

In October 1801 a group of men met in Dublin's Royal Exchange Buildings to consider a proposal to establish a fever hospital in Dublin. The institution they founded, the House of Recovery, Cork Street Fever Hospital opened its doors three years later in 1804.

One of the initial proposals they considered at that meeting was a suggestion that the hospital publish an annual report outlining the events of the previous year.

Although many of those reports no longer exist, a collection of reports from 1801 to 1818 was assembled by one of the original trustees, John Maquay. On his death in 1819 a bound copy was presented to the hospital board by his son.


These have now been scanned into digital files.

This particular year's reports cover the initial meeting in October 1801, an appendix which considers the experience of fever hospital's in Manchester and Waterford and finally medical testimony supporting the building of a fever hospital.

A second section deals with observations on the circumstances which generate contagion in the liberties in the south side of Dublin.

There then follows a list of donations received, the largest, being £300, coming from, the then, Lord Lieutenant. Lord Hardwicke.

Finally, a letter from a Dr. Maurice Morgan, going into some detail on the necessity for a fever hospital with many insights into the state of the poorer areas of Dublin.



FEVER HOSPITAL
CORK STREET.

Reports
and other
Documents
relating to
The Fever Hospital
and
House of Recovery
Cork Street
Dublin

From the Commencement, to 4 January 1818

Collected by J. L. Maguay

and when he is no more, let the Book
be sent to the Managing Committee.

A. D. 1819

J. L. Maguire

SOME ACCOUNT
OF THE
ORIGIN AND PLAN
OF
AN ASSOCIATION,
FORMED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF A
HOUSE OF RECOVERY,
OR
FEVER HOSPITAL,
IN THE
CITY OF DUBLIN,
WITH EXTRACTS
SHEWING THE NECESSITY AND UTILITY OF SUCH
AN INSTITUTION.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED BY T. M. BATES,
89, COOMBE.

1801.

SOME ACCOUNT, &c.

AS no adequate hospital accommodation has hitherto been provided for the relief of the sick poor of Dublin afflicted with fever, (especially such as may be of a contagious nature) and, as it has been found by experience that every exertion heretofore made for the relief of persons labouring under the above disorders at their own houses, has in a great measure failed in producing the wished for effect: The establishment of a house of recovery to which patients on the first appearance of fever might be removed, has therefore, been long considered as an Institution much wanting, and peculiarly calculated to alleviate the complicated miseries suffered by the poor from the prevalence of contagious disease; and it having been intimated by Government, that they were disposed to assist such an undertaking, a subscription was immediately entered into, a proposal containing the outlines of such plan as was most likely to meet with general approbation, and a statement of the aid that might be required, signed by four of the subscribers, laid before Government, and

and the Sum of 1375l. 12s. 6d. having been subscribed, the subscribers were summoned to meet on 28th October, 1801, at the Royal Exchange,

John David Latouche, Esq. in the Chair.

The following Resolutions were then entered into,

1st. That to relieve the destitute poor, afflicted with fever, and to check the progress of contagion, are the main objects of the proposed Institution.

2^d. That in order to carry the design fully into effect, we are of opinion, that the erection of a new building, adapted in its construction and all its arrangements for the specific purpose of a house of recovery, would be more desirable, than the fitting up any old buildings designed for other purposes.

3^d. That we consider manifest poverty and disease properly ascertained to the satisfaction of the managing committee, (to be appointed as hereafter directed) and residence within a certain district (to be defined in the manner hereafter prescribed) as the only circumstances necessary to entitle a patient to admission, and we are of opinion that no recommendation of a subscriber should on any account be attended to, unless the above circumstances shall after minute enquiry at the houses of the persons recommended be found to concur.

4th. That the procuring the ground on which the house of recovery shall be built, the erection of the building, and the providing the necessary furniture, be entrusted to fifteen trustees in whom the property of the Institution shall be invested, without any other controul than that they shall permit the building to be used for the purpose of a house of recovery or fever hospital, conformably to the general principles now agreed on.

5th. That in the outset of the establishment, accommodation should be provided for the reception of at least forty patients: But if the funds of the Institution, whether arising from donations or annual subscriptions should so far encrease, as that a surplus shall remain after the above mentioned accommodation shall have been provided for, the trustees shall be at liberty either to enlarge the establishment by providing accommodation for an additional number of fever patients, or in case such enlargement shall be deemed inexpedient, to such other measures as they shall deem most conducive to the health of the poor of this city, and in case the house of recovery shall hereafter be discontinued, for the space of three years, the said trustees shall be at liberty to dispose of the property then in their possession, or the produce thereof, for the purposes aforesaid, in such manner as they shall judge most eligible.

