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### *Obituary of Samuel Tuke, of York.*

The decease of this eminent promoter of the interests of the insane, an honorary member of our association, is thus commented upon in the pages of a journal in his native city.

“Our obituary of this day will recall a name, fraught with no common interest, to many of our citizens. Recollections worthy of being retraced will be aroused in some minds, a sympathetic feeling in many, a respectful recognition of departed worth, perhaps we may say, in all.

It is one of the most interesting features of the social framework of Britain, that while it recognises the distinctions of feudal rank, and records the exit of each worthy head of a time-honored house, as in some sort the property of the nation, not the less through the various gradations of the scale does it appreciate the successful citizen, the independent yeoman, or even the lowly mechanic, if such an one, filling worthily his station, or rising to a higher sphere, has left to his successors incentives to the like honorable course, “footprints on the sands of time.”

Of the burgher or citizen class, was the immediate family of Samuel Tuke. The name of Tuke, early scattered in the counties of Nottingham and South Yorkshire, appears in the seventeenth century in the city of York, where the ancestor of the subject of this sketch, having embraced the principles of the Quakers, suffered imprisonment in consequence, in “Ouse Bridge Prison,” in the year 1660.

Samuel Tuke was the eldest grandson of William Tuke, who died in 1822, at the patriarchal age of 90, and whose name is so well known as the founder of the Friends’ Retreat, near York, in 1792, and as the originator in this country of those principles in the treatment of insanity, which, in their

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progress, have so much contributed to the alleviation of human suffering.

William Tuke's eldest son, Henry Tuke, died at the comparatively early age of 58, not less honored and beloved than his father.

Samuel Tuke, the only son of Henry, who lived to maturity, was born 31st July, 1784. He early co-operated with his grandfather and father in their philanthropic labours. To the subject of insanity especially, as is well known, he devoted a large portion of his time, and in the course of his life was the author of several works which are well known on the Continent and in America, as well as in this country. His "Description of the Retreat" was published in 1813, and led to very remarkable consequences, consequences which the author himself had never ventured to anticipate. Steadily did he pursue his labours in the great work of bettering the condition of the insane, not only by his writings, but by the unremitting attention which he paid to the welfare of the Retreat, of which he was the treasurer for thirty years. Not inaptly has he been called "the Friend of the Insane."

In 1840, he edited the work of a German physician, Dr. Jacobi; in the introduction to which he fully expresses his views in regard to the provision for the insane, and their moral management, with many practical directions regarding the construction of asylums.

But to many of the readers of this memoir (in this city) it is as the public man and the active citizen that Samuel Tuke will be chiefly remembered. To some, as the man of warm, deep, and abiding sympathies, in private life; to not a few by the earnestness, the deeply devotional spirit, the catholicity of feeling, yet lofty standard of Christian obligation, which marked his religious character.

He was never a party man. His mind was simply incapable of being so moulded. Every line of action which he adopted, however much it might provoke hostility in those who honestly took a different view, was simply the result of some great principle, firmly grasped and rigidly carried out. Thus, he early supported the concession of political privileges to the Roman Catholics, when a very different view might have been expected from association and training. Yet his mind was essentially conservative, in the sense of a deep feeling of the *venerable*—intense in proportion to the moral worth associated with it. Equally strong was his love of social order, his idea of government as the embodiment of a governing moral force.

The period of his life comprised events of no ordinary political interest and importance—the contested election for the county of York in 1807 ; the abolition of the Slave Trade, and the struggle for the extinction of the system of Slavery ; the Reform Bill of 1832, and the carrying out of its spirit and principles, may be mentioned as subjects in which, he felt and manifested a warm interest.

There was, we believe, only one occasion on which he appeared before the public in any sense as a political partisan. In the year 1833, on the election of the Hon. Thomas Dundas, to fill a vacancy in the representation of the city of York, having been himself solicited to stand, he gave the full weight of his eloquence in support of that gentleman. This was very much prompted by an ardent wish to carry out those principles to which we have already alluded, and which, in his mind, were inseparably connected with the idea of a true Reform in the representation.

