excise that which is unnecessary, unsuitable or redundant, a process in which they will have our hearty support."

This expression of opinion is, it must be admitted, somewhat at variance with the widely existing impression that much of

¹ Fifty-fifth Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy, page 8.

the large expenditure incurred by asylum authorities is due to the recommendations and requirements of the Commissioners.

Dr. Hack Take in his observations on Menston remarked that it would have been wise to avoid anything in the way of costly embellishment calculated to prejudice the mind of the ratepayer on entering the building. We must be thankful that roc's eggs are not required for the decoration of the dormitories with a view to stimulate the interest of the insane in natural history. Personally I cannot think that lapagerias and camellias exercise an influence on the mind that primulas and geraniums are without.

These however are slight blots, if blots they be, in a great and beneficent undertaking, and the public has the satisfaction of knowing that nowhere does a higher sense of duty and devotion or a higher range of ability prevail than among the superintendents of our asylums, and that the treatment of the patients themselves by the officials and attendants who are engaged in a service so full of responsibility and of danger leaves nothing to be desired.

Larger opportunities for the study and observation of mental disease, especially in its incipient stages, as is contemplated in the Royal Edinburgh Infirmary, the education of the general practitioner through separate hospitals devoted to the scientific investigation of diseases of the brain, and greater facilities for clinical study the future will probably bring in its train; but when we look back across the past century, full as it has been of generous reforms, those who are interested in the treatment of the insane may claim that in no other field has greater progress been effected, and noble men left a more enduring mark.

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VINDICATION
OF
MR. HIGGINS,
FROM
THE CHARGES OF CORRECTOR;
INCLUDING
A Sketch of recent Transactions
AT THE
YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

ADDRESSED TO EARL FITZWILLIAM,
BY A NEW GOVERNOR.

York:

PRINTED BY AND FOR WM. HARGROVE AND CO., HERALD-OFFICE;
AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS IN THE CITY AND COUNTY.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

1814.

ALBION

MR. HIGGINS

THE TOWN OF ALBION

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YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM

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BY A NEW SYSTEM

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A LETTER

TO THE

Right Hon. Earl FITZWILLIAM,
&c. &c.



MY LORD,

AS it was to your Lordship Mr. Higgins dedicated his Pamphlet, on the recent events in the York Lunatic Asylum—as you are one of the oldest Governors of that institution—and as you have, at a late meeting, evinced a most warm regard for its interests, I do not scruple, on the present occasion to address you.

A person signing himself Corrector, has attempted to answer Mr. Higgins, and in so doing has vilified both that gentleman and the cause in which he is engaged—this virulent attack has not drawn a reply—and in omitting to notice a work, at once weak and intemperate, Mr. Higgins has consulted his own dignity. Yet, that the errors of Corrector should not be detected—the futility of his arguments exposed, is a question of a different nature. Where, in

pretended transcripts, the material words are changed *—where the sense of a passage is wantonly or wilfully perverted—where a fact is distorted to give colour to a charge—the casual reader who proceeds straight forwards, troubling himself with no reference or collation, must inevitably be misled—as the majority of readers are both casual and careless, even Corrector may have made an impression unfavourable to the character of Mr. Higgins—and that vindication

* For examples see p. 6.—the censure in Martha Kidd's case is professed to be given in the words of the Committee, but the language of the Committee is altered, the force of the censure gone. Mr. Higgins complains that no servant was discharged, or called before the Governors, and individually reprov'd—p. 6: this is quite misrepresented. Mr. Higgins states, that in the Patients' entry-book there is a systematic falsification—that the man who has been destroyed by violence, is said simply to have "died"—and that he who has escaped, is said to be "removed." That the entries were thus, is confessed—and notwithstanding the many escapes and at least *several* violent deaths, there is no instance of an entry corresponding with the fact. How does Corrector meet this *general* charge? by producing a solitary entrance in a distinct book respecting the violent death of a person, in the ordinary entrance-book said to have "died." Mr. Higgins has never denied that when the servants could vindicate themselves from suspicion in a case made notorious by a Coroner's inquest, that they would so do—he said the entry respecting Thirkill was like all the entries on similar occasions, deceptive—and it was so.

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which he himself justly disdains, may be allowable or necessary in another.

It is proper to state, my Lord, that this address is equally without the assent and knowledge of the gentleman principally concerned.

That the old Governors of the Asylum have not been the invariable objects of my praise, is a fact that will neither disconcert nor offend your Lordship. Public institutions, like that now in discussion, must necessarily be conducted in their common course, by neighbouring Governors—occasional superintendence is all the more distant Governor can bestow—and in that your Lordship has never been deficient. The extent of the superintendence will vary with the apparent necessity of the case—however the necessity may here have existed of more than a formal routine of attention, that necessity was unseen and unknown—the true state of the case once laid open, a great portion of the Governors became the steady friends of reform and of the institution.

I confess, my Lord, trivial as this address must appear, it has a view beyond its obvious and immediate object. I trust it may tend to show how institutions of high name and established character, institutions connected with persons every way eminent and excellent, may yet be deplorably misgoverned—presenting the exterior of order and decorum—all within may be worthless and hollow—I am not, my Lord, making poli-

tical allusions—In matters of state, acquiescing confidence on the one part is well balanced by vigilant opposition on the other—I advert to those numerous establishments, and endowments—half public and half private in their nature—hospitals, schools, infirmaries and asylums, at once the honor and the disgrace of the nation.

I will now, my Lord, proceed to the charges of Corrector, the first of which relates to transactions anterior to and on the 2d of December, 1813.

In the month of October, 1813, Mr. Higgins was applied to, as a magistrate, by Sarah Vicars, for an order of relief. Her husband, a pauper, of Fishlake, near Doncaster, had recently returned home from the York Lunatic Asylum; Mr. Higgins examined the Overseer of Fishlake, and Sarah Vicars on oath, and received from Mr. C. Maples, surgeon, a certificate of the state in which Vicars appeared, the day after he reached his own house. Mr. Higgins deemed it proper to lay this evidence, with an introductory statement, before the public, and this was done very shortly prior to the December Quarterly Meeting of the Asylum Governors. To that meeting Mr. Higgins transmitted various documents respecting Vicars' case, and he personally attended at it. This conduct, on the part of Mr. Higgins, constitutes the first charge—it is said to be extraordinary and contradictory—extraordinary, as referring to the public, a case proper for the sole

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and exclusive attention of the Governors—contradictory, as involving an application to those very Governors whose authority was thus contemned.

At an early period of the Asylum, dissensions arose—on the one part, Mr. Mason, Dr. Burgh, and others, complained of abuse, and demanded investigation—on the other, Dr. Hunter, supported by the great body of Governors, declared all was well, and refused all inquiry—the contest continued many years, I grieve to say, with mutual complaints and mutual acrimony—it terminated we are informed, in 1795.* On which ever side the merits lay, one thing is clear—with an irritated and vigilant minority close at hand—in the interior of the house much disorder could scarce be expected to prevail. The contest closed—all consideration for the state of the unhappy lunatics, all superintendent care of the institution, appears to have been at an end—since 1794, no visitors had been appointed—at the quarterly meetings, four or five Governors, with difficulty collected, summed up the items of a tradesman's bill, contracted with the butcher for the ensuing three months, ordered a wall to be pulled down, or a door to be blocked up—wished each other a good morning—and retired. At the annual meetings little more occurred—whether the institution was in debt or in credit—

* Corrector, p. 4.

how many patients had been admitted, and how many discharged, were the usual limits of inquiry.

I do not charge this conduct to hardness or apathy on the part of the Governors—they did nothing, because they believed there was nothing to be done—the institution had attained the last of those stages through which human institutions are commonly found to pass—in the commencement there is energy—to energy confidence succeeds—to confidence abuse—the opinions and feelings of the Governors were in the second stage, the institution itself on the very close of the last—for sooner or later, from abuse reform will spring. A more compact or extended concatenation of confidence has rarely been known—the Governors had confidence in the Physician—the Physician had confidence in the inferior officers—the officers in the keepers—the keepers in the patients themselves; who were hence rarely troubled with either attention or restraint.*

What Mason, Burgh, and Withers, themselves Governors, had attempted in vain, Mr. Higgins, a stranger, had no hope to effect—and he appealed, as well to the public as to the Asylum court—all past experience showed the necessity of this double reference—and two pretty strong

* I by no means charge Dr. Best with medical neglect—he has stated his attendance at the Asylum, and such statement appears satisfactory.

principles of human nature—Habit and Pride—decisively pointed out the same course—it was the *habit* of the Governors to think all was right—and in fact they had seen nothing which was wrong—the passage to the Committee-room was well swept—a cheerful fire blazed in the chimney—the table was covered with a decent green cloth—the apothecary bowed—the matron courtesied—the head keeper obsequiously held the door in his hand—and an under keeper attended with humble reverence, as often as the bell called him into the Governors' presence—"What can we reason but from what we know." Whatever was seen was excellent, whatever was unseen must be correct.

The opinion which habit had fixed, pride could naturally retain firm in its position. Every man can observe the disorder in his neighbour's house—but who will, even to himself allow, that there is disorder *in his own*? We all comment on the discharge of public duty by others—which of us will bear that comment in return?

It was no turbulence of disposition which prompted Mr. Higgins' Appeal to the public—it was not the suspiciousness of a distrustful temper—it was the sagacity of an acute and intelligent mind. The Governors met, took the "statement" into consideration, examined the servants on oath, and—*calling for no other evidence—making no personal inquiry into the actual*

situation of the house or of the patients—eulogised them, and censured the accuser!

Is not this decisive? what short of an appeal to the public, an appeal which the public has answered, by delegating 50 new Governors to represent it, could have reformed, or preserved from ruin, an institution thus governed?

It has been said in apology, that Mr. Higgins' evidence was on paper—as the phrase is—cut and dried—the servants were examined on oath, *vivâ voce*—the distinction is important—the best evidence was *not* produced by Mr. Higgins—but ought it not to have been called for by the Governors? they could not convict on Mr. Higgins' papers—but they could have called before them those persons whose testimony the papers comprised—where suspicion of disorder was once raised, the investigation ought to have been complete—can it be said, that what to all others was *proof*, to the body of Governors was not even ground of *suspicion*? A few days after this—*when the institution had got into other hands—witnesses were* * sent for, guilt *was* proved—the

* But not by the Governors *as such*. One gentleman exultingly proclaimed the want of a fund to defray contingent expenses, a clear bar to inquiry—this sentiment seemed to prevail, and the new Governors then, for the first time appearing, did not think it advisable to make any motion on the subject—funds however were soon forthcoming. When pretexts like this, for avoiding inquiry, are eagerly seized on—can there exist a real “in-

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eulogised servants were discharged—and the existing system was overthrown. *Did then the Governors, on the 2d of December, examine on oath “such witnesses as were competent to give testimony”—and which of the two is entitled to the approbation of the public—the body of 26 Governors, or Mr. Higgins, “the disappointed accuser?”*—the conduct of Mr. Higgins has already been publicly thanked, and I am very sorry, that to vindicate him from the charges of Corrector I am thus compelled to censure his opponents.

Whilst I cannot but say that I think the conduct of the Governors on the 2d of December eminently wrong, let me not be understood too far to extend my censure—the eyes of many were very speedily opened, and several have most cordially and efficiently united in the great purpose of reformation—on one high character; whose name has so often and so honourably appeared in the Asylum records, too great encomiums cannot be passed—his unbroken and unwearied attention to business, which seemed to know no end—the calmness and urbanity with which he moved, amid contending turbulence—the gentleness yet decision of his rule—the intuitive promptness with

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tention” of reform? On the contrary, does not this pretext alone evince the necessity of making the public a party, of enforcing a new spirit through the medium of new Governors?

which he saw, and the perspicuity with which he declared from the chair, what was wisest and best to be done—want not my praise, for they have already received the praises of all. I cannot omit referring to another of the *old Governors*, whose conduct as a member of the Committee merits great approbation—I allude to Mr. Alderman Wilson—once satisfied that abuses did exist, he most cordially and ably assisted in their rectification.

That prejudice *might* in possibility be created by an ex-parte statement, no one will object, who considers the urgency of the call for such statement—but on whose minds was it that prejudice could prove injurious? On the minds of the Governors certainly—for they alone were to decide—had a hundred “*statements*” been published—on which side might *their* prejudices be expected to predominate—on which *did* they predominate? the *unanimous vote* will answer this query. However he appealed to the public, it was before the Governors only that Mr. Higgins could accuse, or the question be tried—and Mr. Higgins wisely thought that the Governors of the Asylum, like all other Governors, might then best be trusted, when their conduct was most narrowly watched.

The public will now decide, how far the proceedings of Mr. Higgins have on this point been—to use the flowing harmony of Corrector—*extraordinary and contradictory*.

The cases, my Lord, referred to a Committee

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of inquiry, next call my attention. I shall briefly state their character, and concentrate to one point, the observations they may suggest. The first cases considered, were those of Kidd and Arundel—these persons were both parish paupers, removed from the Asylum to the Workhouse at Pontefract—they both remained in a state of derangement, but neither exhibited symptoms of violence. The facts respecting Arundel were not very decisive—some faint smell, possibly attributable to personal neglect was discovered on his arrival at Pontefract—and he exhibited a dread of being returned to the Asylum—there were perfectly sufficient grounds for inquiry, but not for censure. Mr. Higgins therefore exhibited inquiry, without much expecting conviction*—further evidence, accounting for this man's terror of the Asylum, might have appeared—but in fact it did not. The case of Martha Kidd was widely different—a more horrid picture of filth and misery could not be represented—a picture calling up the strongest emotions of pity and of disgust—but the emphatic words of Margaret Beckwith, who described with the same energy she had felt the state of this wretched object, can alone do justice to the case—and feelings more honourable, more truly excellent,

* It can scarce be said Mr. Higgins did institute inquiry respecting Arundel—his name was sent to Mr. Higgins conjoined in several documents with that of Martha Kidd, and hence both came before the public.

than those of Margaret Beckwith, the humble mistress of a parish workhouse, it is the lot of few to witness.—“She” (Martha Kidd) “was poorly in herself—very dirty—with vermin in her hair and on her carcase”—on being asked, if she appeared to have been washed that day, her answer was “liker say not washed for weeks—her legs may-be had not been washed for years—and when I came to pull off her stockings they were scaly with dirt—her toe nails hung over one another, and when I took a knife she screamed sore—she were not like a christian—I shed tears over her to see such a ragged creature—she had not been dealt with as a christian—it was an abomination for a poor creature to be used as she was here.”—This case, one gentleman has sneered at, as merely that of “a lousy pauper,” and this case is considered by Corrector as proving the good usage of a whole class of patients.

Mr. Scorey was a clergyman educated at Queen’s College, Oxford, he died in the Asylum in 1812, aged 41 years—he was three several times in the Asylum, to which place Mrs. Scorey, his wife, found herself compelled to return him from the violence of his disease.—Mrs. Scorey stated it was her habit to visit her husband frequently—the treatment he received from the keepers was most offensive—they pushed him into the room where she was waiting—and fre-

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quently kicked him—on her once representing to a keeper that this was most indecent treatment of a clergyman—she was answered, the keeper “thought no more of him than of a dog.” Mr. Scorey was at this time fully sensible of the insults he received—he even called to his wife for protection—during the period of his second confinement, he was always in a dirty state—Mrs. Scorey brought towels and washed and cleaned him—this conduct was apparently deemed officious—and was probably the origin of the brutal violence here detailed—on one occasion, Mr. Scorey was kicked down stairs, and fell headlong—on another he was seized by the collar, and his neck squeezed till his eyes became bloodshot. A demeanour thus brutal, has not actually received the applause of Corrector—but it has wholly escaped his censure*.

* The cases both of Kidd and Scorey involved a charge of personal violence—the evidence as to Kidd arose from her own expressions to her husband and daughter, the marks of bruises on her body, and the fact of a dislocated hip. Whether the marks exhibited on her person were to be attributed either to ill usage or neglect might have been doubted, had she in other points been duly attended to. There seems but one alternative in the care of maniacs—occasional accidents, or perpetual restraint—no vigilance of superintendence can entirely suffice—as the Asylum is constructed, the keeper cannot be close at hand to all, and sudden bursts of fury will arise in those whose

On the close of Mr. Scorey's case, it was moved by a member of the Committee, [Mr. Nicoll, that the inquiry should there stop—enough, and more than enough, had been done

general state is placid. The system of perpetual restraint is in itself horrid—it is inconsistent with bodily health, with comfort, and with recovery—occasional accidents are comparatively insignificant. I will subjoin from the Report of the London Sub-Committee, instances of coercion in a celebrated receptacle for lunatics, Bethlem hospital.—The efforts were strenuous to withdraw this house from the operation of the bill last sessions brought into Parliament—honourable members, themselves governors, got up in their places—talked of the excellent regime of the place—its physicians, its surgeons, its officers—the great names connected with it as visitors and patrons—like other Governors, they believed all was wisest and best—to be sure, like other Governors, they only believed—they did not pretend to *know*. In the York Asylum, there is the strongest evidence of whatever evil gross neglect could produce—but Bethlem exhibits a cold premeditated system, in which coercion is to supersede the necessity of habitual care. Amid such offences of omission and commission in places of the highest name—can Parliament for a moment hesitate to interfere? The Report from which I make the following extracts, has not I believe been generally circulated—its date is June 18, 1814, and it is signed Edward Wakefield, Chairman.

“One of the side rooms contained about ten patients, each chained by one arm to the wall; the chain allowing them merely to stand up by the bench or form fixed to the wall, or to sit down on it. The nakedness of each patient

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to justify an entire revision of the affairs of the Asylum. The cases before the Committee could not be accounted for as accidental—they were not exceptions—they shewed the general tenor

was covered by a blanket gown only. The blanket gown is a blanket formed something like a dressing gown, with nothing to fasten it with in front; this constitutes the whole covering; the feet even were naked. One female in this side room, thus chained, was an object remarkably striking; she mentioned her maiden and married names, and stated that she had been a teacher of languages. The keepers described her as a very accomplished lady, mistress of many languages, and corroborated her account of herself. The Committee can hardly imagine a human being in a more degraded and brutalizing situation, than that in which they found this female, who held a coherent conversation with them, and was, of course, fully sensible of the mental and bodily condition of those wretched beings who, equally without clothing, were closely chained to the same wall with herself.

“The few minutes which the Committee passed with this lady, did not permit them to form a judgment of the degree of restraint to which she ought to be subject; but they unhesitatingly affirm, that her confinement with patients, in whom she was compelled to witness the most disgusting idiocy, and the most terrifying distraction of the human intellect, is injudicious and improper. She entreated to be allowed pencil and paper, for the purpose of amusing herself with drawing, which were given to her by one of the Committee.

“Many of these unfortunate women were locked up in their cells, naked, and chained on straw, with only one blanket for a covering.

and character of the house—it was not that personal attention had been on some one occasion omitted—that some one keeper had in a moment of anger forgot himself—what appeared, was the general conduct of the general body of the servants. In these observations the Committee unanimously acquiesced—but the Archbishop of York, decidedly agreeing with Mr. Nicoll in principle, suggested the propriety of proceeding with the cases on another ground—the Committee

“In the men’s wing, in the side room, six patients were chained close to the wall—five handcuffed, and one locked to the wall by the right arm, as well as by the right leg. He was very noisy: all were naked, except as to the blanket gown, or a small rug on the shoulders, and without shoes; one complained much of the coldness of his feet—one of the Committee felt them—they were very cold.

“The patients were in no way distinguished from each other as to disease, than as those who were not walking about, or chained in the side rooms, were lying stark naked upon straw, on their bedsteads, each in a separate cell, with a single blanket or rug, in which the patient usually lay huddled up, as if impatient of cold, and generally chained to the bed-place, in the shape of a trough. About one-fifth were in this state, or chained in the side rooms.

“It appeared, that the wet patients, and all who were inclined to lie a-bed, were allowed to do so, from being less troublesome in that state, than when up and dressed.

“In one of the cells, on the lower gallery, the Committee saw William Norris. He stated himself to be 55 years of age, and that he had been confined about 14 years;

stopping there, might be charged with partiality—it might be surmised the cases not gone into might tend to a vindication of the house—in this very satisfactory view, Mr. Nicoll and the rest of the Committee acquiesced, and the remaining cases were brought on. One of the Thirkills, when on the point of being dismissed cured, suddenly disappeared—he did not return to his friends at Sherburn, to whom it is known he was much attached—and he has never since been

that in consequence of attempting to defend himself from what he conceived the improper treatment of his keeper, he was fastened by a long chain, which passing through a partition, enabled the keeper, by going into the next cell, to draw him close to the wall at pleasure; that, to prevent this, Norris muffled the chain with straw, so as to hinder its passing through the wall; that he afterwards was confined in the manner the Committee *saw him*; namely, A stout iron ring was rivetted round his neck, from which a short chain passed to a ring, made to slide upwards or downwards on an upright massive iron bar, more than six feet high, inserted into the wall; round his body, a strong iron bar, about two inches wide, was rivetted; on each side the bar was a circular projection, which being fashioned to, and enclosing each of his arms, pinioned them close to his sides; this waist-bar was secured by two similar bars, which passing over his shoulders, were rivetted to the waist-bar, both before and behind; the iron ring round his neck was connected to the bars on his shoulders by a double link; from each of these bars another short chain passed to the ring on the upright iron bar. We

heard of—this event occurred about 11 years ago: The other Thirkill died by violence—the violence appears to have been accidental, and the Coroner's Jury have recorded an acquittal of the persons concerned in the superintendence of the house. What Mr. Higgins has observed on this case is most accurately correct—he complains of falsification of entries, of deceptive statements, intended to mislead the public respecting the deaths of patients, and their mode of leaving the

were informed he was enabled to raise himself, so as to stand against the wall, on the pillow of his bed, in the trough-bed in which he lay; but it is impossible for him to advance from the wall in which the iron bar is sodered, on account of the shortness of his chains, which were only twelve inches long. It is conceived equally out of his power to repose in any other position than on his back; the projections, which, on each side of the waist-bar, enclosed his arms, rendering it impossible for him to lay on his side, even if the length of the chains from his neck and shoulders would permit it. His right leg was chained to the trough, in which he had remained thus encaged and chained more than twelve years. To prove the unnecessary restraint inflicted on this unfortunate man, he informed the Committee, that he had for some years been able to withdraw his arms from the manacles which encompassed them. He then withdrew one of them: and observing an expression of surprise, he said, that when his arms were withdrawn, he was compelled to rest them on the edges of the circular projections, which was more painful than keeping them within. His position, we were in-

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Asylum—Mr. Higgins' charge is that when a patient has been destroyed by violence, he is simply said to have "died"—that when he has disappeared, he is merely said to be "removed"—and thus the entries are—the aim at deception is habitual—the attempt to delude the public by representations of security that had no existence, flagrant. These cases did not call on the Committee for censure, but they abundantly autho-

formed, was mostly laying down, and that, as it was inconvenient to raise himself and stand upright, he very seldom did so; that he read a great deal; books of all kinds; history, lives, or any thing that the keepers could get him; the newspaper every day; and conversed perfectly coherent on the passing topics and the events of the war, in which he felt particular interest. On each day that the Committee saw him, he discoursed coolly, and gave rational and deliberate answers to the different questions put to him. The whole of this statement relative to William Norris was confirmed by the keepers.

"In the public hospitals, it is customary to lock up the patients in their cells at dusk; this, in winter, is soon after four o'clock; and the cells are not opened until seven o'clock the next morning. The coldness of the season sends the patient into his bed, however he may incline to remain awake. To him, who is darkness and utter confusion within, this is no privation of comfort—no infliction of sorrow;—but surely fifteen hours dreary, solitary confinement, in a dark cell, must tend to retard the progress of the convalescent, and to deepen the gloom of the mind shattered by sorrow."

rized the observations Mr. Higgins has brought forwards.

The case of Mr. Wilson deserves the peculiar attention of your Lordship—here, if any where, the Committee erred—and that they erred, several members of it have since ingenuously confessed. Mr. Wilson was a respectable middle-aged man, placed in the Asylum by his wife. Mrs. Wilson, most affectionately attached to her husband, and of a timid and susceptible character, had considered several circumstances attending his situation with feelings of fixed horror—the condition of his linen, often bloody—appearance of personal violence exhibited on his body—occasional refusal of admittance—had worked up her mind to a state of high agitation—and her apprehensions indirectly reaching the Committee, had prepared it for a scene of deep barbarity—on the other hand, when the case came to be examined, little appeared beyond what seemed, under the circumstances, inevitable. Mr. Wilson had an unfortunate habit of offending his fellow patients—he trod on them—spit at any one near him, and hence was inevitably subject to occasional violence in return—the facts proved fell so far short of the opinions preconceived, that a perhaps too hasty decision of acquittal was the result—for Mr. Wilson's case did involve one point of most serious moment—for some time prior to his removal from the Asylum, his general

health had alarmingly failed. He became emaciated and feeble, and was apparently sinking into the grave—on his return home, his restoration to bodily health was obvious and rapid—the fact was, his habits called for night attendance—this had been promised, but the promise was not performed—it was observed in the Committee, that this was an omission scarcely to be reprehended in a public institution—with four keepers, was night attendance possible to 140 male patients?