6th. That the management of the Institution, the extent of the district from whence patients labour-

ing under contagious fever may be admitted into the house, the appointment of physicians, nurses, and all the other officers and servants, be vested in a committee, consisting of the trustees, and six other persons to be elected annually by the governors.

7**th**. That said committee shall be fully competent to make all such rules and bye laws (not inconsistent with the principles expressed in these resolutions) as may seem best fitted to carry the objects of the Institution fully into effect, as well for the internal regulation of the house and the admission of patients, as for preventing the spreading of contagion in the houses and neighbourhood from whence the patients shall have been removed, and for the introduction of such habits of cleanliness, as may diminish if not destroy the operation of those causes, that have contributed to make such an Institution so necessary at the present time, and to disburse from time to time such sums as may be necessary for any of the above purposes.

8**th**. That a donation of 20 Guineas paid in any one year, shall make the donor governor for life, and that annual subscribers of two Guineas, or upwards, shall also be governors, provided, that no such annual subscriber, (after the first year) shall vote at the election of members of the managing committee, unless his name shall have been on the books of the Institution, as a subscriber for one whole year previous to such election.

tion, and unless he shall have paid his subscription for the year, in which he shall tender his vote, together with all arrears thereof.

9th. That it shall be lawful for the managing committee at any meeting, specially summoned for the purpose (not fewer than eleven members being present) to enlarge the sum necessary to constitute a governor.

10th. That when a vacancy or vacancies shall occur by the death or resignation of any of the trustees; any one of the remaining trustees shall have a power of convening the others specifying the place, time, and purpose of the meeting, and giving three days notice thereof, and the trustees who shall meet in consequence of such notice (provided every trustee resident in the city of Dublin, shall have been summoned, and not fewer than five shall have been assembled together) shall be competent either to fill up such vacancy or vacancies, by the election of a new trustee or trustees, or to empower the governors to enlarge the number of managers to co-operate with the trustees by electing one or more additional managers as may seem best calculated to advance the purposes of the Institution, provided always that the number of managers shall not be enlarged beyond the number of nine, nor the number of trustees reduced below the number of twelve, nor the whole number of the Committee beyond the number of twenty-one by such proceeding.

11**th**. That in case of the insolvency, or general non-residence of any one or more of the trustees in the City of Dublin, or within ten miles thereof, the remaining trustees be, and they are hereby empowered (if they shall think it expedient so to do) to declare the place of such trustee or trustees vacant, and to proceed either to the election of a new trustee or trustees, or to enlarge the number of elective managers in the same manner and subject to the same restrictions as are contained in the foregoing resolution.

12**th**. That in case it shall be found by the experience of three years after the opening of the hospital, that a committee of twenty-one members is not sufficient for conducting the business of the Institution, it shall be competent for the managing committee specially summoned for the purpose, and not fewer than eleven being assembled together, to declare that the number of elective managers should be enlarged to any number not exceeding the number of trustees at the time, or that the number of said annually elected Managers should be reduced to a number of not less than the original number of six as the exigency of the Institution shall be found to require.

13**th**. That in case it shall be found expedient to enlarge the Committee to the full number of thirty Members, and the number of Trustees shall have been reduced below the original number of fifteen, it shall

competent to the trustees, or any five of them, assembled in the manner described in the 10th resolution, to restore the original number of fifteen trustees in the manner herein before directed.

14th. That it be an instruction to the managing committee to take special care, that such a registry shall be kept of all their proceedings, whether within the walls of the house of recovery, or without, as shall enable them at all times to exhibit to the public a detailed view of their progress; and that it be a standing rule of the institution, that at the end of the year, after the opening of the hospital, and at the end of every succeeding year, an account of the annual income and expenditure, and all other particulars of their progress shall be printed for the public information.

After the foregoing resolutions had been passed, the Subscribers proceeded to elect fifteen trustees by Ballot, when the following Persons were declared to be duly elected.

Edward Allen,	John D. Latouche, Esq.
John Barrington,	Randal Mac Donnell, Esq.
Samuel Bewley	George Maquay, Esq.
William Disney, Esq.	J. L. Maquay, Esq.
Thomas Disney, Esq.	John Orr, Esq.
Arthur Guinness, jun. Esq.	George Renny, Esq.
William Harding,	Luke White, Esq.
Lewis Hodgson, Esq.	

Containing extracts from several publications relating to contagious diseases among the poor, and the establishment of houses of recovery, tending to elucidate the following points.

1. The advantages resulting from the establishment of fever hospitals, or houses of recovery proved.

FIRST. By the experience of Manchester.

SECOND. By that of Waterford, and other towns.

THIRD. By medical testimony.

2. That it is extremely difficult (if not impracticable), effectually to check contagion in populous towns, without the aid of such an establishment.