It was, however, in support of the claims of the British and Foreign Bible Society—in Anti-Slavery efforts—the cause of Scriptural Education of the poor—and various movements of a philanthropic or religious character that his influence and his voice were most frequently exerted.

We might, were it needful, enumerate the various charitable institutions of the city, as partakers of his pecuniary or active personal assistance. Judicious Benefit Societies for the Working Classes—Sanatory Reform—his active and unremitting exertions when guardian of the poor—will naturally be suggested to the minds of those who may have watched his public life, or shared his labours. In this last named capacity, his sympathy with suffering and intense aversion to anything bordering upon oppression, were obvious features of his character.

Samuel Tuke's mind was a rare combination, comprising a sound judgment, with no small measure of more shining qualities. To a vigorous and perceptive intellect, he united a vivid imagination, and a strong sense of the beautiful. He was therefore a man of taste—rigidly correct *taste*. His eloquence, though somewhat unequal, was of a striking and often lofty character. There was a masterly comprehension of an idea—forcible, clear, and well-enunciated expression. On certain occasions the clear summing up of conflicting arguments, and the delivery of a lucid judgment with calm precision, yet always with a certain warmth of feeling, elicited a display of mental power not easily forgotten.

The preceding slight outlines will be readily filled up by

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those who knew the man,—not less readily when we allude to him as the kind neighbour, the unwearied benefactor to the poor, or the fellow-citizen, sharing in

———“the talk  
Man holds with week-day man in the hourly walk  
Of the mind's business.”

We must not omit to say that Samuel Tuke was a man of business. He was long the head of a prosperous firm, succeeding to the concern founded by his grandfather, now about a century ago. The unfailing energy and varied talents of a mind at home in far higher pursuits, precluding him from being less than the presiding mind of the whole, these were best understood by persons brought into intimate association with him in this character.

The sanctuary of the domestic hearth with such a mind was indeed a sanctuary; and only the large and happy family who revered him as a parent can fully understand the associations which this allusion may call forth. After eighteen years of married life, he was called upon to endure the severest trial which human affection can undergo. But the man, or rather the Christian, though “cast down was not destroyed;” and soon was he again active in the field of duty, with energies only deepened by the shade of sorrow. His active intellect hardly seemed to admit of repose. It had been well, indeed, if such a mind had had more of the disposition to relax. Playfulness was not an element in his character, which was naturally stern, but not the less was there the flow of natural wit, and at times a chastened humour more delightful still. His religious character may be touched upon—briefly, because of the sacredness of the subject—confidently, because it was the substratum of his moral being—at once the spring and the regulator of his energies. We would fain appeal to those, who, alas! are no more household names in our city—the names, well recognised in their day, of William Gray, John Graham, Anthony Thorpe, Thomas Wemyss—as members of a vanished circle (as we can confidently to not a few still living), who would instantly appreciate the soundness and stability of his Christian character.

As a member of the religious Society of Friends, by conviction as well as by birth, he was, as in everything else, the active exemplar of the principles he adopted. He carried them out for himself, even in their remoter bearings; but surely we need not again say that Samuel Tuke belonged less to a sect, than to the universal Christian church.

As a minister of the gospel in his own society, he will long be remembered. It may be sufficient to say that here there was evidence of the same characteristic power. With a deep and reverent appreciation of the sacred truths he had to deliver, there was a clear and sound expression. In his ministry, as in his life, there was the evidence of talents consecrated to the service of Christ. In the reception of that Saviour as his Redeemer, lay the secret of his spiritual strength. A life of activity and of power, but how far removed from the self-activity of the worldling! Though by nature he was no common man, "by the grace of God he was what he was."

Samuel Tuke retired almost entirely from public life in the winter of 1848, in consequence of a slight paralytic seizure. This was followed by greatly enfeebled health, and subsequently by renewed attacks of paralysis, which, for the last few years of his life, confined him to his bed chamber. A severe attack on the 12th instant, producing a state of entire unconsciousness, was the cause of his decease two days afterwards."

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To the foregoing sketch from the *York Herald*, of October 17, 1857, we add some particulars respecting the life and character of our late Associate, in connexion with the treatment of the insane.