It was not till the point of physicians' fees came to be discussed, that this case appeared in its true light—it was then seen, that of two guineas per week, paid by Mrs. Wilson, the physician received £1 8s.—the house 14s. That 14s. per week was inadequate to procure the addition of night attendance, was an admissible excuse—but was it a moment to be endured that such a distribution of payments should take place—that the physician should receive into his own pocket, what ought to have procured that attendance, which the very existence of a patient called for. Mr. Wilson's case then, when duly considered, is perhaps as obnoxious to censure, as any one yet alluded to.

On the 7th of January, 1814, the report of the Committee, on the above cases, was taken into consideration—the opinion of the Committee was adopted as that of the Court, *and* a Committee of general inquiry into the rules and management of the Asylum was appointed. With the decision

of this Court Mr. Higgins, on the 10th of January, declared himself perfectly satisfied—he adds “*that in consequence of the recent proceedings,*” he believes the patients are as well treated as circumstances will permit of. Mr. Higgins’ confidence was somewhat hastily adopted, and he had soon reason to withdraw it—that the publicity now connected with the conduct of the Asylum, should prove greatly and even immediately operative, was to be expected—that it should in any short period, and under the management of the old servants, prove a radical corrective, was beyond hope—even at this time, after an entire change of servants, and under the unremitting attention of visitors and of Committees, much remains to be done, and much will long remain.

On the 24th of March, Mr. Higgins discovered four cells, which he, with sufficient reason, denominates “secret”—in the recent visits of Governors, they had been, if not concealed, certainly not exhibited—and their state was such as might well sanction the suspicion of *designed omission*. Mr. Higgins’ description did not, it could not aggravate the state of these cells. In one cell a chain, concealed under the straw, was discovered, and this chain was fixed in a board obviously *new*. These facts gave rise to Mr. Higgins’ letter, and these facts, in the fullest manner, warranted that letter. The state of the cells—the repeated omissions to exhibit them—the reluct-

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ance with which they were at last shown—the chain—the newness of the board—all conspired to create the same impressions, and Mr. Higgins felt himself called on, publicly to retract the confidence he had so prematurely bestowed, and so openly declared.

Of Dr. Best's letter of the 2d of April following, I would willingly omit all mention—but Corrector forces it on me—suffice it to say, that in consequence of these two letters of March 24, and April 2, Mr. Higgins was publicly thanked, and Dr. Best publicly censured*—Are these the recollections that a wise defender would recal?

Mr. Higgins is charged with an erroneous reference to further cases, stated by him to have been in the hands of Mr. Nicoll. It is true, my Lord, as stated by Corrector, that Mr. Nicoll did, on one occasion, refer to some cases which he declared he had not evidence to support—either the evidence was that of hear-say, or it proceeded from the insane themselves, or in some other respect it was found insufficient—but it is equally true, that at the close of the examination, Mr. Nicoll had many other cases in his possession, with which he certainly would have come forwards, had not all further inquiry become superfluous.

* This censure was grounded on the indecorous expressions of Dr. Best's letter of April 2.

Mr. Higgins is charged with contradiction in at one time representing himself perfectly satisfied, and then again impugning the conduct of the Committee and the Governors. Mr. Higgins has, on no occasion that I am aware, approved the report of the Committee on the cases examined into—he professes to have been satisfied with the resolutions of the Court which sanctioned that report; but let it be remembered, that the principal resolution of that Court was, that a full inquiry into every species of abuse should be immediately instituted—the acquiescence of the Court, in the opinion of the Committee, was a very secondary concern—in fact little more than a form.

When the general report was presented on the 14th of April, Mr. Higgins did not approve it—and when he saw that months had passed over, and every old servant was still retained, he very naturally professed himself by no means satisfied with what had been done—there has, therefore, been no contradiction, no vacillation in the mind and feelings of Mr. Higgins—that he has been uniform in his decision is one thing, that he has been well warranted in it, is another; and I confess I think he has been somewhat hard both on the Committee and on the body of Governors. He says the Committee were “obliged” to attach blame in the cases of Kidd and Schorey. There was no compulsion—the Committee did it voluntarily, freely, unanimously—and if the terms in

which their censure was conveyed, appear to Mr. Higgins unbecomingly mild, let it be remembered, that a lighter censure agreed to by all, was of far more practical use than the severest reprehension confined to one party in the Committee—the censure, as it stood, was a sure harbinger of general inquiry—had it been the act of a party, to party feelings it had probably been attributed, and its efficiency had not unlikely been destroyed. The general report was like that on the cases—unanimous, and to unanimity surely some sacrifice is due—its professed purpose has been fully answered—a division once made, might have extended from the Committee to the Governors; it would certainly have retarded, and might have defeated the purposes of reform. As little has Mr. Higgins reason to complain of the retention of servants—before the meeting in August, no change in the superior departments of the establishment was possible—the rules forbid it—and it was deemed far the surest way to have one entire remove—the patients, in the mean-time, were little likely to suffer, as there were now Visitors vigilant in their duty, and Committees frequent in attendance. Whether Mr. Higgins' charge against the Governors is ill or well founded, his complaint is obviously misrepresented*; his expression is “It does not however appear, that any of the

* Corrector, p. 6.

persons, who have thus abused your confidence or betrayed their trust, have yet been dismissed from their situations, or even censured for their misconduct"—and thus the case stood—a *general vote*, not that "Martha Kidd is found not to have been kept so clean as she should have been," the punctuation professes a correct transcript—but that "in the case of Martha Kidd, a gross neglect of cleanliness and of attention to the person, is in full proof," had passed—but no servant had been called before the Governors and censured—the resolution was against the house, against the management, not against the individuals—and of this Mr. Higgins complains.

Mr. Higgins is accused of scurrilous and unjustifiable representations to the House of Lords*—and of a most atrocious and insulting letter to the Governors, in August last. I would not, my Lord, enter into a conflict of epithets with Corrector. I may yet observe—his own phraseology is tolerably appropriate to his own conduct. Mr. Higgins, understanding a petition was presented to the House of Lords, praying that the York Asylum might be exempt from the visitation of magistrates, appointed at the quarter sessions, transmitted a counter-petition—he was at first correctly informed on the subject of this petition—he now erroneously confesses himself to be in error—such petition *was* presented. What Beth-

* Corrector, p. 6.

lem and St. Luke's had asked in vain—what was refused to the excellently conducted institution at Nottingham—no other Asylum for Lunatics could hope to obtain—that at York could least of all pretend to be exempted. Mr. Higgins gives his petition to the public—it is *not* scurrilous, and it is well justified.

I cannot, my Lord, consider Mr. Higgins' letter of the 14th of August as either atrocious or insulting—its expressions are hasty—this Mr. Higgins allows—but its statements are just. Misapplication of funds is his first charge. Does this rest on "*conjecture**?" Is it not avowed, that from the most opulent patients only 14s. per week were paid to the house, that the physician retained whatever further sum their weekly payments might amount to? † Is it not avowed that this

* Corrector, p. 13.

† It has never been pretended that this distribution of the payments of the superior patients was either generally known or generally sanctioned. The vindication of the measure rests on two points—the long-continued practice—and the refusal of some one meeting of Governors to take the question of the physician's emoluments into consideration. But did even this meeting know what those emoluments were—or how derived? The refusal to inquire might be founded on various reasons—the smallness of the meeting—pressure of other business—entire ignorance of any deviation from the professed principles of the house—at any rate, the mere refusal to inquire into facts, cannot be

mode of distribution was unknown to the friends of patients, unknown to the Governors of the Asylum, unsanctioned by any existing rule—nay,

construed into a sanction of actual abuse—even if it could, is the tacit sanction of a small meeting, unpromulgated to the body of Governors at large, and grounded on no notice, to be opposed to the known rules and principles of the institution. I say *the known rules and principles*, and I prove it thus:—In 1800, the state of the Asylum was published—it is there said, that a few persons of better circumstances were admitted, in order that “the overflowings of *their* weekly payments should be applied in aid of those persons who were in narrow circumstances”—and the physician is allowed “to take from the friends of such patients the reasonable emoluments of his profession.” In 1813, a similar statement is given—and a similar principle held out—it is here said—“the expenses of the indigent are reduced by the payments of the more affluent patients”—and that the physician is authorized to receive from the friends of the more affluent patients, the reasonable emoluments of his profession. A resolution in the old order book, is evidently applicable to the principle alluded to—it says, the patients shall be classed according to their payments, at 8—10—12—14—16—18—and 20s. and upwards per week—the weekly payments to discharge board, &c. The “reasonable emolument” was obviously a distinct payment. I fear then the question of misapplication is brought to this point—for the late distribution between the physician and the house, a practice of many years may be pleaded—*against* it, the well-known and repeatedly published principle of the institution above stated, and the total absence of sanction from the Governors.

is it not known that the existing rule respecting the superior patients was, that the surplus of their payments should aid the lower patients, and that the physician should receive the reasonable emoluments of his profession? Is it not most obvious that the payment of 14s. per week was not adequate to the cost of the superior patients, and that consequently there was no surplus to the house, but a misapplication into another channel? Respecting the amount of misapplication, Mr. Higgins may be incorrect; but I should be extremely glad to see better proof of that incorrectness, than the surmises of an anonymous pamphlet. If Mr. Higgins is wrong, a decisive means of exposing his error is easily pointed out—*let Dr. Best state what his receipts have been.* Mr. Higgins proceeds on grounds, at least *probable*—they must be considered *true*, if this obvious detection of his error is withheld. Corrector is at any rate mistaken—three guineas per week is allowed by Dr. Best to have been in one case paid—in how many cases this has been the amount, and in how many it may have been exceeded, we have no information.

Mr. Higgins next states, that the lunatic poor have been neglected or abused. His third point is, that the offending servants have neither been censured nor discharged—he then alludes, in terms of warm and generous indignation, to the falsification of entries in the books of the Asylum,

and to the concealment of deaths in the reports of the house—to his phraseology objections may be taken, but his charges are true—entries were falsified—deaths were concealed—and both habitually.

This, my Lord, is not the place for discussing legal rights, yet I cannot suffer the sarcasms of **Corrector**, respecting the visitation of a magistrate, to pass unnoticed. Whether in or out of his own jurisdiction, I consider a magistrate authorized to inquire into the treatment of a lunatic pauper, received into any house, from a place within such magistrate's jurisdiction—if I am asked on what principle, I reply on an implied condition, attaching on the very act of reception. It may as well be asserted, that a parent has not a right to visit the house where his child is received, for education—such a power, equally necessary to the well-being of the pauper as the child, has the tacit assent of the schoolmaster in the one case, of the keeper in the other—the right, I allow, is to be discreetly exercised—but I assert that it exists.

When I met with the charge of “indelicate disclosures,” I must confess an alarm seized me—the expression was referable to but one case—that of some unfortunate female, injured in the Asylum—zeal had prevailed over discretion—her name, her rank, her family, had been promulgated to the world—such was my surmise—but it was in the second page of **Corrector's** pam-

phlet it arose. I did not yet know my author—at the conclusion, the subject is resumed *—"large bodies of men" had been collected together, for the discussion of a topic deeply concerning the public, and at a period of highest interest. The statement of such discussion in print is—*an indelicate disclosure*—passing over the finical coxcombry of the phrase, I deny the principle. The discussion for public purposes of public measures, by public men, are the right and property of the public—a close room or an open one—a select company or a miscellaneous—it is the subject and the persons that create the right. If Governors, incompetent to the task, assume a leading part—a wholesome memento will in future keep them where they ought to be—on their seats. If gentlemen are afraid to speak, because they do not know they are right—or ashamed, because they do know they are wrong—the next day's "libel" is a most wholesome medicament of their disease. Let every one shrinking from the indelicate disclosures of Corrector, lisp his pretty nothings in the security of the tea-table—or more manfully proclaim his thoughts—whilst the bottle circulated. The general Court or the special Committee is not his province—neither the prudent object of his wishes, nor the certain medium of his fame.

* Corrector, p. 12.

Corrector, my Lord, in conclusion, tells us, "that *if* the existing regulations of the institution had been attended to—and he knows there was an intention to bring them into activity," &c. &c.—all might have been well, without the new code. Two points are comprised in this sentence—a comparison of the two sets of laws—and a reference to intended reform by the old Governors. That the old code comprised a very respectable dead letter system of rules, I am by no means inclined to deny—because I know nothing respecting it, and never met with any one who did—save and except as far as extracts are therefrom made, in the report of the late Committee of Inquiry. The "intention" of renovated activity is new to the world—when and where was it conceived, by whom expressed? and to what did it extend? Was this "intention" evinced on the 2d of December, when the establishment was acquitted and the servants praised? On the 10th of December, when the most vehement—I had nearly said virulent—opposition to all inquiry was exhibited, and when all past possibility of error was as vehemently disclaimed. Unable to conjecture the time and place of such "intention"—I would ask Corrector, who were the persons intending? or on what the "intention" could be grounded—On existing evils acknowledged? none were acknowledged or known—On laws become obsolete from disuse?—as well their existence as their neg-

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I will here, my Lord, conclude this hasty and perhaps needless sketch—its haste has been great—and its use will be little—if, as I confess I augur—Corrector—self-destroyed, has already yielded to his fate.

I have the honor to be

Your LORDSHIPS most obedient Servant,

A NEW GOVERNOR.

* I am not quite satisfied that the past abuses of the Asylum should be referred to in vague and indefinite terms—*fraus latet in generalibus*—nor is it enough to say, that squalidity, filth, and rags, were in too many instances predominant—or that the means of occupation, amusement, or exercise, scarce existed—for that 100 patients might, in fine weather, be once a day driven for an hour into a small area, deserves none of these names—or that the cell was fitted to its wretched inhabitant—without light, without air—soaked in urine, and besmeared with ordure—to all this I would add a more detailed account†, and with that the kindness of a most estimable friend has furnished me.

† A short review of the evils which existed in the Asylum twelve months ago, will enable the public to judge of the necessity of reform, and how far those were likely to effect it who had so long suffered it to be wanted.

That the institution was not supported according to the principles of its founders, and that the laws *written* for its conduct, were, with few exceptions, violated in practice, is now universally admitted; but these are not the only charges against the Asylum.

The internal economy and management were bad, the number of assistants or keepers was altogether insufficient, and the accommodations were inadequate to the patients admitted, and in a most unsuitable state.

Avarice appears to have been the ruling passion in the house.

The public has frequently heard what the physician thought the reasonable emoluments of his profession. It appears that the housekeeper received a fee on the admission of superior patients, and declared, that she thought herself justified, no doubt by long usage, in charging to the institution what profit she pleased on the articles she was entrusted to purchase. The keepers acknowledge to have received £100 per annum as perquisites from the superior classes of patients; that they took the clothes of the patients, when *they* considered them to have been worn a sufficient time. The gardener also recently stated, that he derived a considerable income from the sale of vegetables, and from fees received on the burial of the patients.

The chief power and management of the house were vested in the steward, who resided at the lodge, which is at a considerable distance. The apothecary, who was resident, did not consider himself possessed of the authority to prevent the servants going out when they pleased, and the matron exercised a very partial and contested power. Amongst other things, she states, that "having found it impracticable to prevent the ingress and egress of the servants in the night, she has for *several years* ceased to lock the back-kitchen door, before she goes to bed." We find also, from the Committee's Report, that "though the rules provide, that no servant shall absent himself from the house, for more than one hour without leave, it appears, that they seldom or never ask leave, and that several of them are frequently out late at night at the same time."

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What must have been the state of the 200 unfortunate beings, who depended so entirely on the conscientious discharge of the most painful duties, by those servants, whose irregular and mercenary habits we have just exhibited?

It is also easy to be made appear, that the number of attendants was altogether inadequate. In the year 1813, the number of patients reported to be in the Asylum, was 199, of whom a considerable majority were men.—These persons were under the care of four male and three female keepers. If the whole time of these keepers had been devoted to this number of patients, and they had been equally divided under their care, the number would have been very deficient: but the case was far otherwise; one of the men keepers made and baked the bread; another, who had been a butcher, killed the pigs, and the women keepers assisted regularly at the wash tub. It must also be noticed, that the opulent patients had much more than their equal share of this attendance.

It will not be unfair to conclude, that two of the keepers, one male, and one female, would be chiefly employed in attending the patients of the highest class, which were stated to consist generally of about 17. The house business performed by the attendants, may be considered, as employing, at least, the time of one of them. We have then 182 patients under the care of four keepers, or more than 45 to each; of these 182 patients, there would, in all probability, be from ten to twelve of each sex, who would require extraordinary attendance, from their foul and offensive habits—each of these ten or twelve would afford ample employment for one person, to preserve them in a state of decency. It is impossible to show, making every allowance for the assistance frequently derived from patients, that this class could be properly attended to, without an absolute abandonment of the rest; nor could these receive more than a very small share of the attendance they required, if the worst class were as much neglected as possible. At present, with only 100 patients, of whom a very small number are of the opulent class, four male, and

three female attendants, find themselves fully employed in doing justice to their charge, without any interference of domestic services.

One specimen of the misery induced by the want of sufficient attendance, and of the indifference with which the feelings or comforts of the patients were considered by the attendants, shall be given. A Governor of the Asylum visiting the house, accompanied by the architect, between ten and eleven o'clock one morning, in the month of April last, 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.

We have now only to show, that the accommodations were unsuitable and inadequate. To do this, it might be sufficient to state, that 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. At the time of the fire, there were said to

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be about 80 patients in the building which was burnt. The remainder, more than 110, were of course, in the main building, in which, the present Committee find it very difficult to accommodate 85 patients, though the numerous and pressing applications for admissions have induced them to allot less space to each patient than under less urgent circumstances, they would have thought proper. Only a small proportion of the patients have, at present, a room to themselves, and, in many instances, one bed is occupied by two patients. Previously to the fire, 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 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 ele-

vation prevented their 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.

This enumeration of evils will, it is presumed, be sufficient to justify that indignation which has been felt by gentlemen of the County, no less than by the Citizens of York. Whether any means less strong than those which have been employed, and which have happily succeeded in producing reform, might have been effectual, is a question of probabilities, which it would be waste of time to discuss. He who is cured of a dangerous disorder, does not often call his physician to account for the use of unnecessary means; and, it will be sufficient for the public, sufficient for the friends of patients, and amply sufficient for every honest governor to know, that evils have existed, and that they are remedied.



THE
EVIDENCE
TAKEN BEFORE A
COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
RESPECTING THE
ASYLUM AT YORK ;
WITH
OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES,
AND A
LETTER TO THE COMMITTEE,
§c. §c. §c.

By GODFREY HIGGINS, Esq.

DONCASTER :

PRINTED AND SOLD BY W. SHEARDOWN, HIGH-STREET.
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HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN, PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON ;
AND TODD, YORK.

1816.

W. Sheardown, Printer, High-street, Doncaster.

No. I. Letter
II. Dr. B.
III. Mr. I.
IV. Extr
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VI. Lett
VII. Rep
VIII. Pro
IX. Lett
X. Enid
XI. Extr

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CONTENTS OF THE APPENDIX.

- No. I. *Letter from S. W. Nicoll, Esq.*
II. *Dr. Best's Defence.*
III. *Mr. Mandall's case.*
IV. *Extracts from the Town's Book at Louth.*
V. *Francis Moat's evidence respecting Vickers.*
VI. *Letter from Mr. Higgins to the Governors.*
VII. *Report of the state of the Asylum, 1815.*
VIII. *Proceedings of the Governors of the Asylum, August, 1815.*
IX. *Letter from Messrs. Graham and Gray.*
X. *Evidence relating to the bad bread.*
XI. *Extracts from several cases of abuse.*
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LATELY PUBLISHED,

A LETTER to Earl FITZWILLIAM, respecting the ABUSES
in the YORK ASYLUM;

By GODFREY HIGGINS, Esq.

To be had of Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster-row;
F. C. and J. Rivington, St. Paul's Church-yard, London; W. Sheardown, High-
street, Doncaster; and Todd, York.

CONTENTS OF THE APPENDIX.

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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,

Taken before the SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to consider of Provisions being made for the better Regulation of MADHOUSES in *England*.

Lunæ 1^o die Maii, 1815.

The Right Honourable GEORGE ROSE, in the Chair.

Godfrey Higgins, Esquire, called in, and examined.

WHERE do you live?—At Skellow Grange, near Doncaster, in Yorkshire.

You are a Governor of the York Asylum, and a Magistrate of the West-Riding of Yorkshire?—I am.

Have you any knowledge of the state and condition of the York Lunatic Asylum, and the method of treatment of the patients in that Asylum?—I have.

Have the goodness to state to the Committee, how you became possessed of that information?—In the year 1813, application was made to me to grant a warrant against a man who had assaulted a poor woman; upon inquiry I found the man to be insane, and ordered him to be sent to the Asylum, at York: sometime afterwards he returned, and I was informed he had been extremely ill used; (the name of the man was William Vickers;) in consequence of this, I published several letters and other documents, upon which various meetings of the Governors were held from time to time for the course of twelve months, until the 27th of August last; upon which day all the servants and officers of the house were dismissed, or their places declared vacant, except one. Not being perfectly satisfied with what was done, I thought it incumbent upon me to publish a letter to Lord Fitzwilliam, as Lord Lieutenant of that Riding; in which, to the best of my knowledge, I stated every thing that I knew relating to the Institution and to the abuses which had taken place in that house. The Appendix contains a report of the Committee appointed to investigate the abuses, and the new Rules and Regulations.

[*A Copy of this Pamphlet was laid upon the Table of the Committee.*]

In what condition did you find the Asylum when you visited it in the Spring Assize week of 1814?—Having suspicions in my mind that there were some parts of that Asylum which had not been seen, I went early in the morning, determined to examine

every place; after ordering a great number of doors to be opened, I came to one which was in a retired situation in the kitchen apartments, and which was almost hid by the opening of a door in the passage; I ordered this door to be opened; the keepers hesitated, and said, the apartment belonged to the women, and they had not the key; I ordered them to get the key, but it was said to be mislaid, and not to be found at the moment; upon this I grew angry, and told them, I insisted upon its being found, and that if they would not find it, I could find a key at the kitchen fire-side, namely, the poker; upon that the key was immediately brought. When the door was opened, I went into the passage, and I found four cells, I think, of about eight feet square, in a very horrid and filthy situation, the straw appeared to be almost saturated with urine and excrement; there was some bedding laid upon the straw in one cell, in the others only loose straw; a man (a keeper) was in the passage doing something, but what I do not know; the walls were daubed with excrement; the air holes, of which there were one in each cell, were partly filled with it; in one cell there were two pewter chamber-pots loose. I asked the keeper if these cells were inhabited by the patients? and was told they were at night. I then desired him to take me up stairs, and shew me the place of the women who came out of those cells that morning; I then went up stairs, and he shewed me into a room, which I caused him to measure, and the size of which he told me was twelve feet by seven feet ten inches, and in which there were thirteen women, who he told me had all come out of those cells that morning.

Were they pauper women?—I do not know; I was afraid that afterwards he should deny that, and therefore I went in and said to him, "Now, Sir, clap your hand upon the head of this woman," and I did so too; and I said, "Is this one of the very women that were in those cells last night," and he said she was; I became very sick, and could not remain longer in the room, I vomitted. In the course of an hour and a half after this, I procured Colonel Cooke, of Owston, and John Cooke, Esq. of Campsmount, to examine those cells; they had come to attend a special meeting which I had caused to be called that day at twelve o'clock; whilst I was standing at the door of the cells waiting for the key, a young woman ran past me, amongst the men servants, decently dressed; I asked who she was, and was told by Atkinson, that she was a female patient of respectable connections. At a special meeting of the Governors which I had caused to be called, I told them what I had seen, and I asked Atkinson the Apothecary, in their presence, if what I had said was not correctly true; and I told him, if he intended to deny

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any part of it, he must do it then; he bowed his assent, and acknowledged what I said was true. I then desired the Governors to come with me to see those cells; and then I discovered, for the first time, that the cells were unknown to the Governors; several of the committee, which consisted of fifteen, told me they had never seen them, that they had gone round the house with his Grace the Archbishop of York, that they had understood they were to see the whole house, and these cells had not been shewn to them. We went through the cells, and at that time they had been cleaned as much as they could in so short a space of time. I turned up the straw in one of them with my umbrella, and pointed out to the gentlemen the chain and handcuff which were then concealed beneath the straw, and which I then perceived had been fixed into a board newly put down in the floor. I afterwards inquired of one of the committee of five, who had been appointed to afford any temporary accommodations which they could for a moderate sum of money to the patients, if those cells had been shewn to that committee, and I was told they had not. Before I saw these cells, I had been repeatedly told by Atkinson the Apothecary, and the Keepers, that I had seen the whole house that was occupied by patients; I afterwards was told by a professional man, Mr. Pritchett, that he had heard Mr. Watson, the Architect, ask one of the Keepers what those places were; Mr. Watson at that time was looking out of the staircase window, and he heard the Keeper answer Mr. Watson, that they were cellars and other little offices: the day after my examination of these cells, I went again early in the morning to examine them, after I knew that the straw could have been used only one night; and I can positively say, from this examination, that the straw which I first found there, must have been in use a very considerable time. Early in the investigation which took place into this Institution, several gentlemen came forward to state that they had examined the house on purpose to form a judgment of it, but though several of them were present when I stated the case of these cells, they did not state that they had seen them. When Colonel Cooke, of Owston, was in one of the cells, he tried to make marks or letters in the excrement remaining on the floor after it had been cleaned, and fresh straw put into it, which he did without any difficulty, and which he will be ready to state to the committee if required. The day after I saw these cells, I went up into the apartments of the upper class of female patients, with one of the men Keepers as I should suppose, about thirty years of age, one of those who were dismissed in August; and I asked him, when at the door of the ward, if his key would not open those doors; I did not give him time to answer, but I seized the key from his hand, and with it opened the outer door of the

ward, and then went and opened the bed-room doors of the upper class of female patients, and locked them again; I then gave him his key again: Mr. Samuel Tuke, a Quaker, of York, was standing by and saw me.