3. That such an establishment is peculiarly necessary in the City of Dublin, especially in that quarter which comprises the Liberty, and its immediate neighbourhood.

4. That the establishment of a house of recovery is not dangerous to the neighbourhood in which it is placed, (even in populous towns), but, on the contrary, eminently contributes to restrain the progress of Infection, and diminish the prevalence of fever in the adjoining district.

5. The proper situation for a house of recovery, and the reasons for preferring a new building adapted for the specific purpose, to an old house, or houses originally designed for other purposes.

FIRST. *The advantages resulting from the establishment of Fever Hospitals, or Houses of Recovery, proved.*

FIRST, *By the experience of Manchester.*

THE beneficial effects of the house of recovery which has not yet been opened a year and a half are almost beyond belief, the facts are however established by authentic documents. The number of fever tients (as entered in the physicians book at the infirmary) in Portland Street, Silver Street, and the other streets in that pile of buildings in the neighbourhood of the house of recovery, for the preceding year and eight months were 1,256, something more than the average of 400 a year—those in the same district from July 1796 (a period commencing two months after the establishment of the house of recovery) to July 1797, (being twelve months) were only twenty-six, of these there were in July 1796 only five such patients, in August but one, in September 1796 none, and in the last four months from March to July 1797, only one fever patient.

In the report of the weekly board of the infirmary at Manchester, notice is taken of the extraordinary effects of the house of recovery, in diminishing the proportion of the fever patients in the Infirmary, it appears from the physicians books of the Infirmary, that in January 1796 (before the establishment of the House of Recovery) the whole number of the
home

home patients at the Manchester infirmary was 296, of which 226 were cases of fever, and that in January 1797 the number of their home patients was 161, and of these only 57 were cases of fever.

From the opening of the house of recovery on the 19th of May, 1796, to the 2d of November 1797, 542 fever patients have been admitted, of these 465 have been cured and sent home, 48 (and there were some very bad cases) have died, and 29, were on the 2d Instant, remaining in the House, the account therefore, up to the 2d Instant, (November 1797), stands thus,

Cured and Discharged,	-	-	-	-	465
Dead,	-	-	-	-	48
Remaining,	-	-	-	-	29
Total admitted,					542

But the proportional number of cures in the last half year (a benefit that will probably increase) is greater than that of the preceding period, because the Poor are now induced to apply in the earlier stages of the Fever, when Medicine can be applied with more effect. The account from the 8th of May 1797, to the 2d Instant, being near six months is as follows:

Cured and Discharged,	-	-	-	141
Dead,	-	-	-	8
Remain in the House,	-	-	-	29
Total,				178
				Many

Many of the opponents of the house of recovery in Manchester, are become its active friends, and that which was at first an act of Philanthropy in a few individuals, is now supported by the good wishes and contribution of the greater part of the respectable inhabitants at Manchester, other consequences have attended the extraordinary success of this institution, viz. first, that the board of health does now receive fever patients into the house from places beyond the districts for which it was first established, by which means the environs of the town will be cleared of the epidemic fever. Secondly, that the infirmary and town were oppressed by the enormous crowd of fever patients, whose claims seemed to supersede those of persons not afflicted with contagious diseases. And thirdly, that in the year 1796, there was a decrease of near 400 in the bills of mortality at Manchester.*

The above extract bears date the 6th of November 1797. The following is dated the 7th of June 1799.

To so great a degree have contagious fevers been reduced, since the establishment of the house of recovery, that the limits of the house are now extended *to the whole of Manchester and its extensive Suburbs, and to every part of the vicinage for two Miles round from whence a Fever Patient can be safely removed.* The number of home patients of the in-

* Vol. 1. of reports of society for bettering the condition of the poor, page 68, 69, 70. Irish Edition.

firmly at Manchester has also in consequence been gradually diminished. There were admitted on the physicians books during the year ending 1st June 1796,	-	-	-	-	2880
Ditto, in the year ending June 1797, being the first year of the house of recovery being opened,	-	-	-	-	1759
Ditto, in the year ending June 1798,	-	-	-	-	1564

During the spring and summer of the preceding year, contagious Fevers of an alarming nature had appeared in different parts of the town and neighbourhood, by removing however the patient into the house of recovery *the extension of the Fever was completely prevented.* The account of the House for one year ending the 31st of May 1798, at which time 710 patients had been admitted, is as follows:

Cured and Discharged,	-	-	300
Dead,	-	-	16
Remained then in the House,	-	-	23
			<hr/>
			339

Account from 31st May 1798, to 31st May 1799,			
Cured and Discharged,	-	-	364
Dead,	-	-	24
Remained in the House 31st May 1799,			11