From an early age the subject of this biographical notice took a warm interest in the condition of the insane. It followed naturally, as he has himself stated, from the active part which his progenitors (especially his grandfather, William Tuke) were taking in the foundation and management of the Retreat, when he was young. He soon began to enjoy visiting the house and its inmates: then he was led to make independent observations: and he in this way gradually prepared the materials for a work, on the subject which had thus, so early and so completely, rivetted his attention.

The earliest reference made in his private memoranda, to the subject of insanity, is in the Autumn of 1810, and is as follows:—

"I intend to collect all the knowledge I can on the theory of insanity, the treatment of the insane, and the construction of lunatic asylums. For this purpose, to collect and compare facts, rather than books. Also, to avail myself of any opportunity of ascertaining the state of lunatic paupers in places where I may happen to



travel, and report the accounts, along with those I already possess, to the editor of *The Philanthropist*."

In the following year an article appeared in this periodical "On the state of the Insane Poor." He there states that he was more especially induced to take an interest in the condition of pauper lunatics, "by a conversation in a stage-coach, which led me to visit the workhouse of a city in the South of England." The account which he proceeds to give of this visit is of interest, not only because it powerfully influenced his own mind, but because it exhibits the then miserable condition of the workhouse lunatic "condemned," as the writer observes, "to abodes and to treatment, which must shock the most callous feelings."

"I was introduced," he adds, "by a humane and respectable friend to one of the guardians of the institution (the aforesaid workhouse) who with great civility accompanied us to the house. On enquiry for the nurse of the insane paupers, and stating the object of our visit, we were led into a small yard, at a short distance from the principal building, in which were four cells or rooms arranged on one side, and adjoining to each other. We descended into them by one step, and their size was sufficiently large for the accommodation of one inhabitant. At the further end of the cell was a platform of wood attached to the wall, which was intended for the patient's bed. In two of the cells, all the light and air which could be admitted passed through an iron grating in the door, so that the air could not be excluded without entirely darkening the apartment. In each of these cells a female was confined; but I cannot describe my feelings and astonishment, when I perceived that the poor women were absolutely without any clothes. The weather was intensely cold, and the evening previous to our visit the thermometer had, I believe, been 16 degrees below freezing point. One of these forlorn objects lay buried under a miserable covering of straw, without a blanket or even a horse-cloth to defend her from the cold. The situation of the other was no less deplorable; she was buried in straw in the corner of the cell, on the left hand of the door, probably to be less exposed to intrusive observation. Her aspect bespoke much more bodily than mental disease, and she complained very much of the extreme cold. The grating of the door had been open, by her own desire, the whole of the preceding night; for she said she could not breathe comfortably without the admission of fresh air. She complained bitterly of not being allowed clothes, and appealed to the nurse to say

whether she had shewn any disposition to tear her clothes since she had attended upon her, which was a period of about twelve months. The nurse confessed that she had not shewn any violent propensities since she had known her, but stated that she understood the poor woman had had a violent paroxysm a short time previous to her being employed in that department. She further asserted, that during the whole time, the master or mistress of the house had never visited the cells of these unhappy beings. . . . In another cell, which only differed from those I have described by having a small casement, which admitted light, a man was confined. . . . He had some clothes on, but his bed, like the others, was only straw, and his leg was chained to the wooden erection at the end of the cell."

The writer adds that the master always objected to any alteration, on the ground that they would not wear clothes, and that it would be dangerous to admit them to any greater amount of liberty. Flannel dresses were, however, sent to the workhouse after the visit, "which they wore with great thankfulness, and invoked many blessings on the givers."

In reference to the *Guardians*, he does not hesitate to assert that "it was their bounden duty to visit, to examine; and no human being ought for a moment to doubt whether a fellow-creature, of the more delicate sex too, should be confined in a cold apartment, without fire and without clothes, at a season when all the conveniences of life were barely sufficient to preserve in the human frame a comfortable degree of warmth. We cannot sufficiently regret that apathy or timidity of mind which represses vigorous exertion on such an occasion. Surely, a mind actuated by the virtuous sympathies of our nature, would not have joined with comfort the warm social circle, or reposed his head on a soft pillow, whilst he knew that any one was enduring so many privations, and so much misery, which it was not only in his power, but was his duty to relieve." Truisms, these, *now*, but by no means so in 1811.