Do you know of any unfit practices with respect to the female patients?—Yes; I have been informed they have been got with child; and I have now in my hand a copy of a warrant granted by Frederick L'Oste, of the county of Lincoln, to apprehend James Backhouse, the head keeper, who was charged with having got with child Elizabeth West, a female pauper, sent to this Asylum, by the Overseers of the Poor of the Township of Louth; the warrant appears to have been backed on the 17th of June, 1797, by R. Metcalfe. I am informed that he was taken by the authority of this warrant, to Louth, where Elizabeth West fathered the child upon him. Elizabeth West was admitted into the Asylum, August the 17th, 1796, was removed, May the 8th, 1797, and was delivered of a male child August the 19th, 1797; the Keeper, Backhouse, paid £30. to the Overseers of the Poor of the parish of Louth, for the maintenance of the bastard; he paid it in three instalments; it appears by the town books, that the Overseers of the Poor have made themselves debtors in these sums to the township; I am informed that Elizabeth West was a young woman of exceedingly good character before she went to the Asylum; and she is now a woman of exceedingly good character, and has been living some years in a respectable family. Sometime after this the head keeper retired from this house, upon which occasion a piece of plate was voted to him as a mark of approbation of his conduct during a service of twenty-six years; I have not the most distant suspicion, that any one of the Governors who voted for this piece of plate, had any knowledge whatever of this transaction between Backhouse and West, except the Physician Hunter.

In what line of life is Backhouse at present?—He now keeps a private Madhouse, in York.

Do you know of any case more recent, of the same nature?—Yes; the case of Dorothy Exilby, of Kirby Malzeard; she was admitted February 8th, 1801, she was discharged cured, Feb. 20th, 1802, delivered of a male child the 21st September, 1802; the father of this child is said to have been one of the patients. I have heard also, and believe from the respectable authority from which I received it, that a woman in a superior situation in life who was there as an insane patient, was got with child by some person within the house.

Do you know whether, amongst the women whom you found as inhabitants of the cells, you have described as having been

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concealed, there were persons of a better situation of life than pauper lunatics?—I think there were not at that time.

Have you reason to believe that women of that better situation of life, had ever been confined there?—I have not.

Do you know of any cases of cruelty or unnecessary severity having been exercised in that Asylum?—I conceive the case of William Vickers must have been a case both of cruelty and of very great neglect. When I examined him, which I did very soon after I was told he had returned from York, his body appeared to be bruised in many parts; I was informed he had a bad sore on his leg, and I refused to order the Overseer of the Poor to give him relief, until he had procured for my satisfaction the certificate of Mr. Maples, a Surgeon, of Thorne, (who attended the poor people of the parish,) as to his state of health; of which the following is a copy:—

“This is to certify, That I was sent for by Mr. Hopwood, of Thorning Hurst, on Thursday the 14th instant, to examine the state in which William Vickers, 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.*”

Upon that certificate being sent to me, I ordered him relief, and I began to make inquiries of his relations and friends, into all the circumstances which had taken place respecting him, and I have no doubt, that if the eight or nine disinterested witnesses had been examined by the Governors, this case would have been completely made out; several of the witnesses told me, from the appearance of his back when he first came from York, that he had been flogged; he repeatedly told them so when in the Asylum; and at one time, when one or two of the witnesses were present with him in the Asylum, a woman was brought from the other part of the Asylum, and she told them that she was flogged also. When I saw Vickers, the black marks remained very strong, but the marks of the whip lashes, which they described, had disappeared. Vickers, at the time I saw him, was in such a state of health, that he could not give an intelligent answer to any question whatever, although he walked about and ate his victuals heartily. Another case which I laid before the Governors, was that of the Rev. Mr. Skorey; he was

a clergyman, reduced to indigence I believe in consequence of his mental complaint; he had at times, and for considerable periods, intervals of reason; in those intervals, when he was perfectly capable of understanding every thing that was done to him, repeatedly in the presence of his wife, he was exposed to personal indignity; and on one occasion he was inhumanly kicked down stairs by the keepers, and told, in the presence of his wife, that he was looked upon no better than a dog; his person swarmed with vermin: and to complete this poor man's misery, the keepers insulted his wife with indecent ribaldry, in order to deter her from visiting him in his unfortunate situation; his wife occasionally visited him, to bring him such little comforts as she could procure by the labour of her hands, for she worked to support him during the time that he was in the Asylum; he had a gold watch, which was lost there, and which his wife could never recover.

How long ago was this case?—I should think not more than three years ago.

Do you know any thing of the cases of two persons of the name of Thirkell?—Yes.

Were they relations?—Yes.

Have the goodness to state to the Committee, what you know about them?—One of them a labouring man, was sent to the Asylum on the recommendation of Miss Place, of York; after some time he disappeared, and has never been heard of from that time to this.

In what way was his disappearance entered in the books?—He was entered "removed;" when Miss Place called to inquire after his state of health, as she told me, she asked Atkinson, the Apothecary, how he did, and Atkinson said, he was gone away well. I have asked the father of this young man, if he knew whether hand-bills were published, or any means taken to discover him; he said, he never heard of any, and he never could get a sight of a hand-bill.

Did Atkinson, or any one belonging to the Asylum, say, that hand-bills were issued offering a reward for his discovery?—Yes, the steward said so; and on the day when I discovered the concealed cells, I asked Mr. Surr, the steward, to produce to me the printer's bill for that quarter of the year in which the hand-bill must have been entered, if any had been printed by the printer of the Asylum, and he told me, after a long search, that he had lost the bill.

How long ago is this?—About two years ago. The other Thirkell was a relation of the former, and came from Sherburn, in Yorkshire, and was killed some time after he was in the Asylum, by another patient; his death was entered in the book

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of the Institution, where the accounts are kept of what becomes of the patients, under the word "died." Upon my examining Mr. Surr at the meeting in August, as to the mode in which the casualties were entered, he acknowledged that they were all entered in the same way; but in the case of Thirkell, a coroner's inquest did sit, and the verdict of the jury was entered in the order book, which was a book kept locked up for the use of the Governors. When a man of the name of Bardwell, alias Chappy, was killed a little after this, and who was endeavoured to be buried privately, and without a coroner's inquest, his death was also entered "died;" but the Rev. Mr. Graham having heard that he had been killed, would not bury him, but insisted upon a coroner's jury being summoned; and the verdict of the jury was, "that he had died by the violence of three other of the patients."

Have you any reason to doubt that the fact was as found by the coroner's jury?—Certainly not; I never meant to attach blame in the case of Thirkell, who was killed, and I only named him in my information to the Governors to clearly distinguish his case from that of the Thirkell who had disappeared, for at that time I did not know the christian names of the two.

Do you know whether any book or books are kept, so as to ascertain with accuracy the number of patients admitted, and how they are disposed of, whether by cure, or by death, or escapes, or in any other way?—There was a set of books regularly kept by the apothecary, and also another set by the steward, both of which purported to be a correct account of the admissions of the patients, and how they were disposed of, but I have reason to believe that those accounts were false, and that they were kept falsely on purpose. By the report of the committee of investigation, it appears that the patients admitted from the opening of the Institution up to the 1st of July, 1813, had been 2,560, and that the deaths during that period had been 365; but it appears that a publication of the state of the Asylum, signed by Mr. Atkinson, the Apothecary, was made in the York Herald, August, 1812, and another in August, 1813; which are as follow:—

"Extract from the York Herald, August, 1812.

Admitted from the first Estab-	Discharged cured	1,112
lishment, in the year 1777,	Ditto relieved.....	612
to June 30th, 1811	Ditto incurable	312
2 346	Died	210
Present year	Remain	195
99		
<hr/> 2,445		<hr/> 2,445

York Herald, August, 1813.

Admitted, to 1st July, 1812..2,445	Cured.....1,132
Ditto, from 1st July, 1812,	Relieved.....655
to 1st July, 1813 111	Incurable and relieved by
	their friends 348
	Died 221
	Remain, Men122
	Ditto, Women 77
	199
2,556	2,556

(Signed) Charles Atkinson."

In the last account the deaths within the year ending June, 1813, appear to be eleven; but I found upon examining the register of the Parish Church of Saint Olave's, that either eighteen or nineteen had been buried in that church-yard alone in that year, and the committee have ascertained, that twenty-four had really died in that year; it appears therefore, that thirteen were taken from the deaths and added to some other item, to make the sums agree; this would have the effect of disguising the mortality, and also of supporting the credit of the house in a two-fold manner, if added to the cures; and if reference was had to the Extract from the York Herald, of August 17th, 1811, I think, that, in that year will clearly appear to have taken place; the following are the two accounts published for 1811 and 1812:—

"Extract from the York Herald of August 17th, 1811.

Admitted from the 1st Establishment in 1771, to 1st July, 1810,2,254	Cured.....996
From the 1st July, 1810, to 1st July, 1811..... 92	Relieved.....592
	Incurable, and removed by
	their friends 294
	Died 292
	Remaining in the house, 106
	men; 66 women 172
	2,346
2,346	2,346

Extract from the York Herald of August 22, 1812.

Admitted from the 1st Establishment in 1771, to 1st July, 18112,346	Cured.....1,112
From the 1st July, 1811, to 1st July, 1812..... 99	Relieved.....616
	Incurable, and relieved by
	their friends.....312
	Died 210
	Remaining in the house, 116
	men; 79 women 195
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The Accounts kept by the apothecary and the steward were Debtor and Creditor Accounts; and as it appears, from a comparison of the Report of the Committee and the extracts from the York Herald, that the deaths of 144 patients had actually been concealed, they must have been concealed from design, because the account is a debtor and creditor account, and if the account was false in one place, it must have been false in more places than one, or else the sum totals could not have agreed; therefore as this arises upon debtor and creditor accounts kept by two men, and they both agreed, and both were false, it must necessarily be a falsification by quadruple entry, not double entry only. I asked the apothecary, who made out these accounts; and he told me, that he did, but that it was his practice to send them to the physician and to the steward for examination, previous to their publication.

Do you know what has become of the books of the Institution?—Yes; the committee for the management of the Institution, about last Christmas, sent to the steward, to desire him to send them his books of accounts. He told them, he would not do it, for the books were his, and he would not give them up. They reported this at a quarterly court, upon which Mr. Brook the treasurer, was sent to demand them; when he told Mr. Brook, that, in a moment of irritation, he had burned them all except a single quarterly account, namely, that for the last quarter of 1814, which he delivered up. A few days afterwards, the steward produced a set of quarterly books for the last sixteen years. The books produced were those occasionally inspected by the Governors, and they purported to contain an account of the sums received for the patients. There was, however, another set of books which have not been produced, in which the steward entered his actual receipts; and it was by the comparison of a single quarterly account belonging to this set, which accidentally came into the hands of the Committee of Enquiry, with a quarterly book of corresponding date belonging to the former set, that the physician's participation in the weekly payments of certain classes of patients was discovered. I have, I think, therefore reason to believe that the burning of the books, if it actually took place, was not a sudden sally of passion, but a deliberate act of selection; that information was given to me by Mr. Jonathan Gray, of York, one of the governors, who was present at the time.

Do you know any thing respecting the mortality within the Asylum?—Yes; I believe the average number of patients during Dr. Hunter's life, for 32 years, ending in 1808, was 84; and that the deaths upon the 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:—In 1809, 156; in 1810, 168; in 1811, 168; in 1812, 186; in 1813, 200; in 1814, 173. The average number of patients was 175. The deaths on an average have been 25 in a year, or a seventh of the whole. During the year ending the 1st July, 1814, the number of patients was as follows:—1813: July, 200; August, 198; September, 196; October, 199; November, 188; December, 186. —1814: January, 173; February, 160; March, 160; April, 159; May, 139; June, 121. The average number for the year, is 173. The deaths were 33, or nearly one-fifth of the whole. There was no death took place from the 14th July, 1814, up to the 3d of February, 1815, nearly seven months. In the former year, exclusive of the four that were said to be burned, there was a mortality of one-sixth of the whole patients, 29 out of 173, whereas during Dr. Hunter's life they did not exceed one-tenth of the whole. The same proportion, videlicet, that of 1813-14, would allow 17 deaths during the year ending in July, 1815.

Do you know how many patients have died during the last year, in the Asylum?—When I inquired last, about a month ago, I was told there had been three.

Do you know the mortality that took place in the Institution called the Retreat, at York, by which the Committee can be made acquainted with the ratio of deaths in the number of patients?—A greater mortality appears to me to have taken place in the Asylum, than in the Retreat *cæteris paribus*. I beg leave to observe, that the calculation ought always to be made on the average number of patients in the house, and not upon the number admitted in the year. I believe the deaths in the Asylum, in the first thirty-six years, were 365; the average number of patients in the Asylum, about 98; the deaths in the Retreat, in sixteen years, were 26; the average number of patients in the Retreat, 46. I have been informed, that of 82 old cases, stated to be incurable, admitted into the Retreat, 16 were discharged cured. At Saint Luke's only 18 out of 323 incurables were reported cured; and from Bethlem Hospital but one out of 78 was discharged cured, and that one was returned to the Hospital.

How long is it since the Asylum was burnt:—A few days after the court of Governors at York had ordered a general investigation, by a committee, into the rules and management of the Institution (which was about last January twelve-month) the building was found to be on fire.

Did any investigation take place how it came to be on fire?—Yes; a general meeting took place immediately on the spur of the occasion, and a committee of five gentlemen was appointed;

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and they made a report a few weeks afterwards, that they believed four patients had been burnt.

Do you believe more than four people were burnt?—I can hardly state a decisive opinion upon that subject; only it appears by the report of the committee, that several patients had been admitted into the house, of whom no account whatever can be given.

You mean by that, that they are not now existing in the house, and they can produce no proof of their being discharged?—Yes; viz. Margaret Smith, admitted February 17th, 1787; Catherine St. Clair, admitted October 16th, 1790; D. Myson, admitted April 20th, 1796; D. Thackwray, admitted July 20th, 1796; and Mrs. Parke, admitted August 19th, 1797.

At what time of the day or night did the fire break out?—At about eight o'clock in the evening.

Do you know any thing of the use of chains in the house?—Yes, I do; but I never thought or stated it as my opinion, that the use of a chain would have been a charge against the Institution, if it had not been stated by Dr. Best and all the keepers, that to their knowledge there were no chains in the house, and that they were unnecessary.

Did you find any chains in the house?—Yes, I did; I found a chain in one of the cells that was concealed, which certainly did not appear to have been recently used; and I should never have made an observation upon that chain, if it had not, as I have said before, been repeatedly stated by the officers and servants of the Institution, that to their knowledge there was not such a thing in the house.

Did you find, in any other part of the house, chains?—Yes, I did; on the day when all the servants and officers of the house were dismissed, I went to a closet at the side of a fire in one of the cells, and demanded the key of it; we could find all the keys in the house but that, and the carpenter was obliged to open it. In that closet I found an instrument, which I believe is called by Shakespear a gyve; it is a strong iron bar about two feet long, with a shackle at each end, intended to keep open the legs of a patient; it is fastened to an iron belt which goes round the body of the patient, and has two chains to it, and handcuffs for the hands of the patient. I took it directly to the weighing scales, and that part of it which was there, for the chain was wanting, weighed 24lbs. I desired it to be taken care of, in order that the Committee of the House of Commons might see it, if they should be so disposed. It appeared rusty, and not to have been lately used. The keeper could give no account of when it came into the house.

Did you find any where about the house any chains in such a state as to induce you to think the use of them had

been recently required in the house?—No; nor do I believe they had.

Have any new laws been made?—Yes.

Bearing what date?—The new laws were passed last August.

Dr. Best, the Physician, has resigned, has he not?—He has.

So that at this moment there is not an officer belonging to the Institution, who was there during the time the abuses you have been detailing existed?—Yes; there is one, Mr. Brook, the Treasurer, who I believe every body thought had conducted himself with very great honour to himself, and advantage to the Institution; Dr. Best resigned lately, assigning ill health as the cause.

Have you any reason to believe that the food of the patients was bad?—Yes; Mary Beckwith, who was examined in the case of Martha Kidd, one of the cases of abuse I laid before the Governors, told me, that she was faint for want of something to eat, when attending as a witness, and she was ordered some bread and cheese, that the bread was of the vilest and worst description she ever saw in her life. I asked Mr. Ridsdale, a respectable linen-draper, in Pontefract, who was there at that time, if he saw any thing of that bread, and he said he had, and he was ready to make oath of it if necessary, and that it was in his opinion of the worst quality he ever saw in his life; and therefore I think they would have hardly given the witnesses upon such an occasion such bad bread, if they had not fed their patients with it.

Were the servants of the Institution in the practice of taking fees from any of the patients, or of exacting money from them, upon one pretence or another?—A respectable man of the name of Hanson told me, that when he was a patient in the house, he was shut up in a dark cell naked, sometimes with another patient, and sometimes by himself, for a week at a time or more; that he was obliged to obey the calls of nature in a corner of the room; that the straw was not changed for a considerable number of days; and that at one time when he was there, when the keeper brought him his meat, he promised him five shillings when he went out, if he would get him a shirt; and when he did come out and left the Institution, he gave the keeper five shillings according to his promise. I understood this gentleman, that when he gave him the five shillings he was recovered, and on that account, I conceive, he is a credible evidence as to the fact. The physician and apothecary also took fees in one case; a Mr. Mandall, of Doncaster, paid the physician five guineas, upon which occasion Mr. Atkinson also received two, as was stated to me by the relations of the patient who paid them.

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What has become of Mr. Atkinson since he was discharged from the Institution?—He has set up a private Madhouse of his own at York.

Do you know that any sums of money have been misapplied?—I have great reason to think there have; and I have stated my reasons at length for that opinion, in my letter to Earl Fitzwilliam.

Do you know an instance of a patient being found out of his proper place?—Yes, I do; one was found by Mr. Samuel Tuke and Mr. Pritchett in the wash-house; it was in the month of April; he was standing on a wet stone floor, apparently in the last stage of decay; he was a mere skeleton, his thighs were covered with excrement in a dry state, and those parts which were not so, appeared excoriated, as did also some parts of his waist. The 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 killing pigs, and could not therefore attend to him; the bed which he was said to have left was in a most filthy state, and corresponded with that of his body; he was spoken of by all the attendants, as a dying man; the further history of this poor creature however, proved the fallacy of appearances; he was removed to another part of the Asylum, where he was better attended to, and in a few months was so much recovered, as to be removed to his parish, in an inoffensive though imbecile state of mind.

Martis, 2^o die Maii, 1815.

The Right Honourable GEORGE ROSE, in the Chair.

Godfrey Higgins, Esquire, again called in, and examined.

IN your examination of yesterday, you stated that it appeared by the Report, that certain patients were missing or unaccounted for; did the Asylum, or the relatives of any of those persons so missed, take any trouble to discover what had become of them?—Not to my knowledge.

You stated yesterday, that a considerable misapplication of the public money had taken place; will you inform the Committee as briefly as you can, how that arose, and to whose use the misapplied money was appropriated?—In the seventh page of the Report of the Committee of Inquiry, it will be seen that a classification took place in the year 1785, and it is therein also admitted, that this order was never repealed. From this it appears, that certain weekly payments were directed; and in page 29, it is stated, that “when any patients of a better condi-

tion offer themselves to the Asylum, they are admitted upon a rate of payment which may be deemed adequate to their circumstances; and that Dr. Hunter, to whom the Governors think themselves obliged, for his liberal, disinterested, and charitable attendance upon the necessitous objects of the charity, may be requested to do justice to his own interest, by receiving from the friends of such patients the reasonable emoluments of his profession:" and that in the same page, it is also stated what the weekly payments of the patients should be, and what items they should discharge; viz. "the weekly payments, discharge, board and lodging, coal, candle, tea, washing and medicines." These orders could not be considered obsolete by the physician, because in 1813, he published a Report, of which the following is a part; and it appears by the order book, that this Report was proposed by himself, and is entered in the book, as follows:—"Resolved, That the Report now produced and submitted to the court by Dr. Best, be adopted, and that the same be printed and distributed;" and it contained 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 expences 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 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 £35. 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 expences 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 authorised to receive from the friends of the more affluent patients the reasonable emoluments of his profession." In the above Report it is stated, that parish and other paupers are maintained at nine shillings a week, 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. It is stated, the physician "is authorised to receive reasonable emoluments from the affluent." Mr.

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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. In page 48 of

the Report of the Committee of Inquiry, it will be seen that there were fourteen patients, at 4s. each per week £145 12 0

Twelve ditto, at 2s. each per week - - - - - 62 8 0

Seventeen ditto, at 1s. each per week - - - - - 44 4 0

Now, take the first class of patients at 16s. and the part taken from them at 1l. 8s. for Mr. Wilson, 252 4 0

of Saviour-Gate paid 2l. 2s. to the Asylum, of which the physician took 1l. 8s. and there will

remain for him - - - - - 1164 16 0

Which, added to the former, makes - - - - - 1417 0 0

This sum, multiplied by five, the number of years

Dr. Best has held the situation, gives - - - - - 7085 0 0

And by twenty-three, the time Dr. Hunter might have taken these sums, viz. since the year 1785,

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Now give me leave to observe, that this statement is founded part on fact and part on reasoning merely from the facts stated by the committee; but I can prove on unquestionable evidence, that as much as four pounds a week have been paid; and if I cast off for errors in taking too high an average, or in any other part of the account, 20,000l. I apprehend enough will have been shewn to prove, that the physicians had applied to their own use large sums, without any authority.

Was there any committee or visitors who looked after the affairs of the Asylum?—No; the physician had for many years past been the sole physician, sole visitor, and sole committee, and had the whole management of the Institution.

There was no visitation of the Asylum at all by any of the Governors, or the magistrates in the neighbourhood?—I never heard there was any visitation by Governors, except at the quarter days, and the annual day; and the magistrates had no authority whatever.

At these quarterly and annual meetings, did the Governors who visited, examine into the conduct and management of the house?—I never heard that they went over it to examine it at those periods.

There was no duty prescribed to them by the laws?—I do not know of any; they met quarterly to audit the accounts, and to make such orders as they thought proper.

Do you, in point of fact, believe that in that period any personal inspection and examination by the Governors, of the state and condition of the lunatics within the Asylum, took place?—No, I do not.

Do you know whether, shortly previous to the time of your visiting the cells you described yesterday, there had been any quarterly meeting of the Governors?—I think not, but constant meetings had taken place of the committees to inquire into the abuses of the house.

Do you believe the Governors knew of the misapplication of the money, or the general mismanagement of the Asylum?—I conceive the physician, who was one of the Governors, could not be ignorant of it, whether others were or not, I cannot tell, but I am certain a great many of them were ignorant.

Are you acquainted with any other houses in which there is any degree of mismanagement of the Lunatics?—Yes, in a house at Spinkwell, near Bradford, the situation in which I found the Lunatic paupers was most deplorable, one of them was chained to a stone floor, wallowing in his own excrement and filth; another of them bolted fast into a chair, from which he could not move; this house had no licence, and had never been visited regularly by any magistrates, as the woman keeper of it told me, and I only got access to it by threatening her as a magistrate I would punish her, and that I would ruin her by suing for the fine of 500l. Mr. Gee, surveyor, of Little Houghton, was present with me when I visited this house.

How many persons were there confined in it?—I do not recollect, certainly, but about seven or eight.

Were all of them ill treated?—No, not all.

Were those persons so chained down, represented to you as particularly violent?—Yes.

Did they appear to you to be so?—No.

What steps did you take in consequence of finding them in such a situation?—I represented it to the magistrates at the Leeds sessions, but nothing was done as we were upon the point of building a new place for our paupers in the Riding; and we were in hopes Mr. Rose's bill would pass, which would regulate all these places.

Do you believe those persons remain in the same situation at present?—I saw them sometime after that, and I think their situation was not mended; the second time I visited the house, three patients were chained in one bed, two were laying lengthwise, and one across the other two. A young man, called

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Craven, the son of an auctioneer, at Bradford, was present with me.

You say that house had not been regularly visited by any magistrate, have you reason to believe it had ever been visited at all by any magistrate?—I believe Mr. Lister had visited it once or twice a very little time before I had gone there; but I have named the circumstance of this house to a considerable number of the Justices at Pontefract sessions, and except Mr. Lister I did not find any that knew of it.