To a poor creature who has been languishing in a cold damp Cellar or in a Garret exposed to the injuries of the weather, (amidst the neglect and confusion
of

of a wretched family) a clean bed, a quiet ward, an attentive nurse, and the frequent visits of the physician, are of most potent efficacy. To these causes it must be imputed that upon a return of the epidemic fever of 1797, of 149 dangerous cases received from the beginning of May to the beginning of October, *only four patients died.*

Of the benefits of the house of recovery it is one of no small consequence, that the owners of cotton mills are now induced to pay a more scrupulous attention to the health of their work people, and that their buildings are in general kept cleaner and better ventilated. *A salutary impression has also been made on the minds of the poor respecting the utility of cleanliness in their houses, the idea of fever comprehends among them that of ruin to their circumstances and desertion by their neighbours, it may therefore be expected that they will catch at every means within their reach to avoid so dreadful an evil, and when they find that a public charity extends its care to them so far as to white-wash their houses, when the Physicians report it to be necessary, they must feel the propriety of attending more to this object.*

The infirmary also receives a variety of patients, which they were obliged to refuse, when the infirmary and town were oppressed by the enormous crowd of fever patients whose claims seemed to supersede those of persons not afflicted with contagious diseases. *Appendix to plan of the London physicians, page 46.*

“ In the year 1796 there was a decrease of near 400 in the bills of mortality at Manchester. An additional proof to the same effect, of a singular nature, appears in the accounts of the overseers of the poor.” The number of coffins for deceased paupers provided in the two years preceding the establishment of the House of Recovery amounted to 1078: in the following two years it was reduced to 751.

“ There is another very gratifying circumstance, the diminution of the proportion of mortality among the patients of the House of Recovery*. In 1796 it was nearly one in eleven; in 1797 one in thirteen; and in 1798, not quite one in eighteen. The list is as follows:

Patients admitted from 19th of May 1796		
to 1st January, 1797,	-	247
Died	-	21
		<hr/>
Admitted in the year 1797	-	349
Died	-	27
		<hr/>
Admitted in the year 1798	-	381
Died	-	21”
		<hr/>

* This is probably “ because the poor are now induced to apply in the earlier stages of the fever, when medicine can be applied with more effect.” “ But the benefit of this institution is not to be calculated by the number of persons cured. Every single removal into the house of recovery, probably prevents on an average two or three cases of the disease.”

Dr. Currie's Medical Reports on Fevers, p. 217:

SECOND. *By the experience of Waterford, and other Towns.*

Dr. Barker, in his account of the Waterford house of recovery (printed in the second number of the reports of the society for promoting the comforts of the poor,) after having stated several cases of complicated misery, suffered by the poor of that city, previous to the opening of the house of recovery proceeds as follows :

Instances of the extension of infection through whole families similar to those described, were to be met with during every season of the year, as the town was never free from fever, and it was computed from the number of applications made to the dispensary, that there were not less than fifteen hundred sufferers from this disease alone, during the year. It was obvious, that of so great a number, many must have died; and also, that independent of the mortality, much misery must have been incurred—often beggary and ruin. As it was evident that contagion was the chief source of this calamity, it was proposed to establish a house of recovery on a plan similar to that already adopted in Manchester, to which the infected person on the first appearance of fever in a family, could be removed, whilst other means were employed to prevent the further extension of the contagion. This proposal was eagerly embraced, and a subscription set on foot by which the object was speedily completed.

Admitted

Admitted into the house of recovery, from the day of opening, viz. on the day of August 1799, to the month of March, 1800. - - - -	231
Dismissed, cured - -	214
Died - -	13
Remain - -	4
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	231

The relief to such a number of miserable creatures, may be judged of from the statement of their situation, and of the effect of fevers, which has been already made, but the advantages from this source are inconsiderable, when compared with those which have arisen from the diminution of infection. If the annual number of fever patients was 1500, which we have reason to think it was, both from an account kept at the dispensary, for some time previous to the opening of the house of recovery, and likewise from the reports of the visitors of the sick poor, the number in the *last seven Months* would probably have been 800, but it appears that the number admitted to both the dispensary and the house of recovery, does not exceed 254, as there have been about 23 fever patients relieved by the dispensary during that time, consequently it appears that the number of fevers has been reduced more than one half, notwithstanding the unhealthiness of the season, and the scarcity of provisions, both of which would tend to their encrease.