About the same time, in reply to inquiries made in America respecting the Retreat, he published some particulars in regard to its management in an American periodical. The "Description of the Retreat," which he began to write at the commencement of the year 1811, and published in 1813, is by no means confined to an historical sketch of its origin and progress, but enters fully into "the modes of treatment" pursued at this Institution, accompanied by "a



statement of cases." A more correct title for the work, and one which afterwards suggested itself to him, would perhaps have been, "An Essay on the Moral Management of the Insane, in which the Practices of the Retreat in this respect are fully stated and illustrated."

The feeling which prompted the preparation and publication of this book will be best evinced by the following memorandum made by the author after entering in his Journal, "Received from the Printer a copy of my 'Description of the Retreat.'"

"This work was commenced under a deep sense of the sufferings of the insane. Their afflictions have often been present with me in my retirement before God, and my prayer has been that, for the poor and needy who have no helper, He would arise. May He prosper this imperfect effort to awaken the public sympathy towards them."

His desire was granted in the effect produced by his work, not only on the York Lunatic Asylum, but on Asylums generally. Writing in 1815, a well known London Physician observes, "Already, the original stimulus of the Retreat, and the Report of a new institution for the cure of the insane, have had a most beneficial effect upon the private establishments near London. They now endeavour to make a boast of their care and attention to the poor lunatics."

From Russia, Germany, Switzerland, &c., and from the United States of America, the author received numerous letters asking for information and assistance in the endeavour to improve existing asylums or erect new ones. In England from this period, he maintained a large correspondence with those interested in the improvement of the condition of the insane, and in the construction of asylums.

It may not be uninteresting to recall the part which he took in the exposure of the abuses existing in the management of the old York Asylum. Shortly after the work had been in the hands of the public, which described the system of treatment pursued at the Retreat, a letter made its appearance in the *York Chronicle* (Sept. 25, 1813) written by the physician and "sole manager" of the Asylum and signed "Evigilator," which commences thus:—

"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 adopted 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 only other paragraph we need cite for our present purpose, still more pointedly refers to the "Description of the Retreat." In this work, *Evigilator* asserts that "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."

In the next number of the newspaper appeared the following reply, signed "S. Tuke."

"In your last week's paper, you have inserted a letter under the signature of '*Evigilator*,' in which is the following paragraph. [Here follows the passage already cited.] 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 on 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 meantime, from so far endeavouring to unprejudice the public, as to declare that the remarks which are made on the frequent inhuman treatment of the insane 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 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 anything 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*."

A humorous writer in the *Chronicle* of the week after, thus addresses the Editor, in a letter dated from Northalerton:—

"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 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 Chronicle*, 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 then read: 1st despatch—'Forced St. Cyr from a strongly entrenched camp.' 2nd despatch—'Melancholy fact of Moreau having lost both his legs.' 3rd document—'Important victory over Vandamme,' &c.

'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 eyes 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, or 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 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 inquired 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 Chronicle*,' and was occasioned by an alarm which one 'Evigilator' had taken at a mere report from the most *un-warlike* of all people, the inoffensive Quakers. \* \* \*

"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."

The Physician of the Asylum appears again upon the field by way of reply to the letter of Mr. Tuke:

"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 establishments in general, (not exempting or excepting *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. 7.)

"It is here distinctly stated, that the practicability of introducing a system of mild treatment into these asylums 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 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 monopolised 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.”

The following reply appeared in the next number of the *Chronicle*, (Oct. 14, 1813):

“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 identified, 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 7, 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 particularly 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 advantage from 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 authorised 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 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.'"

At this juncture a third party wrote to the *York Herald*, a letter, in which he asks the following awkward questions:

"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 definitely, are the patients ever confined *with chains*? And if not, how long has this practice been discarded?

"3. The manner of receiving patients on their first admission into the Retreat, is described at page 146, and in other passages.



May I enquire 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? 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?'"

To these enquiries Ewigilator replied, not by affording any information, but by challenging his opponents to make a specific charge; adding that he should "only so far notice their malignant and slanderous insinuations, as to assert that they are *perfectly and utterly false*."