No step was taken, upon your stating to the magistrates what you had seen, for the correction of those abuses, gross as they were, but it was put off on the hope of Mr. Rose's Bill, placing these establishments upon a better footing?—Yes, that was the way I understood it was disposed of; I beg leave to add, upon recollection, that it was settled that Mr. Lister should look after this, and see that they were taken care of as well as the circumstances would admit, until the passing of Mr. Rose's Act.

Do you know whether any thing was done in consequence of that, by Mr. Lister?—No, I do not; but I dare say Mr. Lister did look after it, and probably their situation is mended.

Bryan Cooke, Esquire, called in, and examined.

You are a magistrate of the West-Riding of the county of York;—I am.

Did you in March, 1814, visit certain cells pointed out to you by Mr. Higgins, in the Lunatic Asylum at York?—I did.

In what state did you find them?—I found them newly cleaned out, the stench was abominable; I turned over the new straw which had been put upon the floor, and the boards were wet; and I pressed my stick upon the floor to see whether it was impregnated with the moisture, and I could have marked any letter upon it in the remains of the filth. I should say it was hardly possible it could have been cleaned out for a considerable time; the floor was completely saturated with filth.

Do you know any other particulars of the state of the Asylum at York?—The general state of the Asylum was filthy in the extreme.

Have you read the statement made by Mr. Higgins, of the part which you took along with him, in the examination of the Lunatic Asylum?—I have.

Are the statements there made by Mr. Higgins, of your interference in the business, correct?—Perfectly so; I think it was in or about March, 1814, there was a meeting at which I attended, and I was desired by one of the Governors to go into one of the day-rooms; he said he had a person there that had formerly

worked for him, and he wished to see him. I, together with a Governor and Colonel John Cooke, of Campsmount, went into a day-room; there were about twelve men patients in it; upon opening the door, my feelings were so offended, that I could hardly proceed from the stench; I retreated into the passage and was very near vomiting; Colonel John Cooke, who was with me, staid about two minutes longer in the day-room, and he assured me that he felt the nausea the whole day afterwards.

NOTE.—The Reader will take notice, that, in the following part of the report of the evidence, the parts published by the House of Commons are in small letter, and my answers to Dr. Best are in letter of a larger size; so that I hope they will be easily distinguished; and the pages occasionally referred to, are pages of this pamphlet—not of the folio edition.

Veneris, 26^o die Maii, 1815.

The Right Honourable GEORGE ROSE, in the Chair.

‘Dr. Charles Best, of York, called in, and examined.

‘Is not your attendance here, for the purpose of making some remarks on the evidence given respecting the York Asylum, of which you were Physician?—It is.

‘Are the questions delivered in by you, such as you wish to have asked you, with reference to some passages of the evidence alluded to?—They are; and I should be glad to answer any other questions which may be put to me by the Committee.

‘(No. 1.) Did you ever observe thirteen women confined together in a very small room up-stairs at the York Asylum?—I did.

‘(No. 2.) Was this a common practice?—By no means; it only occurred in consequence of the usual accommodation of these individuals having been destroyed by the previous fire.

But it continued for several months after Dr. Best had advised the Governors to refuse the offer of the Quakers and of the Governors of the Nottingham Asylum, to receive the patients who could not be properly accommodated in consequence of the fire. And the meeting held the day the cells were discovered, was called by me, in part, to prevent the continued admission of patients.

The very handsome offers of the Quakers and the Nottingham gentlemen, to take part of our patients, were refused because Dr. Best said he had good accommodation for all the patients we had, and he continued taking others in opposition to my remonstrances against it.

‘(No. 3.) Was it likely to be known to the male keepers, what number of female patients occupied the cells at night?—I should believe

not, it being the female patients.

When the cells at night Mr. Atkinson the house was did not appear disposing two

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not, it being the province of the female keepers only to attend to the female patients.

When the man servant told me there were thirteen women in the cells at night, a woman keeper was standing by, and, I think, Mr. Atkinson, the apothecary. My suspicion that some part of the house was concealed, was excited by observing that there did not appear to me to be beds enough for the patients, even disposing two in a bed.

(No. 4.) Do you know any thing of a young female patient, who was permitted to go about the house without any restraint?—I do; the person alluded to was only in a partial state of insanity, and generally conducted herself with propriety; and was in the habit of living during that time with the matron of the house, whose apartment adjoined to the kitchen; it was during her passing from her bed-room to that apartment, that she was seen by Mr. Higgins, as represented in his evidence.

She was running about amongst the men servants: she might, for any thing I know, be going to the matron's room. I have no doubt she was in a state of insanity: it might be partial—I cannot say it was not. On this subject I shall treat more largely in the letter I propose having the honour to address to you.

(No. 5.) Do you know any thing respecting any female patients who are said to have become pregnant during their residence at the Asylum?—I only know of such cases by report, they being said to have occurred many years before I had any connexion with the Asylum.

This may be true; but the case of the young woman, above alluded to, and the facilities afforded to the men servants by their possession of keys of the female wards, may lead a person to believe, that, if other cases did not occur, they were not prevented by any extraordinary care.

(No. 6.) Do you recollect the particulars of the case of William Vickers?—I do; he was brought to the Asylum in a violent state of insanity; he continued in the Asylum for a considerable length of time; varying both in the state of his mind and of his bodily health; in the month of September he was seized with an apoplectic fit, and continued in a state of helpless deplorable bodily illness for some time afterwards, his discharges being involuntary, and it being impossible with any degree of attendance to keep him in a state of complete cleanliness; during that period he had a special attendant constantly by him, and was supplied with every extra comfort and attendance which were judged necessary, and which his lamentable situation required; in the month of October, in the very early stage of his convalescence, he was removed from the Asylum; the state in which he then was seen by Mr. Higgins and other persons, who have been mentioned as witnesses on this case, was occasioned by his previous bodily illness, and not by any improper treatment he had received at the Asylum.

Dr. Best is here under a mistake. He seems to suppose that the witnesses spoke only to what they saw after Vickers came from York: several of them saw him during the time he was

there, and would have deposed to circumstances which occurred during his confinement.

The general meeting, on the 2d of December, came to a resolution, after having examined the servants and officers of the Institution only, and not one of the eight disinterested witnesses who were ready to attend if sent for.

Did the illness cause the marks of the whip, and the black bruises almost all over him?—See Appendix, No. V.

‘(No. 7.) Were the keepers permitted to strike or flog the patients?—Never; I myself suggested, and was the means of introducing a law into the Asylum, some time previous to the occurrence of the matter now alluded to; that if any keeper or servant should strike or otherwise ill treat any patient in the Asylum, such keeper or servant should be dismissed from his situation. The Committee of Inquiry made special investigation into that particular subject, and did not find any grounds for believing that patients were subject to beating, or any other ill treatment in the Asylum.

What, the Committee did in this case, I never heard; but I do know that they did not examine the witnesses whose names I had given them, and who could have given information, viz. Vickers, the father of the patient; Sarah Vickers, his wife; Elizabeth Alsop, Francis Moat, and Thomas Leach. I am surprised, after what I had said on the subject, that they did not, if they were satisfied, pass a resolution expressive of their opinion.—Vide App. No. I. and V.

‘(No. 8.) Do you remember the case of Mr. Skorey?—I do; he was in the Asylum at various periods, with certain intervals, for two years or longer: during the greatest part of that time he was constantly visited by his wife, and his wife also frequently (generally about once a week) called upon me to communicate with me respecting him. It is stated in the Minutes of Evidence, that he was repeatedly treated, in the presence of his wife, at the Asylum, with personal indignity. Mrs. Skorey stated in evidence, that she heard him kicked down stairs, which I conceive impossible; and though, as stated above, Mrs. Skorey was in the habit of calling upon me about once a week during the greatest part of the time her husband was confined in the Asylum, she never on any one occasion complained to me of ill treatment, which her husband is said to have received. When I say impossible, I mean impossible that she could have distinguished by the ear whether her husband had been kicked down stairs or not. With regard to his person swarming with vermin, as far as I know, it happened only on one occasion. The case of the Rev. Mr. Skorey was investigated by the Committee of Inquiry of the Governors of the York Lunatic Asylum; and there were circumstances stated in the Minutes of Evidence before that Committee, which do not accord with the statement mentioned in the Minutes of Mr. Higgins’s evidence.

Dr. Best says my evidence does not accord. I think it does with what Mrs. Skorey deposed, though certainly not with what

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the servants, who were accused of ill using him, said. He says, he conceives it impossible Mrs. Skorey could *hear* her husband kicked down stairs.

I wish every thing about this Asylum had been as correct as Dr. Best would have Mrs. Skorey's language on this occasion. I admit that from her hearing, she could not positively say that he was *kicked*; but the fact was, that she heard a scuffle on the top of the staircase, and on looking out of the door, saw her husband tumbling down stairs, the keeper being at the top; she also heard him say, that he looked on her husband as no better than a dog. The whole evidence is given by Mr. Gray in his *History of the Asylum*, p. 22. sold by Hatchard, Piccadilly. The committee of investigation did certainly inquire into the case: they *unanimously* found the conduct of the servants so reprehensible, that they were dismissed in consequence, on my motion in August following, by the most numerous meeting ever known, after having heard all the evidence.

(No. 9.) Do you remember the cases of two persons of the name of Thirkell?—Yes; one of them was recovered from his state of mental indisposition, and his friends were written to, to remove him from the Asylum, when he escaped or disappeared from the Asylum. The Committee of Inquiry into this case, as well as that of the other person of the name of Thirkell, and two other persons whose cases were brought forward by Mr. Higgins, and stated in the public papers as flagrant ones, reported that, in these cases, "no sufficient ground of censure has been established."

I cannot say that a letter was not written as stated here. When I asked the steward if he had the printer's bill for the quarter in which the hand-bill must be charged, he said he had, but when he discovered my object, he said he had lost it. I noticed these two cases to this committee, to shew how improperly they were entered in the books, the one as having "died," and the other as "removed."

The following is the evidence given me by Thirkell's father.—Vide App. No. 1. for explanation how those cases were inquired into.

"John Thirkell, the elder, of Sherburn, says, that about a month at least after his son Richard disappeared, his son John went to the Asylum to find fault that they had not made proper search for him, when the man at the gate promised him that they would get some hand-bills printed, and dispersed, but that he, John Thirkell, the elder, never saw any hand-bill. His son was always a very quiet good disposed young man, he never heard of him being guilty of any thing improper.

"18th March, 1814.

"J. Thirkell."

(No. 10.) Do you recollect the mode in which the deaths and removals of the patients were entered in the books of the Asylum?—They were,

during the time I was physician to the Asylum, and from its first establishment, reported in the books, in all cases, as admitted, removed, or died.

This admits what I wished to prove, viz. that those killed, were entered as having "died," and those who disappeared, as "removed."

Martis, 30^e die Maii, 1815.

The Right Honourable GEORGE ROSE, in the Chair.

‘Dr. Charles Best, again called in, and examined.

‘HAVE you any further remarks to make upon the evidence given before this Committee by Mr. Higgins?—I beg leave to make the following observations: The first part of Mr. Higgins’s evidence, which I deem it necessary to notice, relates to the confinement of thirteen poor women at the Asylum, in one small day-room, (Minutes, page 2): upon which circumstance I would merely beg permission to observe, that it was well known to Mr. Higgins, that the usual accommodations of these individuals had been destroyed by a previous fire, and that the arrangement which he witnessed was the result of temporary necessity, and not of habitual practice.

Answered before.

‘The case of William Vickers, mentioned at page 5, of the Minutes having undergone an investigation by the Governors of the Asylum, I beg leave to refer to the resolution upon the subject, at page 16 of the Appendix to Mr. Higgins’s letter to Lord Fitzwilliam, which is in these words: “The Governors having taken into their consideration, the statement published in the York and other newspapers, respecting the treatment of William Vickers, lately a patient in the 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 William Vickers remained in the Asylum, he was treated with all possible care, attention, and humanity.” An attempt being made by Mr. Higgins, in his evidence on the same case (page 5) to induce the Committee to believe that flogging constituted a part of the treatment of the patients in the Asylum; I think it necessary to state, that the Committee of Governors of the Asylum made this matter an object of particular investigation; and that no evidence whatever could be found to induce them even to suspect such a practice. I also beg leave to state, that a considerable time before the late occurrences at the Asylum, I was myself the means of introducing the following law, to be found in the printed report of the York Lunatic Asylum:—“That if any keeper or servant shall strike, or otherwise ill treat any patient in the Asylum, such keeper or servant shall be dismissed from his situation.”

Answered before.—See App. No. V. and Mr. Nicholl’s letter No. I.

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The case of Mr. Skorey, which is mentioned (Minutes, page 5,) in such terms as must have excited feelings of horror in the members of the Committee, has also undergone an investigation by a Committee of Governors of the Asylum, who reported their opinion on it in the following words:—"That in the case of the Rev. Mr. Skorey, there has been considerable personal neglect, and that both towards himself and Mrs. Skorey some of the keepers have conducted themselves in a very reprehensible manner." With respect to the facts of this case, to avoid repetition, I beg leave to refer to my evidence already before the Committee.

And I beg to refer to the evidence in Mr. Gray's book, where the whole is given at large.

The whole of the Minutes of Evidence (page 7,) relating to the inaccurate statement of the deaths and admissions published in the newspaper by the apothecary, is calculated to produce an erroneous impression. By omitting to mention that this inaccuracy did not exist in the steward's books, in which the only official register of the admissions and deaths was to be found, and by a reference to which books this inaccuracy was afterwards detected; Mr. Higgins has apparently intended it to be understood, contrary to what was the real fact, that 144 persons had perished in the Asylum, of whose deaths there was no official record, or, to use his own language in the Minutes of Evidence, that their deaths "had actually been concealed." Though the incorrect statement made by the apothecary in the newspapers, was of course very strongly and justly reprehended by the Governors, it did not appear that he had any interest in making it. As, however, my emoluments were variable, and dependent on the estimation in which the Institution was held by the public, it seemed to be thought probable by some of the Governors, at the Annual Meeting in August last, that the incorrect statement in favour of the Asylum might have originated in me, and in consequence a strict inquiry took place on the subject, and it was proved, to the entire satisfaction of the Court, in the presence of Mr. Higgins himself, that I had never on any occasion examined the apothecary's books with a view to ascertain the accuracy of his report, and that I had never on any occasion altered or corrected it. It is perhaps unnecessary to mention, that notwithstanding this circumstance, Mr. Higgins has given his evidence on this subject in such terms as cannot fail to lead to an inference, that I was probably accessory to the publication of this inaccurate statement.

If I understand Dr. Best right, he attempts here not only to shew that he had nothing to do with the concealment of the deaths, but also that they were not concealed. He says that Mr. Surr's books were correct: then why was not Mr. Atkinson's false statement compared with Mr. Surr's books and corrected? Why was the account sent by Mr. Atkinson to Dr. Best and Mr. Surr for examination? and if Mr. Atkinson's book was not an official register, why was he employed to make out the account?

Dr. Best says the inaccuracy was detected by reference to the stewards books. I beg his pardon for contradicting him: it was discovered by an examination I made of the register of the parish church of St. Olave's, and a comparison of the number registered as buried, with Mr. Atkinson's publication in the York Courant. I found that in a certain period, twelve were stated in the paper to have died, when seventeen had been buried.

Mr. Surr's books proved to what an extent this practice had been carried. I am obliged to Dr. Best for his hint; it seems there was an official correct record, and in the teeth of it a statement, by way of debtor and creditor, the totals balancing, false, to the amount of 144, was published in the York papers.

I admit that Dr. Best asked Mr. Atkinson at the annual meeting, if he ever knew him correct the books, and Mr. Atkinson said he never did: but I do not see how this exculpates Dr. Best.

If I am wrong in stating that Mr. Surr's books were false, as well as Mr. Atkinson's, I was misled by Mr. Surr, whose books appeared to me in the same form, and who told me they were the same as Mr. Atkinson's. However, if the books of the former were correct, it appears that all pretence of pleading confused or erroneous accounts is done away. As there was a true account, why was a false one published?

Dr. Best does not deny the fact that the accounts were sent to him and to Mr. Surr for examination before their publication by Mr. Atkinson, and whether either or neither or both should be deemed accessory, the committee will judge. I never wished to prove whether there was an official record or not: I have proved what I have asserted, viz. that 144 deaths were concealed from the public for the sake of supporting the credit of the house.

Had the examination been so much to the satisfaction of the court as Dr. Best represents it to have been, a resolution of non criminality would, in all probability, not have been wanting.

The account given in the same page, of the burning of the steward's books, is equally calculated to convey an erroneous idea of that affair; and a circumstance mentioned in the same paragraph respecting myself, viz. that the physician's participation in the weekly payments of certain classes of patients, was discovered by a book which accidentally came into the hands of the Committee of Inquiry, is perfectly at variance with fact. At one of the very earliest meetings of the Committee of Governors, and the moment the physician's emoluments became the subject of inquiry, I communicated every particular relating to the accustomed mode of remuneration of the physician, by participation in the payments of the different classes of patients who were not paupers. The burning of the steward's books at Christmas last, as mentioned in the evidence, did not take place till eleven months after their examination

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by a Committee of Governors, and after extracts had been made from them, distinctly describing the nature and amount of my participation in the payments of the patients, as will be seen by referring to page 48 of the Report of the Committee, subjoined to Mr. Higgins's publication; from whence I presume it will appear, that Mr. Higgins is not warranted in the conclusion, that the burning of the steward's books, however reprehensible in itself, was a deliberate act of selection, for the purpose of concealing circumstances in regard to the emoluments of the physician. The account of the mortality in the Asylum since the death of Dr. Hunter (Minutes, page 9) is stated with corresponding unfairness. An inference is attempted to be drawn unfavourable to the treatment of the patients under my care, by contrasting the mortality of the year ending July, 1814, with the average mortality for 30 years under Dr. Hunter; no mention being made that a long continued and destructive epidemic had prevailed in the Asylum during that year; and that the patients, during a considerable part of the time, were crowded together in an unprecedented degree, and subjected to various unfavourable circumstances by the destruction of their ordinary accommodations by fire.

For more complete proofs, if any be wanting, I beg to refer to Mr. Gray's history, page 45, 90, and 91, from which the following is an extract:—

“Mr. Surr produced to the committee, those quarterly books which tally with his accompts, 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 stewards actual receipts, he still declared he had destroyed.”

In the first instance, Surr had declared that *all* the books were burnt.

One volume out of each set of books for sixteen years, was burnt, and this was the very book which would have shewn the amount of the physician's receipts, and without which the physician's receipts cannot be known. Will any one believe that this was not an act of selection?—See App. No. I. and No. IX.

The subject of the epidemic I have so fully discussed in my letter to you, that it is only necessary to refer you to it. I also beg, that reference may be had to the letter, in the Appendix, to me from Mr. Nicoll, No. I. and No. IX. explaining how the nature of the physician's emoluments became known.

It was not stated by me, as asserted by Mr. Higgins in the Minutes of Evidence. (page 11) that to my knowledge there were no chains in the Asylum: the only assertion I have ever made on this subject was, that when I was first appointed physician to the Asylum, I found chains were used in certain cases; but that I had gradually and totally abolished their employment: which assertion I now repeat.

I am ready to swear, that I understood the Doctor to assert, both on the 2d of December, 1813, on oath, and on the 7th of January, without the oath, that, to the best of his knowledge and belief, there were no chains in the house. If the Doctor knew them to be unnecessary, why did he not see them removed, instead of being replaced in the new board.

Some evidence being adduced at pages 12 of the Minutes, from which it is to be inferred, that the food of the patients at the Lunatic Asylum was bad; I not only affirm on my own knowledge, that it was both good and plentiful, but have to request that the Committee will permit me to produce certain letters from individuals who had recently been confined in the Asylum at the time Mr. Higgins first published his statement in the York and Doncaster newspapers. The perusal of these letters may possibly tend not only to throw light upon this part of the subject, but also to undeceive the Committee in various other particulars relative to the Asylum.

The witness delivered in the letters, and they were read as follow :

"Sir,

"As we are accused at the Asylum, of harsh treatment, and cruelty to the patients, neglecting to afford them a sufficient supply of proper food; and inattention to cleanliness; I shall be much obliged to you if you will candidly state what you yourself experienced and observed upon these several points, during your residence at the Lunatic Asylum.

"I may possibly have occasion to lay your letter before the Governors; but it shall on no account appear before the public.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"Charles Best."

"Sir,

"Thorne, Nov. 25, 1813.

"I received your's of the 22d instant, and observe the particulars.— During the time I was at the Lunatic Asylum, I was treated with the greatest attention towards my recovery, and having had a very good supply of good provisions: with respect to cleanliness, I always had my linen, and other necessary conveniences, kept in very good order: I never experienced any severe treatment from the managers of the Asylum, having been allowed to walk out at convenient times. I can with the greatest propriety say, I never saw any of the other patients cruelly treated; for my own part, I think it a great blessing there is such a place provided for the afflicted.

Addressed

"Sir, I remain, &c."

"Doctor Best, York."

"Sir,

"Lincoln, Dec. 1, 1813.

"Mr. S—— not being acquainted with Mr. P——'s address, has just brought me the letter from that gentleman, which he received from you a few days ago, inclosed in one to himself. I will take care that Mr. P—— shall have it immediately on my return to my country residence the latter end of this week, (which will be sooner than if sent by the post) and entertain no doubt of his returning such an answer as will be perfectly satisfactory. In the mean time, to prevent any inconvenience that may arise from this unforeseen delay, Mr. S—— and myself think

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it only due to justice to declare, that we have both of us heard Mr. P—— speak in the highest terms of the kind treatment in every respect which he himself experienced in the York Asylum, and of the great care and attention with which the whole concerns of that Institution appeared to him to be conducted.

Addressed,
"Doctor Best."

"I have the honour to be,
"Sir, &c. &c."

"Doctor Best,

"Dear Sir,

"I this morning received your kind favour, requesting me to give a fair and candid statement of my treatment during my abode at the York Lunatic Asylum; also wishing me to give my opinion respecting the treatment of the several patients that fell under my observation during my stay at the said Asylum.

"In answer to these inquiries, I can with heartfelt pleasure state, that my treatment was such as every reasonable person must approve of, not having a want unsupplied, as far as wholesome food, cleanliness, and attention could supply them.

"Owing to my elevated spirits and eager curiosity, I lost no opportunity of investigating nearly the whole of the rooms and beds in the two galleries in which I was placed, and found the strictest attention paid to cleanliness and good order through the whole of the rooms I went into.

"I dined twice at one of the public tables, and was astonished to observe such plenty of good and wholesome food, and regretted the want of appetite to partake of the several dishes which were brought in regular succession on to the table.

"My last week's residence at the Asylum was along with Messrs. D—— T—— and a Mr. K——, who informed me that he had met with the best of treatment during the whole of his stay, and that he had always his meals sent to his room, the quantity and quality of which was such as he fully approved of. I had the pleasure of taking my meals along with him for several days, and had always plenty of good and wholesome food. The room we lodged in contained three beds, which were as good ones as I would wish to sleep on.

"For your kind treatment, dear Sir, I shall ever hold your name in grateful remembrance, and can assure you, that your daily presence at the Asylum afforded me the greatest pleasure; your treatment to me was more like that of a brother than a physician, and I attribute my speedy recovery to your well-judged method of treating me.

"The house apothecary and keepers merit my thanks for their readiness at all times to supply my wants, which were numerous, owing to the keenness of my appetite, which I believe was occasioned by the proper treatment and food that was administered to me during my convalescent state.

"I shall now hasten to conclude, by observing, that if the insertion of the whole, or any part of this letter, (the grammatical errors being first corrected) will be of any service to you, or any individual taking an active part in the establishment, you are perfectly at liberty to lay it

before the public, and beg you will not from any scruples of delicacy withhold it, as misrepresentations, such as you advert to in your letter, ought by all possible means to be crushed in the bud. Independent of your letter, I had been informed that complaints had been made by friends of late patients, against those who had the care of the York Lunatic Asylum. I trust truth will ever prevail over misrepresentation, and if so, those complaints must fall to the ground, as others might be brought forward who could bear testimony to the truth of what I have stated.

"I shall only add, that it is my hope that those afflicted with my late malady may never want a Doctor Best, nor the attention I met with under his skilful direction at the York Lunatic Asylum.

"Hoping this will find you in good health, as it leaves me, I remain,
"Ackworth, 9th Dec. 1813."

"Sir,

"Foston, Dec. 4, 1813.