It appears also from the same sources of information, that instances similar to those above related, of whole families suffering at the same time from this disease, are now scarcely ever to be met with: When the short time which has elapsed since the opening of this institution is considered, its advantages must appear still greater. Yet it is highly probable, that they will continue to encrease, for as the poor become more convinced of its utility, earlier application will be made for admission, and the source of infection more speedily removed, besides the directions relative to cleanliness and ventilation, will, from the same cause, be more minutely observed. Obstacles have arisen to the complete attainment of the object of this institution, the chief of which has been, the impossibility of admitting infant children in this disease with their mothers, from the want of a separate ward for this purpose, the difficulty of procuring cleanliness and ventilation of infected dwellings, has had the same tendency, and also the affection of relations to their friends, inducing them to reject the advantages offered them, and prefer remaining in their own habitations. The obstacles arising from these sources have not, however, been considerable, and only more fully evince the excellence of an institution, capable of producing so much good, notwithstanding their opposition, perhaps: the time may come, when by the adoption of such houses in the different cities of the kingdom, contagious fever shall be nearly eradicated: Such an idea may be deemed enthusiastic, but let it be recollected, that by the prevention

vention of intercourse between the infected and healthy, even the plague has become unknown, and what is more to the present purpose, let us observe the gradual progression of good arising from such institutions as the present, wherever they have been established.—*Extract from an account of the Waterford house of recovery, printed in the 2d No. of the reports of the society for promoting the comforts of the poor. Page 97, 99, 100.*

An account of the patients admitted into the Waterford house of recovery, from the 1st of January, 1801, to 21st October in the same year. Authenticated from that Hospital.

Total admitted in said Period	-	-	644
Dismissed cured,	-		584
Died,	-	-	16
Remained in the House, 21st Oct. 1801,			44
			<hr/>
			644

Similar establishments have been successfully made at Chester, Stockport, and some other places. One is forming at Liverpool.—*Reports of society for bettering the condition of the poor. Vol. 1. p. 69.*

A similar establishment has been attended with equal success at Limerick, and one upon the same principles is forming at Cork.

It is particularly in the prevention of disease and contagion, that the benefit returns with increase
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upon the benefactor, and that the merciful receive mercy.—*Mr. Bernard's observations on the Manchester house of recovery. Vol. 1, reports of same society, page 71.*

THIRD. *From Medical Testimony.*

“ The benefit derived from hospitals in other cases consists in removing disease, and is confined to the patient himself: But in cases of contagion, the evils prevented, are much greater than those remedied, and the benefit is by this means extended from the patient himself to the circle by which he is surrounded. The establishment of such hospitals was first suggested by tracing the contagion which propagates the contagious fever to its origin, and ascertaining the power of ventilation and cleanliness in preventing and in alleviating the disease. The arguments for such hospitals are strengthened by the discovery of the chemical methods of destroying this contagion; and, if I do not greatly deceive myself, they are still farther strengthened by the success of that mode of practice in fever which it is the chief object of this publication to explain and to establish. A vigilant exercise of all the means of prevention and cure, might indeed, in a short period supersede the use of hospitals for fever, by extinguishing the disease; a prospect in which the philanthropist might indulge with more safety, if he
could

could calculate with equal confidence on the wisdom, as on the power of his species”*

“Institutions of this nature are particularly adapted to manufacturing towns. But I believe there is not a town in the kingdom containing 4000 inhabitants, which would not be greatly benefited by similar establishments. Abuses and errors prevail every where among the lower classes of society, which require both instruction and assistance from the more enlightened. Much misery, much actual suffering are unavoidable in all states of society. Yet when the important interests of the poor are properly watched over, their calamities admit of great alleviation. The facts detailed in this paper have been collected to shew by how simple a method, and with how slight, one of the chief scourges of mankind may be disarmed of a great part of its terrors. Other towns, I trust, will perceive it to be their interest to adopt measures of the same kind. *Reliance may be placed on our experience here, for I have been less desirous to celebrate the triumph of art, than of humanity*”.—*Dr. Ferriar's Account of the fever wards at Manchester, 3rd. vol. of his medical histories, p. 91, 92.*

* Medical reports on the effects of water, cold and warm, as a remedy in fever and febrile diseases; whether applied to the surface of the body, or used as a drink. Page 222, by Dr. Currie of Liverpool.

“ We are happy to hear that some public spirited individuals have it in contemplation to attempt the establishment of similar institutions in this metropolis (London). Every medical man, who is in the habit of visiting the sick poor, must give his testimony for the necessity of such a plan; and when the inhabitants in general shall be made fully acquainted with the alarming magnitude of the evil, and the easy and effectual means of greatly diminishing, if not of absolutely removing it: We have good reason to hope, that the noble spirit of charity, by which they are distinguished throughout Europe, will not long delay to accomplish an object more important, and fraught with more useful consequences to the community, than any which for a long time past has engaged the attention of the benevolent.”—*Extract from account of diseases in London, admitted under the care of the physicians of the Finsbury Dispensary. Monthly magazine, Nov. 1800.*

SECOND. *That it is extremely difficult, if not impracticable, effectually to check contagion, in populous towns without the aid of such an establishment.*