Two days afterwards, the following appeared in the papers, written by the father of the author of the "Description,"—Henry Tuke.

"It really appears time to bring the long-protracted controversy, unwisely raised by 'Ewigilator,' 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 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."

It now appeared no longer possible to evade the force of these various attacks, with anything like a good grace. Evi-

gulator, therefore, had no other course left than to publish the subjoined notice in the public papers, with his own name attached to it.

**“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 12 o'clock; and if any persons whatsoever have anything to allege against the management or treatment of the patients, they are requested to take that opportunity of bringing forward their charges.

“York, Nov. 10, 1813.”

On the appearance of this notice, Mr. Tuke wrote to the *York Chronicle* as follows:

“‘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 2nd 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.”

Most fortunately, at this period of the controversy, when the reformers almost despaired of being able to prove that which they were certain existed—gross neglect and cruelty towards the inmates of the asylum—and when, in consequence of this absence of legal proof, they were obliged, as in the foregoing letter, to take a lower and milder ground for their attacks, a case came to light which, in the minds of all but the prejudiced governors of the asylum, amply justified all the suspicions which had been entertained. For the persevering investigation into the merits of this case, the public ought ever to feel grateful to Godfrey Higgins, Esq., one of the magistrates of the West Riding of York. Into the particulars of this patient's treatment, or of others, it is unnecessary now to enter.

It will readily be supposed, that during this controversy the founder of the Retreat felt warmly interested in the result. He had been the means of establishing a hospital for the insane, in consequence of the unsatisfactory condition of asylums generally, and especially of that at York; and now he witnessed the effects of the recognition by the public of the contrast between the two. Up to this point he had abstained from taking any part in the newspaper contest. Now, however, fearing an adverse decision on the part of a packed Court of Governors, respecting the patient whose treatment had been exposed by Higgins, he wrote as follows to the papers:

“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 December 2nd. 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.”

The Governors met. To the great disappointment of those who were endeavouring to obtain reform, the Court decided that—

“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 wit-

\* These being of temporary interest only, are omitted here.

nesses as were competent to afford information on the same, are unanimously of opinion, that during the time that the said William Vickars remained in the asylum, he was treated with all possible care, attention, and humanity."

In reply to this astounding conclusion, a letter appeared in the *York Courant* of Dec. 6, written by Samuel Tuke, and signed "A Hater of Abuses:"

"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 of 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 Vickar's 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 as 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*.

It appearing hopeless to obtain a reform of the abuses complained of, so long as the same Governors constituted the Jury, the bold step was resolved upon on the part of the reformers,\* of obtaining justice by qualifying themselves as Governors, at the next meeting of the Court, by the requisite donation of £20. It was at this time that William and Samuel Tuke became Governors.

“It would be difficult to conceive the surprise occasioned by this unexpected incursion,” (says Mr. Gray, the historian of the Asylum) “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 . . . . Though the Court, on the 2nd of December, appeared to have decided erroneously on the case of Vickars, the new Governors forebore to propose any revision of that case, or even to allude to it; conceiving that this would be an unnecessary attack upon 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.”

The new Governors at once requested that a Committee of Investigation should be appointed. This proposal, which was made to the Court by S. W. Nicoll, Esq. who was among the most useful of the little band which was now fighting a hard battle on behalf of the insane, was vigorously opposed; the Archbishop, however, supported the proposal, and it was ultimately carried.

While this Committee was pursuing its investigations, hostilities were not suspended in the York papers. Some comparisons having been made by Mr. Higgins, regarding the deaths at the Retreat and the Asylum, unfavourable to the latter, “A Friend to Truth,” endeavoured to show that these calculations were an imposition upon the public.

This called forth the following reply from Mr. Tuke:

“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 have died in the York Lunatic

\* We have a letter before us written at this period by Higgins, in which he strongly objects to this plan, on the ground that Evigilator would willingly expend a large sum, in enabling an equal number of Governors to qualify on the opposite side. This fear, however, proved groundless.

Asylum, since its first establishment in 1777, 246 persons.' 2nd. 'That the average number of patients for great part of the time, has been 195.' And 3rd., as an inference from the foregoing, 'that the number of deaths are 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.