"I this moment have received your favour from the hands of Doctor G——, and am extremely astonished, and even feel indignant at the foul falsehoods which have been propagated in disparagement of York Lunatic Asylum. From the very high estimation in which I hold that useful establishment, as well as from a warm sense of gratitude for the kind usage I on all hands and at all times received in it, it now becomes imperiously incumbent upon me unequivocally to declare, that no one single instance of the exercise of any harsh treatment or unnecessary severity, came under my observation; had such occasions of complaint ever occurred, from the wide range that was allowed me; both within and without doors, they could not possibly have escaped my notice; I can with equal sincerity and truth, most conscientiously aver, that an abundant supply of food of the best quality, and in a superior style of excellent cookery, was regularly and duly distributed to each patient, from the highest to the lowest, without a shadow of partiality, and with the most humane care and circumspection. As to cleanliness, the uncommon and general attention paid to that point in all its acceptations, branches, and departments, was a constant source of the purest satisfaction to me. In short, this is my decided opinion, and I here solemnly assert it, that the whole routine of business required in the management of the Asylum, was uniformly conducted upon the most humane, cleanly, plentiful, yet prudent plan, that such an institution can admit of, and is therefore justly entitled to my warmest approbation and applause.—Pray accept of my unfeigned thanks for your unbounded kindness to me, and excess of humanity to that motley and turbulent society, some of whom it seems have rendered themselves so unworthy of your regard. That you may long enjoy health and happiness is the sincere prayer of,

"Sir, your much obliged and humble servant, &c. &c."

"Foston, near Grantham, Lincolnshire.

"Charles Best, Esq. M. D."

I have no doubt, that many of the opulent patients were well treated. It would have been strange, indeed, if they had been all used like Vickers and Skorey.

If any attention was one kind is impossible to say respecting there were any justice must have officers and ser duct, except hi that was amiss.

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If any attention be due to those letters, they prove that there was one kind of bread for the poor, and another for the rich. It is impossible to raise a doubt as to what the Pontefract witnesses said respecting the bad bread. Dr. Best seems to deny that there were *any* abuses in the Asylum; if so, a great act of injustice must have been committed in August, 1815, when all the officers and servants were displaced, on my motion, for misconduct, except himself, whose duty it was to "correct any thing that was amiss," &c.

The accusation of my having received a fee improperly, in a particular case, mentioned at page 12, was brought before the Committee of Inquiry at York, by Mr. Higgins, in August last, with extremely aggravating circumstances, and was by that Committee rejected as undeserving of notice; my written reply to the charges, presented to the Governors, I beg leave to lay before the Committee.

[*It was read, as follows:*]

"To the Governors of the *York Lunatic Asylum*.

"My Lords and Gentlemen,

"An accusation having been this day brought forward against me, by Mr. Higgins, of having charged five guineas for myself, and two guineas or 2*l.* for the apothecary, for extra attendance on one of my private patients at the Asylum about three years ago, the friends of the patient having been informed by me that he had broken his leg, when no such accident had in reality befallen him; I beg leave to observe, that I have witnesses at hand, who, should it be the pleasure of this court, will immediately appear, and as I believe, will prove in the most satisfactory manner, that the patient alluded to did break his leg, and that he moreover suffered a long and distressing bodily illness not connected with the accident.

"In regard to my recommendation of a remuneration to the apothecary for extra attendance, though I cannot speak with any accuracy as to the fact, at the present period, the circumstances being alleged to have taken place three years ago; I think it highly probable that I may have recommended it in the instance under consideration, as I have the recollection of having done so in one or more other instances of casual illness requiring special medical or surgical attendance.

"In regard to myself, though it is perfectly possible that I may have expressed myself as entitled to extra remuneration for extra attendance in the case alluded to, I have no recollection whatever of having done so in this or in any other instance. I can, however, if it shall be required of me, bring forward satisfactory evidence of having declined such remuneration in other cases, when strongly pressed upon me, not indeed from conceiving that I had no right to receive it, but because I believed that the circumstances of the patient's family rendered it inconvenient to them to incur such expence.

"Upon this subject I beg leave farther to remark, that the pecuniary arrangements made between the friends of what are called private patients, in the Asylum, and the physician, having been always consi-

dered, both during the time of my predecessor and myself, as a matter of private contract between the parties themselves; in order to establish any impropriety on the part of the physician in expressing himself as entitled to extra remuneration in certain cases and under certain circumstances, it must be proved that the friends of the patient were apprized by the physician, at the time the contract was made, that the weekly payment was intended to include extra attendance for protracted bodily illness, as well as ordinary attendance for mental disorder.

"On the conduct of Mr. Higgins in bringing forward this serious charge at the present time, without any previous notice to the person accused, I must leave it to the Governors present to form their own opinions." (Signed)

"Respecting the alleged misapplication of money, mentioned at pages 13, 14, and 15 of the Minutes, the annual meeting of Governors in August last, before whom I subjected myself to a voluntary and most rigorous examination, adopted and published the following resolution, viz. "That no criminality attaches to Dr. Best for misapplication of the funds of this institution." In regard to the mode which was adopted of remunerating the physician, considering it objectionable, I do not in the least attempt to defend it; but as it was sanctioned by long-established usage, previous to my appointment; and as the general meeting of Governors at the time I was elected, not only negatively but positively confirmed the existing privileges of the physician, by rejecting a proposition for inquiring into the emoluments before disposing of the office; I have never felt any doubt in regard to my right of receiving the same emoluments as were enjoyed by my predecessor. I here think it an act of justice due to myself to state, without however assuming any merit for my conduct, that during the five years I was physician at the Asylum, I voluntarily gave up about 200*l.* per annum out of these emoluments, for the benefit of the institution."

In refusing to inquire into the emoluments of the physician, at the time of Dr. Best's election, the Governors only repeated what they had done when Mason, Burgh, and Withers, moved for inquiries into the state of the Institution, and what they would have done, with respect to me, if the new Governors had not come forward.—See my letter to you.

The amount stated to have been taken by the physicians, is not denied by Dr. Best, independent of the fees from opulent patients, as stated by me in Mandell's case, which I only named to the Committee of the House of Commons, to shew that he did take fees, besides a portion of the weekly payments, (all my calculations were made exclusive of fees;) and, in page 20 of my letter, I have also stated that he was entitled to them, not that he took them improperly; but, on reference to that page, it will be seen that I have there stated no aggravating circumstances, and my evidence given to you, I am certain will shew that I have studiously avoided it. I have merely stated that Dr. Best took a fee of five guineas: every thing else I have suppressed. How-

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ever, as he wishes to have the story of the broken leg known, I shall take the liberty of inserting the affidavits relating to it in the Appendix, No. III. I wish Dr. Best had favoured the Committee with the names of the witnesses he proposed to call, to refute this charge. I hope they were not of the copartnership at the Asylum,—the publishers of false statements of deaths,—or the burners of books,—or the servants whose evidence, on oath, the Archbishop would not receive. The affidavits were laid on the table of the Committee of *Inquiry* by me, to be used as they might think proper: after some deliberation, I was called in, and asked if I had any specific charge to make against Dr. Best: I replied, no; that as the affidavits had been tendered to me, I thought I ought not to suppress them, and, accordingly, I presented them to the Committee of Inquiry, who, no doubt, would do with them what was proper and right. They were returned to me without any observation. It is for you, Gentlemen, to judge whether the Committee did right in refusing to inquire. I think common justice to Dr. Best required that an inquiry should take place. I should not now produce those affidavits, if the Doctor had not rendered their production necessary to my justification.

I have discussed the matter of the emoluments so much at large in my letter, that it is unnecessary to say any thing here. I have clearly shewn, that Dr. Best was entitled to nothing but the fees from opulent patients; and it is very well he does not make any great merit of the most prudent of all his actions, viz. giving up 200*l.* a year, when he could no longer keep the whole, to secure the remaining 1400*l.*

'The assertion at page 15, that the physician had the whole management of the institution, is not accurate, the subordinate officers were not appointed by the physician, and the respective duties of each were regulated, not by him, but by the laws enacted for the purpose by the Governors. The constitution of the Asylum was undoubtedly faulty, and the plan upon which it was built ill adapted to its purpose; but it would be too much to make the physician for the time being responsible either for the legislative acts of the Governors during forty years, or for the evils unavoidably arising from the inappropriate structure of the buildings.'

No one ever said that Dr. Best was responsible for the bad construction of the buildings; neither could he be held responsible for many other things, as long as visitors and committees were appointed; but, after the Governors had ceased to appoint either, and had confided every thing to him, a great responsibility naturally devolved upon him; and if any thing was then wrong, it was his duty to state it to one of the four quarterly courts, or the general court, to which he made his reports, which

regularly met and as regularly had the pleasure to hear that all was well.—See Dr. Best's statement of his duties in my letter.

By the report it appears that Dr. Best was unanimously elected physician to the institution: the fact was, there were several other candidates; but Dr. Best's friends were so numerous, that not one of them had the least chance of succeeding, and, indeed, not one of them was proposed. The attempt to inquire into the emoluments of the physician, was the last expiring effort at reform: none was ever attempted afterwards.

I was told by one of the Governors who voted on the case of Vickers, on the 2d of December, that he originally subscribed to become a Governor for the sake of voting in his friend, Dr. Best, as physician; and that he attended in August also, to vote for him, but that he knew nothing about the question of the abuses: he had never attempted to make himself understand it.

'If I may be permitted to remark on the evidence of Mr. Bryan Cooke, I would briefly observe, that as it only relates to the state of the Asylum during the pressure of very distressing and unprecedented circumstances, consequent on the destruction of half the building by fire, it throws no light whatever on the usual state of the Asylum at other times. Should it however be thought otherwise by the Committee, I beg leave to contradict the assertion, that "the general state of the Asylum was filthy in the extreme," as stated in page 17 of the Minutes; and to assert, that all the upper parts of the house, consisting for the most part of galleries and bed-rooms, notwithstanding the number of patients, were in a cleanly and orderly state. The temporary day-rooms down stairs, where the most uncleanly patients were placed until new accommodations could be prepared for them, were doubtless, as stated in page 17, in a very disgusting condition. This condition however was not the consequence of neglect, as, without explanation, might be inferred from the evidence, but solely the result of unavoidable necessity.'

Colonel Cooke having been so many years a member of your honourable house, must be known to most of you. His character for veracity requires no vindication from me; but I refer you to Mr. Nicoll's letter, App. No. I.

'Do you know that the four cells, or any one of them, alleged by Mr. Higgins to have been concealed from the visitors, were ever shewn to any one visitor?—I do not know that they have been: I know they have been seen by Governors.'

'Have you seen any person whose duty it was to visit, who has informed you he was aware that there were such cells?—I know that a Governor had seen those cells.'

'Previous to the time that Mr. Higgins asserts them to have been concealed?—Certainly; I refer to the Rev. Mr. Bulmer, of York.'

Mr. Bulmer, in answer to a series of questions from me, admitted, that it was more than two years since he had seen them, but he did not say how much more. I wish Dr. Best had been

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kind enough to have told you, why these cells were not shewn to his six friends who went to examine the house, or to the two committees, or to me, until I discovered that excellent key, the kitchen poker.

'Did it not happen more than once, that patients escaped from the Asylum?—Yes.

'How were these escapes registered, as removals, or as having made their escape?—As removals, that being the established mode of entering them for forty years; there was no distinction made in the books; it did not fall to my province to examine the books, but I have a general knowledge that that was the fact.

'Were any pains taken to recover such patients as had escaped?—I believe always, but it did not fall within my province.

'Were hand-bills printed?—There were; and to the best of my belief, there never was an omission of the printing of hand-bills; but that did not fall within my province.'

I think they ought to have been advertised in all the three York newspapers.

'What had occurred to make the regulation necessary to prevent the patients being beaten or flogged?—I had frequently heard there was a belief that persons were flogged, and I very frequently walked behind the Asylum myself, and heard such howlings, as, if I was not acquainted with the circumstance of the patients very frequently making noises, I should have believed to proceed from their being beaten; that was more than six months before Mr. Higgins's statements.

'It was your practice occasionally to see all the rooms of the Asylum?—Certainly.

'Did you often see the four cells alleged to have been concealed?—When there were patients confined in the day-time in them, which occurred only occasionally.

'You only followed the patients into the cells, you did not look to their state and condition?—At the time the patients were in them, I did, and perhaps at other times; but I conceived that the department of taking care of the rooms and keeping them clean, belonged to the house-keeper.

'You did not consider yourself called upon to inspect the bed-rooms?—When I saw any thing wrong, I observed upon it; I did not conceive it to be my province to attend to the cleanliness of the house, and therefore did not make it a daily practice to examine all the rooms of that very large building.

'Did not you consider it your duty to see that the house was kept clean?—Certainly, as far as was in my power.

'Did you, in the course of the five years you were physician, see those four cells that have been referred to?—I did, frequently.

'How soon after the visit of Colonel Cooke and Mr. Higgins, did you yourself inspect the cells in question?—I really am not able to say at the present time.

'Was it soon after?—I believe it was.

'Can you say how long before that visit it was, that you had inspected them?—I cannot.

'Can you say of your own personal knowledge, that the representation made by Mr. Higgins first, and by Mr. Cooke afterwards, of the state in which they found those cells, is not perfectly correct?—I cannot say it of my own knowledge.

'Have you any and what reason, from the representation of any other person who had examined them, to doubt its correctness?—I have not.

'What has been the extent and nature of the interference of the Governors, with respect to the internal management of the Asylum during the time you have acted as physician?—They met at the Asylum once a quarter, and at the annual meeting in August, to examine the accounts, and discuss any matters that might come before them.

'Did they at those quarterly meetings, inspect regularly the Asylum?—They did not regularly, only occasionally, which was but seldom.

'What do you mean by inspect; what did they do?—They walked round the Asylum, or nearly round, they walked about the Asylum.

'Did they see all the rooms?—That I cannot say; they examined the beer and the bread; there was a repugnance on the part of the Governors to enter the rooms where the patients were confined.

'Then you apprehend they did not see all the patients?—No, I apprehend they did not.

'To whom then was the management and superintendence committed, in the intervals of those meetings of the Governors?—The physician, the steward, the apothecary, and the matron.

'Is the Committee then to understand, that the persons now mentioned had the complete management and superintendence of every concern respecting the patients, without any inspection whatever of the Governors, otherwise than that which has been already mentioned?—Yes.

'What was the regulation of the Asylum, with respect to the friends of the patients being permitted to see them?—They were not permitted to see them without a written order from the physician, except in particular cases; that was left to the discretion of the apothecary on the spot.'

I believe the Governors never, either after Dr. Best's election, or for many years before, made what could be called an inspection of the Asylum: they might walk about the shew part of the house, waiting till the meeting should commence. But I believe, if any one had attempted carefully to examine it, he would have been considered as making a personal attack on Dr. Best.

The whole of the latter part of Dr. Best's answers, tend to shew that he had not the control of the place. It is true the officers were chosen by the Governors; but they were entirely under the orders of the physician. Every application, in case of doubt, was made to him. He ordered every thing. Surely, when he stated that it was his duty to visit every part of the house every day, and to correct any thing he saw amiss, he fully admitted his own responsibility.

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I can readily believe, that Dr. Best might have some difficulty in managing a set of officers and servants, who all knew of the secret cells,—the hundred and forty-four deaths concealed from the public in the newspapers,—the false set of account books,—and the amount of the reasonable emoluments. I can readily believe, that it was necessary to correct these gentlemen's failings with a very light hand. However, they cannot blame him for their discharge: they found in him a zealous and an able advocate to the very last moment of the inquiry, and they ought to be grateful.

Martis 6^o die Junii, 1815.

The Right Honourable GEORGE ROSE in the Chair.

‘Doctor *Charles Best* was again called in; and desired to add to his former evidence, which he did, as follows:

‘LEST it should be thought that the resolutions to which I have referred, in contradiction to some parts of Mr. Higgins’s evidence, were of little moment, in consequence of their being supposed to have been framed by personal friends of my own, for the purpose of protecting my character, I beg leave to observe, that, with the exception of the first of those resolutions, they were all framed after the numerous accession of new governors, which took place in consequence of Mr. Higgins’s appeal to the Public relative to the York Lunatic Asylum.’

I refer to the evidence upon all these cases published at the end of Mr. J. Gray’s *History of the Asylum*, to be had at Hatchard’s, Piccadilly, and to Mr. Nicoll’s letter, App. No. 1.

‘My reason for not recommending the governors of the York Lunatic Asylum to accept the offer of the managers of the Quaker’s Retreat to accommodate a part of their patients, on the occasion of the fire, was, that I conceived it was not worth while for the governors to avail themselves of it, in consequence of the trifling accommodation which would be afforded thereby, four beds only having been offered, and the whole number of patients approaching towards two hundred.’

Four of the poor wretches, who were confined in the concealed cells, might have been sent, without much trouble, about a mile to the humane Retreat of the Quakers, out of the way of the epidemic. But it seems that the lives of insane paupers are of little value, not worth much trouble.

‘What other offer or offers of temporary accommodation were made?—To the best of my recollection, though it did not take place at the same moment, the offer from Nottingham was of eight beds, which I did not recommend them to accept, for the same reasons, superadded to the circumstance of the distance intervening between one Institution and the other.’

The eight and four would nearly have prevented the necessity of concealing the cells.

'For how many patients did you then want accommodation?—It is quite impossible for me to say at present.'

Dr. Best stated to the meeting in January, that he wanted accommodation for none; and, in opposition to my loud protestations against it, he continued to receive more patients.

'How many patients were at that time confined in the cells said to be concealed?—It is not in my power to answer that question, for my visits to the Asylum were generally between eleven and five o'clock, which was while the patients were out of their sleeping-rooms.'

After orders had been given to discharge upwards of thirty patients, and after I had exposed the cells, Mr. Graham, Mr. S. Tuke, and several other Governors, went at nine o'clock at night, and found them still occupied.

'Do you believe that the number confined in those four cells was thirteen?—I do not conceive it possible that there could have been so many; as it may appear from the evidence relative to the state of the Asylum when seen by Mr. Bryan Cooke, that no steps had been taken by myself and the members of the Committee appointed to make temporary provision for the patients after the fire. I beg to observe, that every means in our power was resorted to, to fulfil the duties which were imposed upon us, both by fitting up temporary day-rooms, by placing new beds in the open galleries, and by writing repeatedly to the friends of various patients who we thought might be taken care of at their own houses, to request they would remove them. But various obstacles occurred to the execution of these projects, from unforeseen causes: and the consequence was, that the patients were most inconveniently crowded in their day-rooms for a longer period than they otherwise would have been: some time afterwards, a day-room, which I had immediately after the fire proposed, was actually erected. I beg leave to add, that at the period the fire took place there were to my knowledge three patients in the Asylum, who, after having been previously confined there, had voluntarily returned; two out of the three, without the knowledge or concurrence of their friends. For the accuracy of the statements which I have made in contradiction to those of Mr. Higgins, I beg leave to refer to the following governors of the York Lunatic Asylum:—the Archbishop of York, Godfrey Wentworth, Esquire; Richard Fountayne Wilson, Esquire; the Rev. Robert Croft; John Hall Wharton, Esquire; George Palmer,* Esquire; Philip Saltmarsh, Esquire; George Lowther Thompson, Esquire; the Reverend William Dealtry and the Reverend William Bulmer; by which I would wish it to be understood, that I do not mean that each individual mentioned will confirm each individual contradiction which I have made to the statements of Mr. Higgins, but that my testimony in every point will be confirmed by some one or more of them.'

* Palmes probably is meant.

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The keeper told me there were thirteen : what interest could he have to affect the knowledge of the exact number, thirteen, if he were ignorant, or to tell me a wilful falsehood in this case? Besides, I believe him for the very reason which made me find the cells, viz. comparing the beds with the number of patients.

These three gentlemen referred to, must surely have been *mad enough* to have returned to a place such as that described by Colonel Cooke, and Mr. Nicoll in his letter, No. I.

The concealed cells were so situated, that patients might be in the house for years and know nothing about them. The house was inspected by the Committee of Fifteen once, and by the Committee of Five many times, and yet the existence of these cells was neither discovered nor suspected. I again ask Dr. Best, why they were not shewn by him?

Dr. Best has made his reference to ten persons, all old Governors, with great ingenuity; for, unless an inquirer should propose every question to the whole ten, if the answer to his question should be in the negative, he can never arrive at a certainty.

Suppose, for instance, you ask Mr. Wharton, if he knows a thing to be true, he may reply he does not; but this proves nothing, for, it may be said, Mr. Palmes or some one else may.

Extract from the Report of the Committee, p. 5. folio edition.

‘As the Governors of the Asylum at York called the attention of the other House of Parliament, by petition, in the last session, to the management of the establishment, in order to shew that it was unnecessary to subject it to the provisions of a bill then depending, respecting Madhouses; your Committee are desirous of directing the attention of the House to the parts of the evidence which relate to that establishment.’*

* York, p. 1 to 10, folio edition.

TO
 THE COMMITTEE
 OF
 THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,
 APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO
 THE ABUSES IN MADHOUSES.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

I FLATTER myself, that this publication may be unnecessary to vindicate my character from the charge of wilful misrepresentation, to those to whom I am known; but yet strangers to me, who may have read Dr. Best's deposition, may entertain doubts, and I think it is of great consequence to the cause of radical reform, in the management of persons afflicted with insanity, that no one, either in the House of Lords or Commons, should have any plausible grounds to misrepresent your report, by stating that the abuses therein described have been exaggerated.

I confess I was much surprised, when I saw the remarks which Dr. Best had thought proper to make upon my evidence; and I regretted that it was too late, by offering myself to you for cross examination, to clear up any doubts which they might have raised.

After Dr. Best's resignation, I did not wish for further inquiry. It could do no good to the institution, or be productive of benefit to any one, although it might gratify a revengeful disposition. The books burnt under such extraordinary circumstances, would have afforded room, at least, for much discussion; but scandalous as this act was, and evident as was its object, I did not wish to expose it without necessity; and therefore, at the different meetings, carefully avoided all allusion to it. My object was to obtain security for the future: I was willing to wave my just claim to indemnity for the past; and I trust those who know me will give me credit when I say, I have always felt for the very respectable connexions of more than one of the officers of the house; but surely, neither considerations of this kind, nor vulgar personalities, ought to have deterred me from the pursuit of the radical reform I had in view, and which

it was my duty, both as a man and a magistrate, to effect if possible.

It will be in the recollection of Mr. Rose and Mr. Bennet, that, when I was in London last spring, I did not court the inquiry.

I met with Mr. Wakefield, whose exertions in the cause of the unfortunate lunatics have done him so much credit, by accident, at the new Penitentiary at Milbank. I had then been nearly three weeks in London on my own affairs, and was about to leave it in a few days. In conversation with him, he told me he did not believe that Mr. Rose had dropped the inquiry: he pressed me to permit him to speak to Mr. Bennet upon the subject, and to inform him that I was in town. To this I consented; and, in consequence, had immediately a message both from him and Mr. Rose, requesting that I would call upon them.

During my interview with the latter, I represented to him that I thought the inquiry might be dispensed with, as I understood his bill had been lost in the preceding session, from a mere mistake of the Governors of the York and Nottingham Asylums, and that as it would no longer be opposed by them, I supposed it would pass without any difficulty. In this he satisfied me I was mistaken; and I consented to defer my journey home a couple of days that I might be examined.

I name these circumstances, because it has been said that I sought this inquiry merely out of enmity to Dr. Best, as it had been said, in an early stage of the business, that I sought the reform for a similar reason, viz. enmity to a man whom I had never seen and had scarcely heard of, and whom, at first, I did not know to be physician to the institution.

Throughout the whole of my proceedings, it was my object to save Dr. Best's character, as much as might be consistently with the attainment of my object. I considered that some anger, on his part, was what might reasonably be expected. I could not suppose he would give up a very large income, and see the well-founded suspicions of many respectable persons of York, whom he was pleased to consider as his personal enemies, confirmed by an investigation into the state of the Asylum, without some marks of irritation; but I also considered, that, in the *capacity* in which I was acting as a magistrate, it was my duty, whatever I might feel, to let nothing like personality influence my conduct; and if I am now at last compelled to place some circumstances in a stronger point of view than I have hitherto done, and, by so doing expose Dr. Best, I hope I shall be excused by the absolute necessity of the case, if I am to justify myself from the charge of wilful misrepresentation, and to shew that, as much as possible, it has been my desire to exercise forbearance towards him.

Under the influence of this feeling, I suppressed several particulars in my letter to Earl Fitzwilliam, which I might have stated, and which seemed to me to press heavily upon Dr. Best.

I stated, in general, merely that the cells were concealed, but did not state by whom. I might have added, that both the committees, in Dr. Best's presence, directed that all the apartments occupied by patients, throughout the whole house, should be shewn to them; and that he accompanied each of them separately in their survey; that it was his duty to have shewn to both the Committees those cells, the very worst part of the house, without having been directed to do it; and that the Committee of Five, of which he was himself a member, was appointed for the specific purpose of ventilation, and of seeing to the proper accommodation of the patients; and that they, he being present, paid so many visits to the house, that the plea of forgetfulness cannot possibly be admitted.

I might also have stated to his Lordship, that the accounts of the deaths were sent for examination to Dr. Best by Mr. Atkinson, previous to their publication, and that they were not corrected. I might have called his Lordship's attention to Dr. Best's written defence, which he gave to me at Doncaster, to the truth of which he offers to swear, when he says the medical officers, in the plural number, will swear to it, there being only two medical officers, of whom he was one. I now beg to call your attention to that paper, (Appendix, No. II.) with this observation,—that the humane servants, who lent their own clothes to Vickers, were the persons who were all dismissed in the August following, for their cruelty and general misconduct. If any one can believe that these keepers lent their own clothes to this poor man, after he had torn his own to pieces, insensible as he was, to the calls of nature, he is more easy of belief than I can be.