“ During the mild open winter in January, and in the beginning of February, the malignant fever was rapidly diffused to a very great extent, and with an aggravated train of symptoms. Among the poor, the mortality from this cause, was nearly that of one in four, notwithstanding the attentive administration of proper articles of diet and of suitable remedies, with plenty of wine. The good effects of all these applications are almost wholly superseded by the miserable accommodations of the poor, with respect to bedding, and by a total neglect of ventilation in their narrow and crowded dwellings”.—*Extract from Dr. Willan's reports on the diseases of London for March 1800.*

“ When a fever either arises in, or is introduced into the house of a poor person, every circumstance favouring its progress, it generally attacks the family in succession; their clothes, and the woollen and cotton parts of their furniture become infected, retain the infection tenaciously, and are capable of communicating the disease for a long time. These they can neither afford to purify nor to destroy. Thus their dwellings and persons continually breathe contagion, and where this is the situation not of one family only, but of a great number, it is hardly possible to prevent a communication of the disease to the families of the rich, among whom it would never have been produced. The clothes
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disposed of thoroughly penetrated by contagious effluvia, are purchased by healthy persons without suspicion; and thus fevers may often arise among the servants of the rich."—*Dr. Ferriar, vol. 1, p. 243, 140.*

There is one point of considerable importance, which perhaps ought to have been more distinctly noticed in the preceding remarks; namely, that all the circumstances, which conduce to the generation and progress of contagion, also affect in the highest degree the *event* of the disease in each particular instance. It has been observed, that when two or more persons are confined to one bed by a fever at the same time, it almost invariably happens that at least one of them sinks under the disease. "In almost all the instances of fatal termination, the patients die at a very extended period of the disease, their strength being rather gradually exhausted by its duration, than overpowered by its force".

"It is very difficult," as Dr. Ferriar remarks, "to eradicate the fever, when it seizes a family thus situated. The convalescents, from their confinement in the midst of infection, have frequent relapses, attended with increasing danger, so that the disease continues in the same spot for several months together. The recovery even of those who do not relapse, is also tedious and imperfect, beyond the conception of any who have not experienced cases of this nature. The want of proper nurses must be added, as none of the least evils attending this unfortunate class of people. I have no hesitation in asserting that many lives are annually lost from this cause alone".—*Dr. Ferriar.—Vol. III. page 50.*

THIRD. *That such an Establishment is peculiarly necessary in the City of Dublin, especially in that quarter that comprises the Liberty and its immediate neighbourhood.*

“Contagious disease is the most formidable shape, under which the Almighty manifests his displeasure: to the poor of every country a dreadful scourge—to the poor of *this*, the more afflicting, if we consider, that among the labouring classes in Ireland, from neglect of early habits of industry, the maintenance of six or seven children solely depends on the health of the parent, and that his inability to labour consequently exposes a *whole family* to want—in this metropolis, fever, in all its forms, is the great bane of domestic comfort among the lower order of the people.

The western part of this city, consisting of narrow lanes and alleys, has been always unfriendly to the health of the poor, and has become more inimical, in that respect, from the migration of the wealthy inhabitants to the eastern and modern parts of the city. Those lanes and allies are full of neglected and ruined habitations, which have been for the most part, converted into cow-houses, pig-styes, and dung yards, where sordes of every kind, (the source of infection,) accumulates, here, the benevolent are deterred, by the extreme peril they are exposed to, from visiting to explore distress, and medical men to administer aid—and here, it may be said, with truth, that there are, at *all times*, subsisting among the labouring classes, the seeds of the most malignant, and contagious diseases.

Those

: Those facts might justly create apprehensions of widely spreading contagion—it is nevertheless certain, that there is not in this city, (*populous to the extent, as it is said, of 300,000*) one appropriated fever hospital, *always* open for admission—although for such a population two hospitals in the western, and one in the eastern part of the metropolis appear to be necessary”.—*Extract from an account of the proceedings of the governors of the house of industry in Dublin, printed in 1801, page 42, 43.*

N. B. Since the above was published, the accommodation for fever patients in the hospitals of the house of industry, has been considerably augmented.

The report of the sub-committee of the society for promoting the comforts of the poor, on the charitable institutions of Dublin, after stating the advantages of the local situation it possesses, proceeds as follows, p. 10.

“ But these advantages are unfortunately more than counterbalanced by circumstances of an opposite tendency—the closeness and filthiness of the streets which are occupied by the inferior classes of the people, their low situation and want of proper sewers, which subjects them to continual inundation, the wretched condition of the houses, which undergo scarce any repair, and are surrounded by every kind of nuisance*, but above all, the improvidence and supineness

* In those parts of the city where an house is so far fallen into decay as to be unfit for the habitation of any decent family, the lower floor is generally let to a publican or huxter, and the remainder in separate apartments. In one of these

supineness of their inhabitants. The inference from these facts is but too obvious—"that the labouring poor of this city are subjected in an extraordinary degree to the ravage of disease, and in circumstances the most unfavourable to their accommodation and recovery".