[Here follows a Table, commencing with 1776, and ending with 1813, in which the deaths amount to 322. Up to 1812, they were 310.\*]

"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 the patients in the house, at any 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, is about as  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ; 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 9 deaths in one year, there would have been only 7 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 reader's 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 did he 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

\* These numbers are printed, *I presume by mistake*, 210 and 222 in the annual accounts of the Asylum.



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 the 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 that 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."

The report of the Committee of Investigation presented to the next meeting of the Governors, stated it as their deliberate conclusion *inter alia*—

"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. S—— there has been considerable personal neglect ; and that both towards himself and Mrs. S—— some of the keepers have conducted themselves in a very reprehensible manner."

This report was adopted by the Court ; and a Committee appointed to draw up new rules and regulations.

The new Governors now began to exercise their right of inspecting the actual condition of the asylum. Even they were amazed to find what that condition really was. Mr. Higgins visited the house one morning, and discovered "a number of secret cells, in a state of filth, horrible beyond description. . . . In one of these cells was a chain, with handcuffs affixed, fastened to a *new* board in the floor." The cells had been occupied by women.

Mr. Tuke thus describes the condition of one of the patients, when he visited the asylum about 11 o'clock a.m. He was "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. An attendant 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 as a dying man. When better accommodation, and a flannel jacket, &c. were proposed, the manager replied, this was impossible; that 'no one had power to direct his being provided with anything which he did not possess.' The further history of this poor creature proved 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."

The subsequent history of the reformation of the Asylum is pretty generally known, and need not be enlarged upon here. In rapid succession occurred the fire, which breaking out under most suspicious circumstances, destroyed the worst part of the building, and burnt alive at least, four of the patients; the renewed and successful endeavours thoroughly to cleanse out that Augean stable, as the reformers justly styled it, the dismissal of the officers and servants connected with the Asylum, the entire re-construction of the rules of the establishment, and the appointment of Visitors and of a Committee, who should meet periodically to attend to the affairs of the Institution. Who would have thought a year before, that among the Visitors now appointed, would have appeared the name of the Founder of the Retreat, and on the Committee those of the author of the "Description," and of the obnoxious Nicoll? Yet not only was this the case, but those connected with the management of the Retreat, were requested to aid the newly appointed officers in their duties, and to introduce their own rules into the Asylum!\* A lesson surely full of encouragement for all times, for any one sincerely "A hater of Abuses," who knows that one of his fellow creatures deprived of reason, is neglected or abused.

After this review of a history which, as Dr. Thurnam observes, "is one which should possess extreme interest to all persons connected with the care and management of asylums and hospitals for the insane," we may agree with the editor of "Papers respecting the York Asylum," (S. W. Nicoll, Esq.,) in his summary of the agents which had been at work, that "'The Description of the Retreat' was unquestionably the prime cause, Mr. Higgins an able and efficient medium of the explosion;" and that "it was

\* For some years (prior to the appointment of a chaplain) Mr. Tuke regularly read the Scriptures every Sabbath, to a considerable number of assembled patients.

the *torpedo* of Evigilator himself, that blew up his own asylum." He was "hoist with his own petar."

In concluding this reference to the part which the subject of this sketch took in exposing the abuses of the asylum at York, it may be observed that he was charged at the time by those anxious to maintain abuses, with being actuated by interested motives. His own defence sufficiently rebuts so absurd a charge.

"It would be difficult," he says, "to shew how any unworthy motive could have called me forth on the present occasion. The prosperity or reputation of the Retreat could not possibly promote my private interest. Even from the 'Description of the Retreat,' I never obtained or sought any other advantage than a few copies to distribute among my friends. But allowing, for argument sake, that I feel as warmly interested in the reputation of the Retreat as if it were my own private establishment, what motives should induce me to depreciate the asylum? I can imagine but two, which could possibly operate upon me; either the desire of *profit* or of *fame*."

"*Profit* cannot be the motive, since the Retreat is established for a particular class of persons, who are never likely to be sent to the asylum, whilst they have a *tolerably* well regulated establishment for themselves.