If it be said, that by their own clothes were meant the cast off clothes of the other patients, I should say that the expression of "their own clothes," in common language, will bear no such construction; and that, if such had been the meaning, very different words would have been used.

I beg leave further to observe upon this, that, if Dr. Best could be so completely hood-winked by these servants as to be able, honestly and conscientiously, to swear that they did lend their own clothes, for which there was no necessity whatever to this unfortunate man, I am of opinion he was more fit to be an inmate than a superintendent of such a house as this.

I might have published the affidavits of the Mandalls and Masons, (vide Appendix, No. III.) if I had been desirous of producing aggravating circumstances; but I suppressed them.

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I gave a copy to no one. It would have been very wrong in me, as a governor, to treat the calls for justice of these respectable deponents with contempt; but I did as little as possible with them. I laid them on the table of the Committee of *Inquiry*; and as I refused to act as personal accuser of Dr. Best before their tribunal, the Committee of *Inquiry* thought proper not to *inquire*, but to return them to me without any observation. I regret, on account of Dr. Best's family and connexions, that he has placed me in such a situation, that I am under the necessity of producing them now in my own defence. It was absolutely necessary to produce these papers to prove that the weekly emoluments, although enormous, were received by Dr. Best *in addition* to fees, of the amount of which I can form no estimate, and which he received over and above the weekly payments.

The mention of Elizabeth West's pregnancy, induces me to make a few observations upon cases of that kind; and I hope, if I be obliged to encroach on the boundaries of decency, and any feeling and sensible female should happen to see this letter, and, at first, be inclined to take offence, she will pardon me, on considering the difficulty I am under to make myself clearly understood;—and if the unfeeling libertine shall choose to attack what I say with the weapons of ridicule, I beg he will first consider, whether Lord Shaftsbury did not, in opposition to his own doctrine, himself exhibit a proof that ridicule is *not* the test of truth.

Perhaps I shall scarcely be credited, my Lords and Gentlemen, when I inform you, that there have been found persons disposed to skreen or excuse cases of this kind.

I would ask why, if a man has carnal knowledge of a child under a certain age, even with her own consent, he is hanged for a rape, but because she is not able to judge for herself. This seems to me to approximate very nearly to the case of some females in a state of insanity. May they not be as incapable of judging as any child?

Suppose the case of an unfortunate young woman becoming insane: she is put in a strait waistcoat, and taken to the Asylum: confidence is reposed by her friends in the governors and officers that she will be properly treated. Advantage is taken of her disordered state of mind, or her defenceless situation, and she becomes pregnant. The English language does not furnish a word of infamy appropriate to such a transaction.

Under what circumstances the pregnancy of Elizabeth West took place, cannot be known: her testimony would not be admitted; and upon what evidence the magistrates formed their judgment on this case, I know not; but, by a well-known rule

of law, we are bound to believe they had proper legal evidence upon which to form it, until the contrary be shewn. But, besides this reason, which is in itself quite sufficient, we may be very sure that the reputed father, instead of paying the money for the maintenance of the child, would have been very glad to have overthrown the decision of the justices by an appeal to the sessions, could he have shewn that the evidence was insufficient; for this would have saved both his money and his credit. Suppose it be said that the act with the patient was committed during a lucid interval, when she was capable of judging. If this argument of the keeper be admitted, and the evidence of the female rejected, there is an end of all safety and protection for every female in the kingdom, who may be afflicted with insanity. She is, I maintain, instantly at the mercy of every villain, who, with impunity, may use force, drugs, or persuasion, as best suits his purpose.

And let it not be forgotten, that I found these men, who were dismissed from the York Asylum for their cruelty and misconduct, in possession of keys, which opened the ward doors, and the inner bed-room doors, of women of high connexions, beauty, and accomplishments; and that these women were only protected by servants, whose evidence, upon oath, the Archbishop of York had refused to hear. The female, who ran past me when I was threatening to break open the door of the concealed cells with the kitchen fire poker if they did not produce the key, was both young and handsome, and she appeared to me to be then in a state of insanity.

And this was the institution, my Lords and Gentlemen, which petitioned to be exempt from visitation! Where is there a place which bears a higher character than this once did, supported by men of rank, wealth, and great respectability?

Can you wish for a more decisive proof, that every place ought to be subject to the most watchful superintendence—that none ought to be exempt?

I know scarcely any situation in which a young woman is more open to attack than in a house of this kind. Without advertg to very many possible circumstances, let us imagine even the extreme case of actual violence. Any person, at all acquainted with these receptacles of misery, must know, that screams and cries for help are not considered grounds for suspicion of any thing wrong. Suppose the advantage to be taken at a moment when every other officer and servant is out Christmas merry-making,* and force to be used, and the cries for help

* Just as the investigation into the management of the York Asylum commenced, the building caught fire, and half of it was burnt; and it turned out that all the officers and servants, except two, one of whom was ill, were out

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to be heard by the other patients, they would probably not be attended to; and if the young woman should tell what had happened, her story would be treated as the wanderings of a disordered imagination, and would not be credited.

In the case of Elizabeth West, if the infant witness and the dates had not proved the fact, she would not have been believed, had she, in defiance of modesty, told the story; and the name of the head-keeper might have descended to posterity, emblazoned on the piece of plate presented to him afterwards by the governors for his uninterrupted good conduct,—a perfect model of fidelity, purity, and continence.

But another and a very curious species of justification of cases of this kind, has been advanced to me. I hardly know how to convey my meaning in terms of decency.

Until I got the case here alluded to, I was prevented from bringing forward any cases of this kind, because I had reason to believe that I should be thus answered. "It is true the patient was pregnant; but that is no charge against the institution: proper means were *purposely* taken to bring her into that situation for the benefit of her mental health." In the case of Elizabeth West, the payment of the money for the maintenance of the child, instead of the appeal to the sessions, either on the ground stated above, or the insufficiency of the evidence, is a proof of the guilt of the party; and the town's book at Louth will prove the payment by the keeper *himself*.—See App. No. IV.

I beg that the extremely aggravating circumstances of the cases, which I have stated above for your consideration, may not be construed to apply to the keeper here alluded to. I have not the most distant suspicion under what circumstances the pregnancy of Elizabeth West took place. I know nothing, except what I collect from the warrant for his apprehension and the town's book at Louth. What I have said is with a view of impressing upon your minds the necessity of some legislative provision for the better protection of persons of every description afflicted with insanity.

On the subject of pregnant females, I could say more; but a regard to the feelings of amiable and respectable individuals prevents me.

On the subject of the excessive mortality, I shall also take the liberty of making a few observations.

I confess, my Lords and Gentlemen, that this part of my charge Dr. Best disposes of very easily, and in very few words,

Christmas merry-making. Notwithstanding the slight and desultory inquiry which took place respecting this fire, and the subsequent report, I have never been able to divest my mind of suspicions of the most horrible kind respecting its cause.

It must be evident to the meanest capacity, that a fever or epidemic may take place in any house, without blame attaching to any one; and admitting, for the sake of argument, that there really was an epidemic, before it be made a ground of censure, some may think it incumbent on me to shew that every reasonable and due care had *not* been taken to prevent it. On the contrary, I think the other party ought to prove that proper care had been taken, considering that I could have no means of information, he had.

I wish very much that, in this case, Dr. Best had been a little more explicit, and had informed us what species of epidemic this was: I should then have been better able to make observations upon it: as it is, I must guess at it, as well as I can. But first, I must premise, that not being a medical man, I am not certain I understand the technical term, epidemic.

Is the itch epidemic? Perhaps, on referring to the state of the concealed cells, and the description of the house in Mr. Nicoll's letter, (see App. No. I.) you may not think the condition in which they were found by Colonel Cooke and the other governors, on the 24th of March, 1814, the most likely either to prevent or cure it,—and that Vickers had it, cannot be doubted; but, as people do not die of the itch, that cannot be the complaint. Perhaps there was a dysentery: if this were the case, I think the kind of bread given to the Pontefract witnesses, if eaten by the pauper patients, would very readily account for it; and it will then be left for you to judge, whether a due degree of care had been taken to prevent it. It seems to me impossible to doubt the truth of the respectable and disinterested witnesses who came from Pontefract to give evidence in the case of Martha Kyd, when they make oath, that they saw the bread given to Margaret Beckwith in the Asylum, and that it was of the most detestable quality they had ever seen.

I am very glad that Dr. Best, by producing the anonymous letters* of recovered lunatics, to prove the goodness of the bread and the merits of the Asylum, admits, that they may be competent witnesses as to what they see or feel during their insanity.† I only wish this had been conceded in the first instance: it would have enabled me to produce such numbers of cases of cruelty, as would have saved me very great trouble in cleansing the Augean Stable.

* As Dr. Best has given you some extracts, I will take the liberty of giving you a few also, with this only difference, that mine, all but one, shall have the names to them. See App. No. XI.

† This completely lets in the evidence of E. West as to the question of the father of her child.

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It is very curious, that when a man says the bread in the Asylum was good, he is to be credited; but when he shews marks on his back, and says he was flogged, he is not to be credited.—See App. No. V.

A very extraordinary degree of care to conceal this epidemic, seems to have been taken, for which I am utterly unable to account.

On the 2d of December, (as stated by me in my letter to Earl Fitzwilliam, p. 24,) his Grace the Archbishop, when examining the officers and servants of the house on *oath*, whether they were guilty of cruelty and neglect in the case of Vickers, asked one of them, if there had been any infectious fever in the house,—the man replied, that only a slight appearance of typhus had shewn itself in one or two instances. Dr. Best was present, and made no observation. Now, it is very evident, his Grace's question could be for no other purpose than to ascertain whether there was any complaint to account satisfactorily for the mortality, to which I had called the attention of the governors by a written memorial, (vide App. to my letter to Lord Fitzwilliam, p. 15) read to them, not an hour before, by his Grace; and it is evident also, that, if this epidemic had taken place, it would have afforded Dr. Best the easiest possible means of accounting for the mortality. Then, I ask him, and all his friends present on that day, the reason it was not named? Why my charge was not instantly answered by pleading this epidemic; and why it was publicly heard of for the first time before your committee?

On the 2d of December, I did not bring forward charges against any one individual. I could not say which of the officers or servants, within those walls, where, at that time, I had no access, had beaten or flogged Vickers; but I brought them forward as grounds for public investigation and inquiry. (vide App. to my letter to Lord Fitzwilliam, p. 15) which would have the effect either to procure justice for the sufferers, or to clear up the character of the establishment. And the answer to me was, that there was no sufficient ground for general investigation and inquiry; that the house was in the highest possible state of health, order, and cleanliness; that there was no reason to suspect the contrary; and that to enter on a general investigation and inquiry on such slight grounds, would throw a slur on the house, and on the characters of highly respectable men; and, upon this occasion, there was no mention made of any mortality.

Soon after the 2d of December, my statement, that the deaths in the Asylum were to those in the Retreat, from the beginning of the two institutions, *cæteris paribus*, as three to one, was attacked in the York papers, and two anonymous letters were published; but in neither of these was a word said respecting

this epidemic, and the mortality was denied. Numerous meetings were held; but I never heard that this disorder was named at any of them.

My letter to Lord Fitzwilliam was published October the 3d: two pamphlets were published in answer to it,—one by the apothecary, who has since been dismissed,—and another under the name of Corrector;* but in neither of them is a word said upon this subject; nor is the least notice taken of what I have stated respecting his Grace's question, in my letter, p. 24.

I now take the liberty of asking Dr. Best, why, after having taken the oath administered to him in the presence of his Grace the Archbishop, to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, on hearing the man answer (and I affirm he did hear it for he took part in the examination) that there was no fever in the house, he did not inform his Grace of this, as it would seem, equally fatal disorder. I maintain, that, in *foro conscientiae*, both the man and Dr. Best were bound, in answer to his Grace's question, to have replied,—no, there has been no fever, but there has been an epidemic. And it seems to me to follow, as a matter of course, that, if there had been such a complaint in the house, such would have been the reply.

I apprehend the existence of an epidemic in the house, would not in the least affect the other cases of abuse or neglect; but, if there were not some extraordinary reason to account for it, I think no one will deny that the mortality, if ascertained, will, in fact, prove such mismanagement as effectually to establish something like a high degree of criminality in every person at all responsible for the care of the patients, and render the consideration of all other cases of little consequence. And although we have heard only of an epidemic in the last year, I prophesy we shall, as soon as I have stated one other fact, hear that it had not been very uncommon. The mortality, in the last year, does not seem to be materially greater than in several former ones.

In 1809, the number of deaths were .. 29

In 1810, 23

In 1811, 23

An epidemic is as much wanting to account for the deaths in 1809, as in 1814, in which, exclusive of those occasioned by the fire, there were 29. The proportion of deaths in 1810 and 1811 to the number of patients in the house, is, to those in the

* It has been said the latter was published by the Rev. W. Dealtry, of Wigginton. I thought it too contemptible to receive any notice; but it was answered by a letter attributed to S. W. Nicoll, Esq. I now only name it that Mr. Dealtry may have an opportunity of contradicting a report so injurious to him in every point of view.

Retreat, nearly as four to one. Will another epidemic be ready to account for this?

At first sight, this may appear to reflect on the professional characters of the medical officers of the institution: with that I really believe it has no connexion. The real conviction in my mind is, that Dr. Best, in order that he might be able to say that his house was conducted on as lenient a plan as the Retreat, had ordered all chains to be disused; but had neglected, in lieu thereof, to adopt any increased vigilance or mild contrivances, such as the Quakers use, to prevent the patients from injuring each other; and that, in fact, they killed one another. This, I have no doubt, was one of the causes of the mortality. The case of Chappey, a pauper, (alluded to in p. 7,) is a strong example of this kind. He was shut in a room for the night, when in a state of great violence, and in a strait waistcoat, with three other lunatics, an iron fender and two pewter chamber-pots being left loose amongst them; and, before morning, he was so bruised that he died the following day. At this time, the Committee of General Inquiry was sitting almost daily. Immediately on his death, as if nothing unusual had happened, he was put into a coffin, and sent to his friends in York to be interred. But the Rev. Mr. Graham, suspecting something wrong, would not bury him without a coroner's inquest, which returned a verdict, that he had died from the violence of the other patients.

He was entered in the books, as usual, "died;" and, if it had not been for this troublesome clergyman, the epidemic would have borne the blame.

How many similar accidents happened, it is impossible to know, as the mode of entering all, "died" or "removed," effectually disguised the facts both from the Governors and the public.

After I had produced the fact of the mortality, on the 2d of December, 1813, and it had been strenuously denied, and had been proved, and could no longer be denied, lime, I am told, was thrown into the privies, I believe, not so much to conduce to the health of the house, as to promote the credibility of the epidemic-story, which it had been then found would be necessary to account for that which could no longer be denied.

I prescribed a medicine much more efficacious than lime: I prescribed COMMITTEES and VISITORS: after the application of which remedy, in twelve months only four patients died.

Not long after my prescription, a most extraordinary thing was done by the committee. I am informed, that, with the approbation of Dr. Best and the apothecary, no less than THIRTY patients were ordered to be discharged; and

letters were written to their respective friends to take them away.

Who, after this, will doubt the efficacy of my medicine,—visitors and committees? I will warrant it superior even to Dr. Hunter's famous secret—*insane powders*—either green or grey,—or his patent Brazil salts into the bargain.*

At the meeting in August, a resolution, called the non-criminality resolution, was passed, which has been sometimes misrepresented, and sometimes misunderstood. In the proceedings of that day, it makes a very singular appearance, standing like a solitary cypher on a sheet of paper, without preface or appendix, or any explanation whatever why or how it came there; for no stranger would ever think, from reading it, that Dr. Best had misapplied the money; but he might suppose that the steward, or treasurer, or some one else, had misapplied it. I had said that large sums had not been applied according to the original intention of the donors, to the relief of the poorer classes; but I had never said that Dr. Best had misapplied them. I only ought to have said so, instead of exercising any forbearance towards him. However, that this resolution may no longer stand by itself, I will take the liberty of supplying both a preface and an appendix; then it will be as follows; the preface and appendix in Roman letters—the resolution in italics:—

Minutes of the Committee of Investigation, p. 45.

"The Committee having requested Dr. Best to state what he considered to be the duties of his office, stated to the following effect:

"That he exercises a general superintendence over the subordinate officers and servants of the institution; attends the Asylum daily except when prevented by any particular business; visits all the wards and apartments of the patients; orders any thing he sees amiss to be corrected; prescribes medicines for such patients as he judges to require them; directs the diet and treatment he considers most pro-

* Amongst much medical nonsense, published by physicians interested to conceal their neglect, and the abuses of their establishments, it has been said, that persons afflicted with insanity are more liable than others to mortifications in their extremities. I believe this to be totally erroneous. Nothing of the kind was ever experienced at the institution of the Quakers. If the members of the royal and learned College of Physicians were chained, or shut up naked, on straw saturated with urine and excrement, with a scanty allowance of food,—exposed to the inclemency of a northern climate, in cells having windows unglazed,—I have no doubt they would soon exhibit as strong a tendency to mortified extremities, as any of their patients. And I have no doubt also, if you will order the experiment to be tried, these learned gentlemen will instantly exhibit as violent paroxysms as ever were exhibited by either Norris or Vickers, until the united and happy effects of cold and hunger, induced a speedy and wholesome docility.

N. B. There seems to be a very important error of the press, or short-hand writer, in the 28th line of the 82d page of the Minutes of Evidence. The word "Monro" ought to be substituted for the word "Morris." See p. 97 and 202.

"per in particular cases; settles the rate of payment on the admission
 "of each patient, except in the instance of those who pay less than
 "parish paupers; answers the letters of inquiry from the patients'
 "friends; informs the parishes or relations of patients when he considers
 "them fit for removal; or directs the steward to do so."

"RESOLVED—That no criminality attaches to Dr. Best for misappli-
 "cation of the funds of this institution."

Extract from the Order Book, 8th February, 1813.

"ORDERED—That the report now produced, and submitted to the
 "court by Dr. Best, be adopted, and that the same be printed and dis-
 "tributed."

Extract from the Report.

"1813. The Asylum 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 expences of
 "the indigent are reduced by the payments of the more affluent patients.
 "Parish and other paupers are maintained at the expence of nine shil-
 "lings 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 circum-
 "stances, who pay for their own board, and have no assistance from
 "their parishes, receive the benefit of 35*l.* per ann. (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 expences 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 payments; but
 "is authorized to receive, from the friends of the more affluent patients,
 "the reasonable emoluments of his profession."

I leave you now to judge, whether Dr. Best was ignorant of
 the charitable principles on which the institution was founded,
 and whether, in diverting the overflowings of the opulent pa-
 tients into his own pocket, which were intended to reduce the
 payments of the indigent class "no criminality attached to him
 for misapplying the funds of the institution."

This non-criminality motion was moved as an amendment of
 another motion, by a very warm supporter of mine, S. W.
 Nicoll, Esq. with whom I had not the pleasure to be acquainted,
 until some time after I had commenced my operations against
 the abuses in the Asylum. On my introduction to him, he fairly
 and candidly told me, that, if my object was to ruin Dr. Best, he

would not support me; that he had known him, his family, and connexions, for many years; that he was very sorry for the situation in which he was placed,—but that he was more sorry for the situation of the unfortunate lunatics, who, he was now satisfied, were much abused and neglected; that he was determined to spare no exertions to reform the place; that he would avoid every possible injury to Dr. Best: but that if it came to a question, whether he or the interest of the house should suffer, he would not hesitate what line to take. I need hardly add, that I most thankfully accepted the assistance of such a man on terms so honourable. I have reason to believe, that many of the other governors acted precisely on the same principles with Mr. Nicoll; and this will account for several things which, for want of this explanation, have been thought extraordinary.

The Committee of General Inquiry and Investigation was named by Mr. Nicoll, and was composed of two sets of persons: 1st of old governors, who took a decisive part against all reform, and 2d of gentlemen having the same feelings as Mr. Nicoll, with respect to Dr. Best; so that whenever any thing was proposed favourable to the physician, it was sure to be carried by a decisive majority, provided it was not so strong as to endanger the wished-for reform; and this is the reason why the report of this committee is so odd a mixture of glaring facts and attempts to disguise the real nature of them.

When I brought forward the statement of the misapplication of the money, the friends of Dr. Best alleged in his defence, that he took it because his predecessor, Hunter, had done so; that he did not know that it was contrary to the rules of the institution for him to take it, although a resolution, almost verbally the same as the latter of those copied above, was repeatedly passed in Hunter's time, and Dr. Best had always access to the books; that, therefore, though an extreme misapplication had taken place, yet, as it had been done in ignorance, there was no criminality in it.

By the discovery of the above motion and order of Dr. Best, of the 8th of February, 1813, and the subsequent publication of his report, this defence is no longer of the least service: they were known to few, and not adverted to when the vote of non-criminality was passed.

It appears from Mr. Nicoll's letter, given in the Appendix, No. I. that the motion would not have been made, if the report of 1813 had been known to him. After the appearance of that order and publication, he could not any longer shut his eyes to the real truth, and I believe, though very reluctantly, he gave up the Doctor's cause. I particularly request your attention to every part of Mr. Nicoll's letter.

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Some persons have excused Dr. Best, by saying that the governors were as much to blame as he was, in having ceased to appoint visitors, committees, &c. I do not think the governors were justified in delegating such a trust without any check or control to any one, however high he might stand in their opinion; but having once done so, I contend, the greater the trust they reposed in Dr. Best, the greater ought to have been his anxiety and care, so to fulfil the duties of it, that not the least blame should attach to those who had placed such confidence in his care, attention, honour, and integrity. Whether the confidence of the governors was met by a suitable care, anxiety, and zeal, on the part of Dr. Best, I shall not give an opinion: you are masters of all the facts, and must judge for yourselves. I cannot entirely excuse the conduct of the old governors, though I cannot admit it as an extenuation of Dr. Best; and I beg that what they did, and what I requested, on the 2d of December, may not be forgotten.

I produced a great mass of written evidence, partly on oath, of eight or nine witnesses, to prove a fact of abuse: in consequence, I begged an inquiry might be instituted, and that visitors and committees might be appointed. After having examined the officers and servants, on oath, whether they were guilty or not, and no other witnesses, they censured me, and did not appoint either committees or visitors; and neither inquiry, nor the appointment of visitors and committees, would have taken place, if the attempt to whitewash the case of Vickers had not excited the indignation of a number of gentlemen who had long been aware that abuses existed in the Asylum, and who, by subscribing about 800*l.* made themselves governors, and by joining the few old ones, who were of their opinion, procured a majority—a majority at first very small, but which rapidly increased, many of the old governors, who had been excessively prejudiced, but well disposed, soon beginning to see the truth.

Previous to the general meeting in August, I published a letter, which gave great offence, (see App. No. VI.) in which I say, that large sums of money had been misapplied, and call upon the governors to dismiss every officer or servant who had abused his authority, or neglected his duty.

I published this letter because I knew the determined resolution to retain Dr. Best, at all events; and I thought, to preserve something like consistency, that all the rest of the officers and servants would be continued also; for I did not see how the governors could retain the person whose duty it was, according to his own account, "*to exercise a general superintendence over the subordinate officers and servants of the institution;*"—"To attend the Asylum daily;"—"To order any thing he saw amiss to be

"corrected, &c. &c." and dismiss the rest; and, without their dismissal, I did not think that any real and durable reform would take place.

It was said, that my call to dismiss was premature. The quarterly courts might have dismissed the servants; but, after many months, they were *all* kept in their places. And I believe, if that letter had not been written, they would have been continued. Though that letter roused the anger of all the old friends of abuse and corruption, yet it also awakened public indignation, and the public opinion was not to be resisted.

Until that letter made its appearance, all the officers and servants, and their friends, all the tradesmen, who had been accustomed to make a *good thing* of the Asylum, flattered themselves that, as no notice had been taken of the printed report, the vote of thanks to me at the quarterly court had operated as a sop for the Cerberus; that the old servants and officers would all be retained; that the committees and visitors would continue but for a little time; that the novelty would soon wear off; and that then the house would revert to its old quiet comfortable habits,—good jobs,—bills well paid,—nice perquisites,—reasonable emoluments, &c. &c.

That letter pleased nobody, except a few who, like myself, were *violent* men, that is to say, not half-measure men, but men who saw clearly that, to cleanse the *stable*, strong measures were necessary.

Many of the old and distant governors, who had never seen the report, could not believe that letter: paupers neglected and abused,—casualties disguised,—money, in large sums, misapplied,—the deaths of one hundred and forty-four patients concealed;—impossible! It could not be.

The report of the Committee of Inquiry, which, in fact, though in such terms as almost to disguise the truth,* let out the secrets detailed in my letter, was, by a mistake, not delivered to the governors as it ought to have been, previous to the last quarterly court, which was held before the meeting in August; and it was again, by mistake, not delivered previous to the *general* court in August; so that the public generally, and most of the governors, were kept in ignorance of its contents, until my letter appeared. It might have been discovered before that time, that I was not a man very likely to sit down quietly under such mistakes, the evident effect of which was to render useless all I had been doing.