FOURTH. - *That the establishment of a house of recovery is not dangerous to the neighbourhood in which it is placed, even in populous towns, but on the contrary, eminently contributes to restrain the progress of infection, and diminish the prevalence of fever in the adjoining district.*

"Comparison of the number of patients ill of fever admitted on the physicians' books, at the infirmary, at different periods, in Portland-street, Silver-street, and the other streets in that pile of buildings, in the neighbourhood of the house of recovery at Manchester."

<i>"From September 20th 1793, to May 20th 1794, (a period of eight months selected on account of the usual prevalence of fever)</i>	
<i>the number of fever patients in these streets</i>	400
<i>From September 20th 1794, to May 1795,</i>	
<i>number of fever patients in these streets</i>	389

these wretched tenements from six to ten persons are not unfrequently crowded into one room; the house undergoes no repair, no provision is made for cleaning the stairs or common passages, where every kind of filth is accumulated; by this means contagious diseases are perpetuated, and scarce a week elapses in which some of the inhabitants (to adopt expressions which the familiarity of the mischief has introduced) do not fall down in the fever.

From September 20th 1795 to May 20th 1796, number of fever patients in these streets	-	-	-	267
From July 13 1796 to March 13 1797, being a period of 8 months since the opening the house of recovery, number fever patients in these streets	-	-	-	25
In July last	-	-	-	5
In August last	-	-	-	1
In September last	-	-	-	0

(The above statement should remove the fears of those who, happening to live in the vicinity of the houses of recovery, might dread the propagation of contagion from thence.)—*Report of the Society for promoting the comforts of the poor* (p. 92.) being an extract from the account of the Waterford house of recovery.

“There is a range of houses adjoining to and also in front of the Waterford house of recovery, notwithstanding which, febrile infection seems to have been considerably diminished in its neighbourhood.”
Extract from the account of the Waterford house of recovery, ibid p. 101.

N. B. This effect was experienced within the short space of six months from the opening of the house.
FIFTH. *Proper situation for a house of recovery, and superior advantages likely to result from a new building adapted for the specific purpose.*

“If such institutions (as houses of recovery) should be deemed expedient, they ought to be built in situations elevated and insulated, detached from
the

the city, and contiguous to running water".—*Account of proceedings of the governors of the house of industry, Dublin, printed in 1801, p. 41.*

"The Waterford house of recovery stands in an elevated situation in the suburbs, with a piece of ground annexed, which is applied to drying and airing clothes, and to the use of the patients for exercise. By sinking a pump, an abundant supply of water has been procured. There is a range of houses adjoining to, and also in the front of it."—*Reports of society for promoting the comforts of the poor, p. 101.*

"The situation of our (*the Manchester*) house of recovery, is particularly favourable to a more frequent attendance on the patients, most of whom it was previously impossible to visit more than once a day, while they were dispersed through all parts of a great town."—*Vol. 3rd, Dr. Ferriar, p. 86.*

"The committee after some deliberation, fixed upon four small adjoining houses, situated without the wall of the Infirmary, and detached from other buildings."—*Dr. Ferriar, 3 Vol. p. 64.*

"The circumstances that led to this determination were probably the actual existence of a fever then raging with violence in the town and neighbourhood of Manchester, and the apprehension of danger resulting from the delay that might be occasioned by waiting for the erection of a building adapted for the specific purpose. For Dr. Ferriar in his letter dated the 4th Jan. 1796, addressed to a set of gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood of Manchester who had met to take the subject into consideration (and which letter was the foundation of the whole experiment)

ment), gives his opinion in favour of the erection of a fever ward for the purpose, in preference to renting a house or houses, for the following reasons.

First. In the erection of a fever ward, situation, air and convenience would be better consulted: In renting a house some of these very important objects might be unavoidably superseded.

Second. Upon such a permanent establishment, one or more women of decent character might be induced to undertake the office of nurses.

Third. By thus bringing the worst and most neglected cases under one roof, the chance of spreading infection would be diminished, while attention to the patients on the part of the nurses would be better secured, than if the patients were dispersed in different houses, as, in reality, it would be very difficult to obtain a complete house, upon any rent, for such a purpose.

(N. B. This reason applies with much greater force to Dublin than to Manchester, inasmuch as the number of cases to be provided for in the proposed hospital greatly exceeds that which the Manchester wards were designed to accommodate.)