"But the desire of *fame* might perhaps prompt me to depreciate the asylum. I might contemplate it as a rival in the public opinion, and be envious of the share it received of popular favour. Was it possible, let me ask any one who is in the least acquainted with the two institutions, for this feeling of emulation to exist; and did not the general character of the asylum form the best foil which the Retreat could possibly possess? But if their character had approximated so nearly that I could have indulged any envious feelings in regard to the asylum, have I pursued the course which such feelings would naturally have induced? Should I have detailed all the modes and arts by which the share of public favour it had received had been obtained? Was it ever known that an envious beauty told her rival the secret of her charms? Surely, had I been in such a situation that I could have been acted upon by the unworthy motives just described, would not my course have been the very opposite of that which I have pursued? Should I have felt any anxiety for the improvement of my competitor?"

The foregoing very clearly shows what his motives were not. An extract from his Journal, written during the heat of the controversy with the Asylum, will show what his motives were.

“What a blessing it is to possess a sound mind! Lord, make me sufficiently thankful for this, and all other blessings, which Thou hast showered upon me. Let me prove my gratitude by earnest endeavours to alleviate the sufferings of those who labour under the most awful of Thy permitted visitations. Teach Thou my hands to war, and my fingers to fight for these my defenceless and injured fellow-creatures, for Thou alone art the fountain of knowledge, wisdom, and strength.”

We shall not attempt to fill up the interval between the period to which we have chiefly referred, and the closing years of Mr. Tuke's life. His labours were continuous and sustained, not spasmodic, or dependent upon opposition and controversy; but they were not the less useful to the insane generally, or to the Institution with which he was chiefly concerned. To sustain and perfect that which has been established, are tasks which from their difficulty, are too often neglected. To expose the mismanagement of others, is only a very small part of the true Reformer's work and duty. This was ever strongly felt and expressed by Mr. Tuke.

His bearing towards the insane, deserves a passing remark. There was a remarkable union of tenderness and power, which was well calculated to restrain the actions of the excited, as well as to cheer the melancholy. His presence always inspired a certain amount of restraint. The expression of the eye and the tone of the voice, were the outward indications, which most powerfully told the force of mind and warmth of heart which, in no ordinary degree marked his character.

Those who know anything of the management of the insane, well know how instinctively, even those who are labouring under great excitement, recognize and are influenced by mental power. Very generally also do they recognize another's sympathy, although there may be nothing extraordinary in the words of sympathy which are employed. Many who are now restored to mental health, will recall the visits of love and the hope-inspiring words of Samuel Tuke, when they were bowed down by disease.

He shrunk from anything approaching to public notoriety, in connexion with the position he occupied in relation to the humane treatment of the insane. On one occasion the

lady patients of the Hartford Retreat (U.S.) forwarded some of their workmanship to him through their physician, Dr. Butler. The passage in which, with characteristic humility, he speaks of himself in reply, after warmly thanking them for their present, may appropriately close this sketch of his life.

“I fear that my services in the cause of the afflicted in mind are much over-rated, both at home and abroad. I find much more reason to regret my inertness, than to please myself with the thought of what I have done in their cause. It is true I have had, for almost half a century, a great interest in the welfare of the insane. Their miserable condition as a class when I set out in life affected me, and bound me to unite with the few who were then labouring to improve it; and I do rejoice that so much has, through various agencies, and in almost every part of the world, been effected. I see, however, in the change which has taken place, the work of a hand higher than man’s—a providential ordering of means adapted to the end, which no mere human power could have brought together.”

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*On the Construction of Public Lunatic Asylums.* By J. T. ARLIDGE, M.B., A.B., London, Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, formerly Resident Medical Officer of St. Luke’s Hospital.

Among not a few less agreeable influences pervading lunatic asylums, there is one under whose effect every person concerned in the general management of those institutions is sure to come, viz., the architectural. No asylum superintendent is to be found, who has not various plans of renovation and improvement for his own institution, who does not see precisely the constructional arrangements which the insane require, and who has not, very generally, floating before his mental vision, asleep or awake, some grand scheme for a model asylum. Nor is this to be wondered at, when it is considered that the asylum building is the machine through and by which the superintendent is to work out and develop his system of moral management; that, in short, it is an