Upon the continuation in office of the physician, whose duty it was "to correct any thing that was amiss," and the dismissal of

* Of the wilful false statement of the deaths in the newspaper, it was said that due care had not been taken as to its correctness, &c. &c.

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Dr. Best, though an M. D. in full practice, was, for some years previous to Hunter's death, a pupil of the latter, who, by his letter dated York, Dec. 11th, 1804, says, "I have accepted 'Dr. Best as my pupil:'" again, "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.' Nothing secret!—not even the secret of giving the Asylum, out of a payment of four pounds a week, ten shillings only, and reserving three pounds ten shillings for himself, as his reasonable emolument.

If your indignation at all this does not prevent it, I am sure, my Lords and Gentlemen, you must laugh heartily at the hypocrisy of this regular old quack.

If all the circumstances of this house be considered, you will not be surprised that its reform was procured with so much difficulty.

Most of the old governors in the neighbourhood of York, in whose charge it had chiefly been, were extremely desirous that the abuses should not be known, in order to conceal their own neglect, and their obstinacy,* in having opposed the attempts at reform made, at different times, by Mason the poet, Mr. Withers, at that time recorder of York, and Dr. Burgh, which now it was evident ought not to have been resisted, and which, in fact, had no more to do with politics, as was artfully represented, than with witchcraft.

The last attempt at reform was made when Dr. Best was elected physician, and was frustrated, as usual, by the plea, that there was no ground to inquire into the emoluments of the physician, as there was no reason to believe that any were improperly taken. No governor could positively assert that any were improperly taken, because he could not see the accounts, the whole of them, of every kind, being always made up as published by the physician, Mr. Atkinson, and Mr. Surr, without the intervention of any governor whatever; and if he had got a sight of the books, false ones were provided; and for what could they be designed but to meet such an occasion as this? And now at last (the plea of ignorance being abandoned) the failure of this attempt is the only ground on which Dr. Best

* This was the real reason why I refused to trust the case of Vickers to their tribunal on the 2d of December, but appealed to the public. Experience has justified me; and when, in my next letter, I said I regretted what was done, I did not allude to myself, but to others.

can rest his justification for having taken these large sums; and which I now take the liberty of telling him, he is bound, in *foro conscientiae*, to REFUND. He has no right whatever to them: they are the property of the POOR. I affirm, that, if all the money improperly taken by Drs. Hunter and Best, for patients in the Asylum, had been received half yearly and placed out to accumulating interest, after allowing the physician the same stipend as that now allowed to a most respectable physician, Dr. Wake, the institution would have been richer than it is by upwards of 40,000*l.* and there would have been no need to tax this county for the new Asylums at Wakefield or Northallerton. If my calculations be examined, they will be found to be made upon sums below the actual averages. The sum will exceed 40,000*l.* even upon Mr. Gray's calculation, and he has evidently endeavoured to reduce it as low as possible: he has also taken the highest payment yet known at seventeen shillings a week less than the truth,—3*l.* 3*s.* instead of 4*l.*

I am by no means certain that I have taken the highest weekly payment, four pounds a week, high enough.

The Rev. Doctor Bristow paid four pounds a week, out of which the institution received ten shillings, the remainder 3*l.* 10*s.* being paid over to Hunter for his reasonable emolument, and the use of his "*secret insane powder*!"

It is a curious fact, that there is an order in the book to limit the number of opulent patients to 25; but the number, 25, has been obliterated by an *accidental* drop of ink. I do not believe that *that* drop of ink would have *dropped* there, if more than 25 opulent patients had not been received into the Asylum. The blotted figures are known to have been 25, from a posterior reference to them in the book, which I have no doubt was overlooked when the 25 was blotted.

When the physician had the opportunity of boarding such men as Dr. Bristow, for ten or fourteen shillings a week, it is not likely he should ever have sent them to his private house, until he could send no more into the Asylum. And by a rule of 1788, July 3*d.* he had a power, by dismissing such as he pleased to call incurables, to leave room always for the opulent patients who offered. Dr. Best claims merit for raising the payments of the opulent patients from ten to fourteen shillings a week. In pursuance of my plan of forbearance, in my letter to Earl Fitzwilliam, (p. 21) I gave Dr. Best the full benefit of this argument; but I might have observed, that, if he had not so raised them, from the increased price of every article of life, the expences of the house could not have been paid; and an inquiry would have taken place, the secret would have got out, and he must have lost the whole.

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Earl Fitzwilliam, at the most numerous meeting of governors ever known, declared, that he had not the most distant suspicion of such an abuse, or he would not have tolerated it for a single moment; and he further declared, that he did not believe that it was known to the other governors. I am sorry to say, I differ in opinion with his Lordship: I believe it was known to several of them; but, when his Lordship made this public declaration, there were none of them found shameless enough to avow it.

I shall in the Appendix (No. VIII.) insert the proceedings of the last general court of governors of the Asylum. I must say, I feel much gratified by the compliment it has thought proper to pay me; more particularly, as it can hardly be supposed possible that it would have paid me such a compliment, if it had thought I had been wilfully misrepresenting or exaggerating anything to you. Every thing that had passed before your Committee must have been well known, several of your Committee being present, and forming part of the court.

Dr. Best has accused me of wilful misrepresentation, and of making statements at variance with fact. We will now see whether this serious charge will more properly apply to me or to himself. Of my statement, that the physician's participation in the weekly payments was discovered by a book, he says, (p. 24) that it is at variance with the fact, and that HE disclosed the circumstance to the Committee.

It will not be said that S. W. Nicoll, Esq. barrister at law and counsel to the corporation of the city of York, is not as credible and as competent a witness as the interested physician.

I refer you to his letter, (App. No. I.) in which you will see, that he expressly and flatly contradicts this assertion of Dr. Best.

Mr. Gray, and the Rev. Mr. Graham, were the two gentlemen to whom the accounts were referred, and they both clearly and unequivocally contradict this assertion. I refer you to their letter, (App. No. IX.); and if this evidence be not sufficient, I refer you to the report of the Committee of Investigation, (p. 45 to 48, which will be found in the Appendix to my Letter laid by me upon your table,*) and, after you have read it, I defy you to disbelieve their assertion confirmed, as it then will be, by the evidence of your own eyes.

It there appears, that, on the 26th of January, an inquiry was made into the salaries and duties of the officers of the institution; but that no question was proposed to Dr. Best respecting his emoluments. The Committee then adjourned to the 28th, on which day Messrs. Graham and Gray appear to have made their statement of the classification and payments of the patients.

* My Letter to Earl Fitzwilliam, to be had at Rivington's.

Then it was that the secret was let out, and then, and not before, as you will see in page 49, Dr. Best refers to the classification "*now stated*," that is, to Messrs. Graham and Gray's report, and acknowledges what it would have been madness any longer to attempt to conceal.

I trust I shall now no more be accused by Dr. Best, of stating things at variance with fact.

Dr. Best will hardly class Messrs. Graham and Gray with his violent opponents, when he recollects that they both voted in his favour on the non-criminality resolution, knowing perfectly well the whole history of the false accounts. Should the disclosures I now make be galling to Dr. Best and his friends, they must not impute blame to me on their account. For my own justification, I have been compelled to produce what I had before suppressed out of regard to them; and I beg it may be observed, that it is not I but Dr. Best who so kindly blazons forth the names of his friends in this most honourable transaction. Dr. Best has referred you, for confirmation of what he has thought proper to say in contradiction to my statements, to his Grace the Archbishop of York and ten gentlemen whose names are given in your report. To such of these gentlemen as live in the neighbourhood of York, the distant governors have naturally delegated the duties of a more watchful superintendence of the Asylum than their remote residence would allow them to exercise; they are principally the gentlemen whose respectability of character the public naturally consider a sufficient surety for the proper treatment of the patients. They, of course, must be *very indignant* when they discover that the contrary has been the case; and I cannot believe that they have given permission to Dr. Best to make use of their names in the manner he has done, to countenance the perversion of this excellent public charity to one of the most infamous of jobs—a job pre-eminently infamous, because accompanied by a total disregard of the miseries of the poor helpless wretches, by the officers and servants, to whose care and protection they were confided.

I cannot, I will not believe, that his Grace the Archbishop of York has lent his name to countenance such a transaction, to palliate the "*extreme misapplication*," to use his Grace's own words, of the funds of the institution, by which large sums of money, the property of the poor, were diverted into the pocket of an individual. I will not believe this of a prelate whose humanity and benevolence are so well known, and the liberality of whose sentiments and opinions, reflects an honour on his elevated situation.

It ought, with respect to his Grace, to be recollected, that he has only been a short time at York, and it would be a want of

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candour in me not to declare, that I sincerely believe he was deceived by artful misrepresentations as to the state of the place, and that, when he voted, that no criminality attached to Dr. Best for misapplication of the money, he, like Mr. Nicoll, was unacquainted with Dr. Best's motion and the order of the 8th of February, 1813.

Contrary to my belief, should these gentlemen, however, have so far forgotten what they owe to themselves, as to have lent their names to countenance this transaction, and the assertion that I have stated things at variance with fact, I hope they will be careful not to give an opportunity to censorious persons to quote against them the old proverb, "*fraus latet in generalibus*;" that they will avoid the use of general terms—gentlemanly man—man of unquestionable honour—trifling irregularities much exaggerated—and similar unmeaning phrases; and that they will come at once to particulars; that they will shew that I have not proved, by the report itself, as well as by the evidence of Messrs. Nicoll, Graham, and Gray, that, when Dr. Best was accusing me of having misrepresented him, he was misrepresenting a most material fact, to screen the misapplication of the money.

That Vickers was not neglected and abused.

That the two surgeons, of the name of Maples did not know the itch or a mortified limb, when they saw it.

That Francis Moat, and the other witnesses in that case, perjured themselves.

That the Rev. Mr. Skorey and Martha Kyd were not cruelly and improperly treated.

That the Mandalls, Mr. Mason, and the Pontefract witnesses to the bad bread, also perjured themselves.

That Colonel Cooke and Messrs. Nicoll, Graham, and Gray, have all given false evidence.

That the filthy cells were not concealed.

That the casualties were not disguised.

That the mortality in the house was not excessive, and could not be accounted for, by any other means than general neglect and ill usage.

That the deaths were not stated falsely to the public, to the amount of 144 at least, in order to conceal the dreadful mortality.

That this false statement was not sent to Dr. Best for examination, previous to its publication, and was not returned to be published, without any correction.

That large sums of money were not misapplied, by their friend, the physician, to his own use, in the very teeth of an order of his own shewing that he had no right to them.

That false books of account were not made out, which concealed the emoluments of Dr. Best, and concealed nothing else, and that the true ones were not burnt.

And, finally, that Dr. Best was not, in fact, considered, both by the governors and himself, to have the whole and sole management of the place, and was not, consequently, responsible for all the neglect and abuse which prevailed in every department.

All these facts they must deny and disprove, before the respectability of their names will have any weight either with you or with the public.

My Lords and Gentlemen, I hasten to conclude; and, I trust, I may now be permitted to hope, that I have proved, beyond a doubt, the shameful abuses which existed in the York Asylum, and the absolute necessity of strong parliamentary measures to prevent their recurrence; and, also, that I have completely exculpated myself from the charge brought against me, of stating things at variance with fact, and of wilful misrepresentation;—but I now feel conscious that, in so doing, I have sinned past all hope of forgiveness. With unhallowed hand, I have violently torn aside the veil which concealed the secrets of this *filthy temple of MOLOCH*. I have asserted nothing, however, but what I sincerely believe I can prove, and what I am willing to repeat, at the bar of your honourable house, or, in more solemn form, at the bar of the House of Lords,—still continuing to disregard the intimation formerly held out by Dr. Best, that this investigation, if persisted in, *would end in blood*.*

I have the honour to be,

My Lords and Gentleman,

Your most obedient humble servant,

GODFREY HIGGINS.

SKELLOW-GRANGE, Doncaster, 1815.

POSTSCRIPT.

I think it necessary to guard the reader from falling into a mistake, under which I confess I laboured, until, by a late inquiry, I was undeceived. The thirty patients ordered to be discharged, (vide p. 47) were not all supposed to be recovered, part of them, from being in an inoffensive state merely, having been considered no longer, under all existing circumstances, fit subjects for confinement in the Asylum.

* This I am prepared to prove whenever properly called on.

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The Committee of Five was appointed in my absence, soon after the fire, at a special court, for the purpose of ventilating the house, and affording temporary accommodation to the patients. It consisted of three old, one new governor, and Dr. Best; and, as four of its members maintained that the house was in the best order possible, it was not to be expected that it would do much for its improvement. I was dissatisfied that it had not found the concealed cells, or improved the state of the house; and at the quarterly court, 14th April, 1814, I proposed to dissolve it, but it was said, that such proceeding was very ungracious, and that I had better add to its number, (App. to my letter to Earl Fitzwilliam, p. 28). To this I consented, and four new governors were added to it, viz. the Rev. J. Richardson, Mr. S. Tuke, Mr. Thorpe, and Mr. D. Priestman. This instantly gave it efficiency; and Dr. Best says truly enough, (p. 35) that we ordered the friends of patients (he might have said upwards of thirty) to be written to; but all these orders were issued after the new members were added to the Committee, and in consequence of such addition.

I have much pleasure in taking this opportunity of stating, that the Asylum seems to me to be now under a most excellent system of management; and the late energetic conduct of the governors, in dismissing one of their officers for misbehaviour, gives a reasonable assurance, that it will not only be continued, but improved.

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APPENDIX.

No. I.

LETTER FROM S. W. NICOLL, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

DR. BEST's examination before the Committee of the House of Commons, appears to me open to much observation. I by no means think it was his intention to deceive the Committee; but he was an interested party, and nothing was more probable than that he should deceive himself. He has always considered his own character to be involved in the past state of the Asylum; hence a predilection naturally arose to palliate and excuse that state; and these arguments, which satisfied himself, he has easily imagined would also satisfy others.—My own opinion of the Asylum is, that there were no known systematic cruelties* committed in it. The higher patients paid well, both in fees and in perquisites, and were, in general, well treated; but the deficiency in superintendence and subordination was universal, and when a keeper became teased and irritated with his patient, there was no check to the indulgence of his own temper. This is abundantly evident from Mr. Skorey's case, which can be attributed to nothing but the common principles of the place.

Of the state of the poorer patients, I cannot speak but in terms of the strongest reprobation.

They wanted every thing: air, exercise, cleanliness, clothes, amusement.

Being pretty well acquainted with the receptacles of the poor, with prisons, work-houses, and hospitals, I can unhesitatingly assert, that I never met with any thing approaching the filthy and wretched state of the inferior parts of the Asylum prior to the late reform. The squalid wretchedness of the lower patients, the fetid damp of their cells, struck the mind with horror, and fastened on the imagination.

The observation commonly made is, "having obtained a salutary reformation, why not let the subject rest?"

When one party ceases to *defend* the past state of the Asylum, the other will have no inducement to expose it. The question

* From much consideration, I am decidedly of a different opinion, (vide App. No. XI.) I believe a regular system of cruelty was practised, flogging, starving, and dark and solitary confinement, in order to reduce the spirits of what are called high patients, and I believe not a few perished in the experiment.—G. H.

is of a truly public nature. This case is but one of many; and if the misconduct of the York Asylum is to be palliated, softened, and excused, so may that of every other institution; and the combined evidence of abuses, whence alone a parliamentary remedy can be hoped, may be frittered away into insignificance, and lose all hold on the mind.

If we permit it to be said, that the charges of abuse are a mere cry of faction,—that personal hostility, and not public principle, is at the bottom,—every keeper of every lunatic receptacle may have his personal enemies too, and the whole question may be resolved into party spleen or professional envy. As an example, the York Asylum stands pre-eminent and almost alone. Instituted by persons of the first character, conducted by those who founded it, and their no less respectable successors, the vigilant attention of the public at large,—nay, its forcible irruption into the very heart of the fabric, could alone rectify the abuses which existed.

The confinement of thirteen patients in a very small chamber, was not, I believe, a common practice; yet it cannot be said to be either occasional or necessary: not occasional, for it lasted a very considerable time. The fire happened on the 28th of December, 1813: on the 28th of January following, the Committee walked over the house. My attention was accidentally drawn to this shocking receptacle, filled with clamorous maniacs, who were reciprocally stimulating each others fury. Mr. S. Tuke has since informed me, that this number, or nearly this, remained, on the whole, several months thus pent up.

If it was not occasional, neither was it necessary: other parts of the house were not similarly crowded; more patients might have been discharged; accommodations offered elsewhere might have been accepted; they were refused through Dr. Best, and he continued admitting fresh patients, till a special order preventing it was obtained.

I have already expressed my opinion respecting known and systematic cruelty: the special investigation to which Dr. Best alludes, respecting the personal ill usage of patients, was not, however, sufficient to prove how this point stood: it was denied by all the persons connected with the Asylum who were examined, and *no other evidence* was adduced. It is exceedingly important to know what was the real nature of the investigation alluded to. Six or seven cases casually brought forwards, were referred to a Committee: after examining into three, it seemed to be the unanimous opinion of this Committee, that the whole affairs of the Asylum must undergo a revision. I here proposed to close the inquiry: the desired end was obtained, which was, *not to detail the past, but to reform it.* Additional cases poured

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in upon me; but further attention to them was wholly superfluous.

The resolutions alluded to by Dr. Best, were drawn up by myself, and were formed not for the purpose of expressing my own particular sentiments, but of obtaining that *unanimous* support which I conceived most conducive to the purposes of reform.

Dr. Best's observations on Mr. Skorey's case are obvious and striking: they did not escape the Committee who decided on that case, after fully and deliberately weighing these observations.

The destruction of the Asylum books, a point of principal moment, seems intimately connected with their discovery, and an attention to *dates* is essentially requisite to clear up this point.

An inquiry into the payment of patients was, on the 24th of January, 1814, referred to Mr. Graham and Mr. J. Gray: to them Mr. Surr, the steward, was ordered to send his quarterly statements of accounts for the year 1813. One quarter's account was missing; of another quarter, two statements were transmitted, both, apparently, complete documents, but each, in fact, essentially differing from the other. In one statement, certain patients appeared to pay 10s. per week—in the other, 9s. patients of 15s. per week, in one book, were reduced to 11s. in the other. In all the other quarterly accounts, save this one, the patients were regularly rated at the lower sums. That two distinct sets of books should be kept, thus importantly varying, was a circumstance pregnant with suspicion; that the double entries were meant for the purposes of deception, could scarcely be doubted. One mode of entry was meant to be used—the other to be shewn:—by one, the bills to the patients were to be made out—by the other, the supposed receipts from them were to be exhibited. From inquiry, this appeared clear, the smaller sums alone were carried to the credit of the house—the larger sums were actually received: the difference was paid to Dr. Best.

Prior to this discovery, not one word had been said in the Committee of the nature of Dr. Best's emoluments: that the discovery was accidental, can scarcely be doubted. With the exception of this sort of duplicate, the accounts sent were all those prepared for the public eye. There could be no intention of omitting one quarterly account: it was contrary to the order: that quarter's account then was supposed to be sent; but, by mistake, a quarter of the secret accounts was substituted. Had there been any intention of producing the secret accounts, all would have been sent. In withholding the real statements, the very thing was done for which this double entry was intended.

On the 28th of January, 1814, the day on which this disclosure was made by Mr. Graham and Mr. J. Gray in the committee, and after it was made, Dr. Best was examined by myself in the Committee on the subject of his emoluments: he very freely admitted the payments to him to be such as these books had laid open, and it appeared that from this source he had received about 300*l.* per annum: Dr. Best then is mistaken in considering the account of payments to have originally proceeded from himself. I certainly consider it as no more than a mistake, neither do I at all attribute to Dr. Best, either the withholding of the accounts in the first instance, or their destruction in the last.

Of the quantum of emolument received by Dr. Best from the patients of the higher classes in the Asylum, on account of whom he paid 14*s.* per week each into the Asylum, and from whose friends he received such weekly payments as were mutually agreed on, he at this meeting, January 28th, said nothing. Mr. Palmes told me, in private, that Dr. Best would, if desired, enter on the subject of private patients, but I did not feel authorized to request it. Long after this period, and when Mr. Surr was leaving his office, he was desired to deliver up the Asylum accounts. At first he said he had burnt them; he was applied to again, he then acknowledged he had not burnt *all*. At length he gave up a large quantity. What he *did* give up contained none of the full receipts from the patients; what he burnt, or still retained, contained these true statements, and consequently would, when compared with the accounts actually given up by him, and comprising the diminished payments, have proved the amount of Dr. Best's receipts. The same deliberate selection appears here as originally—there was obviously a purpose to be answered; it is not *chance* which could destroy one set of books, from which danger was to be apprehended, and preserve another from which there was none. Here again those books alone were forthcoming, which it is clear from their construction were alone meant for the public eye. No one will doubt the *design*, when the books were originally sent to Messrs. Graham and Gray, and when we, in the last instance, see a similar effect, we naturally look for a similar cause.

It is often observed that there could be no reason for destroying these books as their contents were already known. Before the time of such destruction it had been pretty generally rumoured that Dr. Best ought to be called on to refund a very great proportion of his receipts. Mr. Surr would readily and perhaps justly conceive that the books destroyed were essential to the establishment of any such claim against Dr. Best, particularly as only one detached quarterly account of this series

had been inspected by the Committee. Although the nature of Dr. Best's emoluments became thus known, their amount has to this day been matter of conjecture.

I thought you stated them too high in your letter to Lord Fitzwilliam, but, from a recent fact, I have altered that opinion. Greatly diminished as are the comparative payments of the higher classes of patients, they would now produce 690*l.* on the principles of Dr. Best's receipts from them. The former amount of their payments must have been very considerably higher than that sum, the inferior patients produced about 300*l.* I think 1400*l.* per annum is a reasonable estimate.*

That this or a much less considerable annual sum should be received by the physician to the Asylum, I think eminently wrong. But at the meeting in August, 1814, it appeared to me unjust that Dr. Best should be censured for misapplying the funds, I considered him as simply treading in the steps of his predecessor, partaking of established emoluments, which, if not directly authorised, were not directly forbidden. When I found, some weeks afterwards, that it was the law of the Asylum that the payments of the rich should form a fund for the relief of the poor, and that the physician was authorised to receive from the higher classes the reasonable emoluments of his profession only, and that this law was known to Dr. Best, having been published by himself in the Asylum report of 1813, my sentiments on this subject were materially altered, and my conduct at the recent meeting became a subject of regret.

I do not think it quite fair to advert to the mortality of any particular year; but it is certain, the mortality of the Asylum was comparatively increasing up to the period of the recent changes; and it is a fact, conclusive, I think, on its past and present state, that, in very near twelve months, five patients

* As Dr. Best has not informed us what was the amount of the highest weekly payment of the opulent patients, we cannot take the annual income from this source much higher than is here stated; but I conceive the real value of the place to him must have been considerably more. Let it be recollected that all these estimates are made independent of fees, and it appears from the evidence in No. III. that they were regulated by Dr. Best's own discretion merely. The name of physician to this place enabled Dr. Best to fill his private Mad-house at Acomb with patients of high rank and great wealth, the overflowings of the Asylum, and even private lodgings besides, and that patients of this description pay enormously is well known. The consumption of the ready money customer, the Asylum, must have been of first rate consequence to the favoured tradesmen in York; the tailor, grocer, shoemaker, druggist, butcher, draper who supplied bedding, which was found by the visitors so short that it would not cover the feet of the patients; miller that supplied meal to make bread, such as the Pontefract witnesses eat; and last, though not the least, the coffin maker. With all these gentlemen at his command, no doubt Dr. Best's family, and Mad-house at Acomb, would be supplied well, and on reasonable terms.

only have died,—a reduction of mortality from one in eight or nine, to less than one in twenty of the average number of patients.

Dr. Best has brought forward the letters of several persons formerly patients in the Asylum,—a species of testimony to which I feel no inclination to object: much evidence of this sort has been in my possession, differing, however, most essentially in its tendency from the testimony now produced. I do not conceive the treatment of the patients to have been universally harsh: when they created no trouble, they received no ill usage; and the accommodation of the superior classes might well be called comfortable. Of the kindness of the late apothecary and matron, Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson, to many of the patients, I have had convincing proofs; and that Dr. Best uniformly conducted himself with gentleman-like civility, I feel well persuaded.

Various passages of the letters produced might, however, shake a confidence, not very firmly fixed, as to the value of the whole. The gentleman, who writes from Ackworth, says, "I dined twice at one of the public tables, and was astonished to observe such plenty of wholesome food, and regretted the want of appetite to partake of the several dishes which were brought in regular succession on the table."

I have much oftener than twice attended each of the public tables of the Asylum, and must observe, that the above expression neither is, nor was, nor ought to be, applicable to any one of these tables.

The gentleman, resident at Foston, says, "I can with equal sincerity and truth most conscientiously aver, that an abundant supply of food of the best quality, and in a superior style of excellent cookery, was regularly and duly distributed to each patient, from the highest to the lowest, without a shadow of partiality, and with the most humane care and circumspection."

Let us hear what Mrs. Atkinson, the housekeeper, says on the subject of the patients diet; (vide report of the Committee of Inquiry, p. 52.) "The middle class of patients have three meagre days, they have a separate table from the paupers. On Saturdays the middle class have principally cold meat, and the lowest have offal in hash. She separates the coarsest parts for the lowest patients."

The superior classes it also appears from Mrs. Atkinson lived in a very different manner from the lower.

As to cleanliness the same gentleman observes, "The uncommon and general attention paid to that point in all its acceptations, branches, and departments, was a constant source of the purest satisfaction to me."

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Can this gentleman speak of the same house in which yourself and Colonel Cooke saw the secret cells, in, it is presumed, their ordinary state? Of a house in which the patients themselves, and the places they inhabited, were to a great extent objects of loathing both to the sense of smelling and of sight? Surely the exhibition of letters like these resembles more the act of an unskilful advocate, than of a sensible man, judiciously supporting his own cause.

There are many other parts of Dr. Best's evidence not less open to observation than those here adverted to; but they are in too able hands to require my attention, which has been given chiefly to those points on which my local situation and knowledge enable me to speak.

I remain, dear Sir, &c. &c.

S. W. NICOLL.

No. II.

Dr. BEST's DEFENCE.

THE following statement will be verified *on oath*, by the individuals whose names are mentioned below, and by the medical officers of the York Lunatic Asylum.

Charles Holgate, a keeper in the Asylum, had the special charge of William Vicars, from his coming to the Asylum on the 17th of April, to the middle of the summer, during the whole of which time he was in a state of almost incessant violence, and when his hands were confined, was in the habit of tearing his clothes with his teeth. During this period he tore both his suits of clothes entirely to pieces, some time afterwards he was provided with a new suit of clothes; the said Charles Holgate, in the mean time, viz. for about six weeks, supplying him with clothes of his own.

About the middle of the summer, Samuel Winn, another keeper in the Asylum, was appointed to take care of William Vicars. Soon after this time he became less violent, being much weaker, and showing a strong tendency to palsy: he continued however to tear his clothes, and within a very short time completely destroyed his new suit, with the exception of two shirts and two pair of stockings. During the remainder of the time he was in the Asylum, he was supplied with different articles of clothing by the keepers.

About the end of September, he had an apoplectic fit, laying speechless and senseless for two or three days, from which he was recovered by suitable treatment, and from the effects of which he was only convalescent at the time he left the Asylum.

During his illness he had a fire always in his room, and had a special attendant constantly sitting by him; and, besides, the assiduous medical treatment he received, he was abundantly supplied with nutritious food, mulled ale, and every thing that was judged most likely to be conducive to his comfort and recovery.

The ulcer on his leg broke out during his confinement to bed, and was dressed daily by the surgeon; and though it at one time threatened mortification, yet was both in an improved and an improving state when he left the Asylum.

A trifling eruption broke out on his thighs, arms, and sides, in the second week of his illness, but it appeared to depend entirely on the state of his constitutional health, and had none of the characters of the itch.

He was kept as clean as possible in the deplorable condition in which he lay, but as his discharges were generally involuntary, it was absolutely impracticable to keep him in a state of complete cleanliness.

CHARLES BEST.

Nov. 5, 1813.

No. III.

MANDALL'S CASE.

MRS. ELIZABETH MANDALL, sister to Mr. Robert Mandall, of Doncaster, but now of Tickhill, says, that to her own certain knowledge, her father received a letter from Dr. Best, when her brother Robert was in the Lunatic Asylum at York, telling him that her brother Robert had got his leg broken by accident, and that as he had given a great deal of trouble to Mr. Atkinson, he recommended him to send Mr. Atkinson a present. Upon this, Mr. Mandall consulted Mr. Branson, of Doncaster, who advised him to send a couple of pounds or guineas; he thought it would be enough, as he thought it was their duty at the Asylum to cure him. That old Mr. Mandall sent him two pounds or guineas, but she, Mrs. E. Mandall, has forgot which, though she saw the letter. That, on the 25th of August, to the best of her recollection, her father received a letter from Dr. Best, informing him that his son was dead; in consequence of this, he went over to York, accompanied by Mrs. Mandall, his daughter. That, when they were both present in the Asylum, Mrs. Mandall asked a man called James, how her brother came to get his leg broken; on which, he seemed surprised, and declared he had never any such thing; that he had nothing but a bruised ankle for a few days, from a kick of one of the other patients. That, presently afterward, a man came in of the name of Henry, to whom Mrs. M. put the same question, and who replied, with seeming sur-

prise, that he had no broken leg, but only a bruised ankle that confined him for a day or two. That, presently after this, Mr. Atkinson came in, (this was all in Mr. Atkinson's room) to whom Mrs. Mandall put the same question, and who directly answered the same thing, that he had no broken leg. Mrs. M. told Mr. Atkinson that Mr. M. had sent Dr. Best two pounds or guineas for curing his leg, for setting the broken bone, at which Mr. Atkinson smiled, but said nothing.

Mrs. M. further says, that her father was very much dissatisfied with the charges, particularly for attendance and wine. That he would not have paid them, but Mrs. Mandall persuaded him to do it. That James and Henry were the two men who constantly attended her brother, as they informed her. Mr. Mandall paid a guinea a week, Mrs. M. thinks, but she does not know from her own knowledge. Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson told Mrs. Mandall and her father, that it was usual to give gloves and wine at the funeral, and her father, in consequence, did give gloves and a gallon of white wine and a gallon of red, which was provided by Mr. Atkinson to the people in the house. Mrs. M. hereby declares the whole of the above to be true, and is ready to swear to the truth of it if necessary.

(Signed) ELIZABETH MANDALL.

Tickhill, Aug. 22, 1814.

Witness, G. HIGGINS.

Mr. Thomas Robinson Mandall, grandson to the elder Mr. Mandall, and nephew to the late Robert Mandall, who died in York Asylum. He remembers seeing a letter from Dr. Best, making a charge of five guineas for his own attendance, and he thinks there was a charge of two guineas for Mr. Atkinson. That he was at that time in the habit of answering Dr. Best's letters for his grandfather; he thinks he wrote the letter which inclosed the five guineas. When his grandfather came from York, he remembers very well his saying that his son's leg never had been broken. He understood his uncle was in the middle class of patients.

(Signed) THOS. R. MANDALL.

Sworn in my presence, this 22d day of
August, 1814.

G. HIGGINS.

Mrs. Mason, of Doncaster, sister to Mr. Robert Mandall, says, she has seen the letters which came from Dr. Best to her father respecting her brother, Robert Mandall; that she is positive there was a specific charge made by Dr. Best of five guineas for his extra attendance, and two guineas for Mr. Atkinson; and that she knows and is certain that her father sent

it. She says, she remembers reading the letter very well; she remembers the word extra; her little girl was ill at the time, and he brought it to her up stairs. She heard her father say, when he came home from the funeral, that both Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson had told him that his son Robert had never had a broken leg, and that they never had seen or received the two guineas. (Signed)

MARY MASON.

Sworn before me, this 22d day of
August, 1814.

G. HIGGINS.

Mr. Mason, of Doncaster, heard Mr. Mandall say he had paid Dr. Best's charge for himself and Mr. Atkinson, to the best of his recollection, five guineas and two guineas. That he came into possession of all the elder Mr. Mandall's papers, as solicitor for his executors. That he remembers a letter purporting to come from Dr. Best, and claiming those above-named charges for the cure of the broken leg, for his own and Mr. Atkinson's trouble and attendance. That he, after some time, destroyed those letters, not thinking them of any consequence, and wishing to efface from recollection all such unpleasant circumstances of his family. Mr. Mason married Mr. Mandall's daughter. He perfectly remembers Mr. Mandall telling him, after his return from York, that he had ascertained that his son's leg was never broken. (Signed)

THOS. MASON.

Sworn before me, this 22d day of
August, 1814.

G. HIGGINS.

N. B. All the deposing parties above are now alive, and ready to give evidence if called on; and so it was stated by me at York.

No. IV.

E. WEST'S CASE.

SINCE I had the honour of giving my evidence to you, I have learnt that my conduct has been publicly censured for traducing the character of James Backhouse, an innocent man. I know nothing against him, except this case of Elizabeth West, and, surely, when the anonymous letters of recovered lunatics are admitted as evidence, it must be allowed that she is a competent witness as to the father of her child, for she was in sane mind when she fathered it, and has been so ever since. Her character, both before her derangement and since her recovery, irreproachable.

Upon what principle the governors not only appropriated the funds of the charity to maintain this child, but afterwards voted a sum of money to Backhouse for a piece of plate, as a reward for his uninterrupted good service, I cannot tell. I do not think the money was appropriated according to the intention of the donors, but yet I must say, I agree with the governors that it does not seem very unfair that the institution should maintain its own bastards. In the case of D. Exilby, the husband, who had no access to his wife, was obliged to maintain the child which was known, by the ocular demonstration of four or five persons, to be one of the children which Parkin, of Hull, had to patients in this well regulated house; and I believe that some of the persons, members of the House of Lords, who signed the order for the plate, would rather have had their hands cut off than have signed it, had they known the circumstance of the child.— This case seems to me to furnish many cogent reasons why the prayer of the governors of this house, to exempt it from visitation, should not be granted.

Extracts from the Town's Book at Louth.

- "Sept. 25th, 1797. The parish agree to maintain the child of which Elizabeth West is pregnant, upon James Backhouse paying 30*l.* and all expences. £. s. d.
- "Feb. 8th, 1798. By cash of Mr. Phillips,* being the
- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|
| "first payment from Backhouse | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| "April, 1799. Received on account of West's bastard child | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| "Feb. 2d, 1801. By cash received from Backhouse, of | | | |
| "York, for West's child | 10 | 0 | 0 |

Extracts from the Books of the Asylum.

- "1797, Oct. 22d. James Backhouse's expences into
- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|
| "Lincolnshire | 16 | 1 | 0 |
| "1799, Feb. 21st. Paid Mr. Thomas Phillips | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| "Sept. 9th. Mr. Thomas Phillips | 10 | 0 | 0 |

It appears by the parish books of Louth, that a man of the name of Robert Barton, a lunatic, was sent, about the 21st of August, 1797, to York, with an allowance of 8*s.* per week for his maintenance, by the parish of Louth; but he was refused admittance, the attendants giving as a reason that they would receive no more patients from Louth.

* He was town's clerk of Louth.

No. V.

MOAT's EVIDENCE IN VICKERS's CASE.

FRANCIS MOAT, of Fishlake, says, that he took William Vickers to the Asylum at York. He called during the time

Vickers was at the Asylum to see him, but was refused. He fetched him away, in consequence of a letter sent to Mr. Thos. Leach, the overseer, from Dr. Best, informing him that he might fetch Vickers away, as he could do no more for him. He saw and read this letter of Dr. Best's. He had no doubt that Vickers was almost starved for want of food, from the excessive greediness with which he took a bone and attempted to eat it, at the public-house, the White Horse, in Copper-gate, in York; and from his excessive weak and reduced state, he could not walk at first without help, but after he got plenty to eat, he could. He, this deponent, says, that he examined the wound in his leg, and he has no doubt that it was caused by an iron or some sort of shackle with which he had been fastened, and which had been permitted to sit into the flesh: he judges from the circular mark round the leg, where it had made a dent into the flesh. He also saw the marks on his back, and he has not the least doubt that they were the marks of lashes or stripes; they could not possibly have been any thing else. Deponent took him to Mr. Thompson's, of Escrit, to shew him to Mr. Thompson, supposing Mr. Thompson to be a governor, but he was not at home.—He heard a woman, called Deborah Thompson, in the Asylum, say, that she had been flogged or whipped.

FRANCIS MOAT.

Skellow Grange, Sept. 28th, 1815.

No. VI.

LETTER FROM MR. HIGGINS TO 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.

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.

* 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.

No. VII.

REPORT OF THE ASYLUM, AUGUST, 1815.

THE General Annual Court of Governors will be held at the Asylum, on Friday the 25th day of August, 1815, at eleven o'clock in the Forenoon.

STATE OF THE ASYLUM.

Patients admitted from the first establishment in Nov. 1777, to July 1, 1813	2560
From 1st July, 1813, to 10th October, 1814, ditto	75
	<hr/> 2635

From Nov. 1777, to July 1, 1813, cured, improved, removed by their friends, and not accounted for (the proportions of each not ascertainable)	1996
From July 1, 1813, to October 10, 1814, discharged and removed, as above	137—2133
From Nov. 1777, to 1st July, 1813, died	365
July 1, 1813, to October 10, 1804, died	34—399
Remaining in the Asylum, October 10, 1814	103
	<hr/> 2635

Patients in the Asylum, Oct. 10, 1814*	103	
Ditto admitted to July 1, 1815	32	
		135
From Oct. 10, 1814, to July 1, 1815,		
Discharged cured	10	
improved	8	
Removed by their friends	6	
Died	3	
		27
Remain—Men	63	} 108
Women ..	45	
		108

JOSHUA MILLAR, Apothecary.

* The new officers and servants had not all entered on their duties before the 10th October, 1814; previous to which time, the number of patients in the Asylum cannot be precisely ascertained.

No. VIII.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL COURT, AUG. 1815.

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 obligation to GODFREY HIGGINS, Esq. to whose zeal and perseverance the origin of these improvements must, in a great measure, be ascribed.

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.

No. IX.

LETTER FROM THE REV. J. GRAHAM AND MR. J. GRAY.

SIR,

York, Nov. 4, 1815.

IN answer to your's of the 2d inst. we have to acquaint you, that, on the 26th of January, 1814, the Committee wished for an account of the average numbers and classes of the patients, to be prepared by us against their next meeting on the 28th. The steward was desired to send us his account books for the four quarters of the year 1813; and four quarterly books were in consequence sent. Three of these were accounts for the *second*, third, and fourth quarters of the year, and they tallied with the steward's accounts with the governors. The fourth book (sent by mistake instead of that for the first quarter of the year) was *another* account for the *second* quarter. This book shewed the steward's actual receipts, which exceeded the sums he had given credit for; and we inferred that the physician received the difference.—At the next meeting of the Committee, 28th of January, we made our statement of the classes of the patients, and of the participation of the physician in their payments, (see p. 48 of the printed report.)

Previous to that day, the Committee had made no inquiry of Dr. Best as to his emoluments, nor had he made any disclosure to them; but, on our statement being inspected, Dr. Best was asked several questions, and he gave the explanation stated in page 49 of the printed report.—We remain, Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

J. GRAHAM,
 J. GRAY.

No. X.

EVIDENCE RELATING TO THE BAD BREAD.

MRS. BECKWITH says, she was at the Asylum upon the examination into the case of Martha Kyd: she was ordered some refreshment: the servants of the Asylum brought her some bread and cheese and ale. The bread they brought her was the worst in quality she ever saw in her life. She brought some of

it away with her, and gave it to several persons, amongst the rest to Miss Johnson and Mr. Hurst.

Her
MARGT. \times BECKWITH.
Mark.

I declare I was present, and the bread was as above described.
R. RIDEAL.

Witness, MICHAEL MITTON, Mayor.

I hereby certify, that the bread given to me by Mrs. Beckwith, of the workhouse at Pontefract, and which she informed me was given to her to eat when she was attending at the Asylum at York, as a witness in the case of Martha Kyd, was the very worst in quality, according to my opinion, of any I ever saw.

WILLIAM POPPLEWELL.

Doncaster, April 5, 1814.

No. XI.

CASES.

ELIZABETH BURTON was in the Asylum about twelve months. She was, on her admission, put into a cell after being stripped naked, where she remained a day and two nights, and was never visited the whole time. She afterwards became low spirited; and when in that situation she displeased the keeper, she was struck on the head with a key, which made the blood run down: clothes were carried for her by her sister, which were never given to her.*

Margaret Beaumont was in a low spirited state of mind. During the two last years of her confinement, she did the work of a servant. Her friends were not permitted to see her. She was often ill treated; once, in particular, she was struck with great violence with a large key. She was also once struck with a poker across her back, and, at another time, with the mangle roller, because she was fretting. She washed her clothes in the dark, and carried them in her pocket till she had an opportunity of drying them. They once put a woman into her bed, named Betty Dale, who was covered with lice: she would not sleep with her, but sat up all night. This woman always kept herself clean, except when they kept her locked up.†

Edward Hanson, master manufacturer, came to the Asylum the 1st of May, 1811: after two or three weeks, was put naked into one of the cells, with nothing but a coverlet and straw: he

* She is now perfectly recovered.

† After Margaret Beaumont's deposition, follow the certificates of several respectable persons of her good character. The key seems to have been very useful. Martha Kyd's head was much beaten with a key.

was there about a week. Sometimes another patient was put in with him. His food was in scanty quantities. He did the necessary business of nature in a corner of the cell, which remained all the time he was in the cell. He was struck on the breast by two keepers for having struck another patient in the yard: he never was so beaten in his life. Dr. Best never visited him in his cells. When in the cells, as well as out, he had both emetic and purgatives given him: he complained to his brother of his ill treatment, who, in consequence, took him out, and sent him to Newton Heath, near Manchester, where he was well treated. He is now perfectly recovered, and carries on his usual business.*

Mary Booth. When first put into the Asylum, had all her clothes taken from her, and in their place, had a bed-gown, a shift, an under petticoat, and cap, given to her. She was put into a room with about eighteen other women patients, many of them with less clothes than herself. She says that they brought a plate of meat for each patient, and left them to eat it; that the other patients would frequently eat her dinner as well as their own; that they frequently fought and hurt each other severely; that she was frequently turned out at eight o'clock, and remained all the day in the cold and rain dressed as above described. Some time after her husband complained of her treatment, she was removed into a room with a better class of patients. In this better room, she saw Sally and Hannah throw a woman down, (she thinks of the name of Smith) and force salad into her mouth with an iron spoon. A keeper of the name of Henry, who cut up the meat in this room, then dragged her out, and turned up her clothes and flogged her severely. Sally and Hannah stood by laughing. At the time she (Mary Booth) saw this, she did the work as a servant, and left the Asylum a few weeks afterwards.

George Pickering was sent to the Asylum in October, in a clean state: he stayed seven weeks. He returned in a most filthy state: his flannel shirt he went in had never been washed: his head and clothes actually swarmed with lice: his body was blistered with vermin.†

Dorothy Exilby's case is too indecent for insertion. Her son, born three months after she came from the Asylum, by Parkin, of Hull, is now alive. She and her husband, William Exilby, are both living, and ready to give evidence whenever called on. She was admitted 8th July, 1801, and discharged, cured, 20th

* This gentleman swore to the truth of the above in my presence.—G. H.

† He is dead; but his daughter, and the man who went with him, and a respectable surgeon, are ready to verify the facts as here stated.

February, 1802. William Exilby has brought up Parkin's son, and never had any allowance for him.*
The following is an extract from the letter of a man of rank to his solicitors, after the statute of lunacy had been superseded.

I say, I was most arbitrarily confined in the York medical inquisition, managed by ———, now no more, and the gang of Myrmidons, who are allowed to commit even murder with impunity, as no proof can be had, except proof that would be considered madness in any of the people under confinement, and who would not be heard in evidence against any doctor's keepers. Another thing is, that a coroner's inquest is seldom or ever called to inspect the bodies after they are fortunately released by death from the most shocking cruelty of doctors and their keepers, and the most dangerous tyranny ever invented by the devil, doctors, or men: so, before you again apply for a commission of lunacy against any individual, under the heaviest of all human afflictions, if you are not destitute of every human feeling for the sufferings of your fellow creatures,—it behoves you to consider what the consequences are of obtaining such statutes, and the tyranny of such laws as those of lunacy.

* From this it should seem, as if the governors did not consider themselves bound to maintain the bastards of the patients, only those of the keepers
 No. IV.

THE END.

PAPERS RESPECTING

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York Lunatic Asylum.



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PUBLISHED ORIGINALLY IN THE

YORK NEWSPAPERS,

During the Years 1813, 1814, and 1815.

NIL DESPERANDUM.

YORK:

PRINTED AT THE HERALD-OFFICE; AND TO BE HAD OF

WM. ALEXANDER, CASTLEGATE;

J. AND G. TODD; SPENCE AND BURDEKIN;

AND THE OTHER BOOKSELLERS IN YORK.

1816.

A COMPLETE COLLECTION

THE PAPERS RESPECTING

THE YORK MANIC ASYLUM

PREPARED ORIGINALLY BY THE

YORK NEWSPAPERS

During the Years 1812, 1813, and 1814

ALL DEBENTURES

YORK

PRINTED AT THE MANIC-ASYLUM: AND TO BE HAD OF

THE MANIC-ASYLUM, (MANIC-ASYLUM)

A. AND G. JONES, MANIC-ASYLUM AND MANIC-ASYLUM

AND THE OTHER MANIC-ASYLUMS IN YORK

1814

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PREFACE.

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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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.

COMPLETE COLLECTION, &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.

From the York Chronicle of Sept. 30.

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 in-offensive *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.

From the York Chronicle of Oct. 7.

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.

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. If 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 further, 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.

From the York Courant of Oct. 11.

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.

From the York Chronicle of Oct. 14.

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.

From the York Herald of Oct. 16.

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.

From the York Courant of Oct. 18.

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

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

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A GOVERNOR OF THE ASYLUM.

From the York Chronicle of Oct. 21.

York, Oct. 20, 1813.

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*.

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

One of these eloquent authors, *himself*-writing under an assumed title, and who professes to have read the correspondence with *considerable attention*, calls upon EVIGILATOR *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.

From the York Chronicle of Nov. 4.

“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 Simple, 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 yea 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-gradating!!!" 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

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Oct. Nov. 10, 1813.

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.

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.

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 apprise 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 *postrums* 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 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 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 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 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
Pocketing 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
		2	2	7
Received, Geo. Surr,		1	1	0
Allowing deposit		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.

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.

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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.

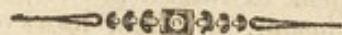
Should you, after all, decide upon publishing your statement, from which a sense of justice and candour will, I trust, still dissuade you, you are at liberty to make what use you think proper of the paper I put into your hands, explaining, of course, in case of its publication, that it is to be considered 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

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.

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—*ca teris 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 Vickers, 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

in proportion
to the Asylum."
I beg to inform
that the above
account of
deaths, and the number
of patients, are
chiefly from
the published

Date	No. of Patients in the Asylum
1777	1
1778	2
1779	2
1780	4
1781	3
1782	3
1783	3
1784	3
1785	4
1786	4
1787	5
1788	6
1789	6
1790	7
1791	7
1792	7
1793	7
1794	8
1795	8

It is evident, that
patients who have
been reported, were
brought to the
Retreat, since
the number of
patients in the
Asylum, and the
average annual
number of deaths
in the Retreat, since
1777, and in the
very simple and
correct manner of
comparison of deaths

*These numbers are
taken from the Asylum.

greater in proportion at the Retreat, than they have been in the Asylum."

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

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.

YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

From the York Herald of March 26.

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-

E

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.

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

Copy, a lunatic,
amongst. The
John Bardwell, alias
and, or some, or
and slept
the night of
it did not appear

YORK

THE next Quarter
the ASYLUM, on
Eleven o'Clock in

Turk, April 4, 18

the following Do
surer since

S. W. Nicoll,
D. Russell, Esq.
Rev. C. Webb
John Dyson, Esq.
Mr. D. Tuke
Mr. John Cross
Mr. Jonathan C
Rev. J. Graham
Wm. Kimber, Esq.
J. Rawdon, Esq.
Rev. J. Richards
Mr. S. Richards
A. Tourpe, Esq.
Mr. D. Priestman
J. Tweedy, Esq.
G. L. Thompson
Mr. Wm. Hornb
Mr. Wm. Tuke
H. Wilson, Esq.
R. T. North, Esq.
T. Smith, Esq.
Wm. Gray, Esq.
Rev. Mr. Perrine
Rev. Wm. Smith
Wm. Carr, Esq.
C. Duncombe, Esq.
B. Brooksbank, Esq.

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. Caesar 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."

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April, 1814.
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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.

*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 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.

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August 23, 1814.

From the

AT AN ANNUAL C
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York, the 20th
24th Day of August,
His Grace the AR
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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.

From the York Herald of Sep. 3.

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.

From the York Courant of Sep. 12.

IT must be matter of great and general consolation to the Public, but more particularly to the friends of the unfortunate:

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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."

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?

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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.

From the York Herald of Sept. 24.

*"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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York, Sept. 19,

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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.

From the York Herald of Oct. 1.

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.

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

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.

F

From the York Courant of Oct. 3.

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.

Helmshley Lodge, near York, Oct. 5, 1814.

Jan. 14. 1815
From the York Herald of Sep. 17.

SIR,

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 160 to 184. 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

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 Northampton Sessions as an incendiary; and let him depend upon it, the Bench will show him no mercy."

ANOTHER *Y. Z.*

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.

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,

C. BEST.

Dec. 23, 1814.

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 vindicative 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."

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 Luke, 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 Corrector; 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*

A LIST OF PAMPHLETS

AS SELECTED IN REFERENCE TO THE FOLLOING PAMPHLETS

Errata.

Page.

76, for Sept. 17, read January 14, 1815.

76, line 32, for Evigilator, read Evigilator;

78, for Sept. 3, read December 17, 1814.