Fourth. In a separate building, the access of unnecessary visitors would be better prevented". *Dr. Ferriar's account of the Manchester fever wards. 3 Vol. of his medical history's 51. 53.*

"The house to be provided for the reception of such persons shall be in an airy situation; detached from other buildings; in the neighbourhood of a populous district of the town." *Plan presented by Dr. Murray, of London, to the Society for bettering the condition of the poor, for the institution of houses of recovery in that city—p. 11.*

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
CIRCUMSTANCES
WHICH TEND TO GENERATE AND PROPAGATE
CONTAGION,
IN THE LIBERTIES ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE
CITY OF DUBLIN,
AND ON
The means of removing them,
Submitted to the consideration of the
Subscribers and the Public.
BY THE
TRUSTEES
OF THE
HOUSE OF RECOVERY,
OR
FEVER HOSPITAL,
IN CORK-STREET.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED BY T. M. BATES, 89, COOMBE

1802.

With respect to the first, it is to be observed, that the houses throughout the Liberty are in general unprovided with necessaries, or those necessaries are so choked up and obstructed as not to serve for any purpose of cleanliness. The consequence of which is, that all the filth of the House is suffered to accumulate frequently for years together; and those immense heaps of putrid sordes piled up in close and confined back yards, surrounded with high walls, that interrupt the free circulation of air, cannot fail to generate and propagate contagion. The external filth (such as is collected in the streets) is removed, (tho' not so frequently as could be wished) by a scavenger who contracts for the purpose with the Grand Jury of the Manor Court of St. Thomas Donore, and executes a bond to the seneschal for the performance of his duty; but the inconveniencies experienced from his neglect are not to be compared with the evils arising from the former source, inasmuch as the comparatively free circulation of air in the open streets counteracts the baneful effects of every external accumulation of filth.

The state of the back yards is the circumstance of most importance to be attended to, and loudly calls for the application of some effectual remedy; at present the landlords of those wretched habitations, not residing in general in the neighbourhood of them, feel no interest in removing the causes of this nuisance, or in assisting or encouraging their tenants in any disposition or effort of their own towards cleanliness. Hence this burthen falls altogether upon the tenants themselves, and they being in general very poor, and accustomed by habit to the noisome effluvia, and therefore not feeling the inconvenience of it, and not being aware of its pernicious influence upon their health, it is not surprizing that the expence and trouble of looking for and paying a dirtman who is to provide a cartman from the country to carry away the filth, prevent them from resorting regularly to the only means in their power of getting rid of it. Hence it is that the accumulation of filth in the back yards prevails so generally and to so dangerous and alarming an extent in many instances and such is the force of custom and habit, that the very sense of cleanliness, and with it of decency

cency is almost lost among the people of this district. The instinct that prompts man to turn with disgust and abhorrence from certain objects, is blunted and sometimes extinguished among them; long habituated to the effluvia of the dunghill within a few feet of their dwellings, they become reconciled to it even within doors, they dont take the trouble of removing the filth from their stairs, passages, and even in some instances from their bed rooms.

The influence of this habitual residence in the midst of filth and nastiness extends to their dress and their persons, and to this cause more perhaps than to poverty or its inseparable incidents is to be attributed the squalid and unhealthy appearance so prevalent among the manufacturing classes of this, as well as other parts of the City of Dublin. Under this head it is proper to notice the great number of houses in a state of total ruin, which are common receptacles of filth of all kinds, and which being incapable of affording shelter from the inclemency of the weather to the most wretched classes of inhabitants, are suffered to remain in this state without even a casual effort

fort to palliate the nuisance or abate its malignity, and this grievance is also observable frequently in the lower stories of houses which are deserted and converted into common receptacles of filth tho' the upper stories are inhabited.

With respect to the filth accumulated in the streets this is certainly a consideration of inferior magnitude. The contract with the scavenger provides in some degree for cleanliness in this respect, but one circumstance is remarkable throughout, and may require attention, namely, " The stagnant
" putrescency of all the gutters or channels
" that adjoin the flag or path ways."

SECOND HEAD, NAMELY, *Stagnant Pools or Ditches of Water,*

Of these are three, some remarkably offensive; one in particular on the west side of Brickfield-lane. This might be easily removed by opening a communication with the sewer in Cork-street,

THIRD

THIRD HEAD.

Exercise of trades which for want of due attention to cleanliness become unwholesome, and sale of unwholesome provisions.

Under this head may be classed dairies and slaughtering houses.—The former of which abound in the Liberty, and are as they are generally kept, a most offensive nuisance. How far' these, and other unwholesome trades are so in a legal sense, will be matter for consideration, when the means of removing nuisances and other circumstances which generate contagion come to be discussed.

The sale of unwholesome provisions is also another circumstance that calls for the interposition of the magistracy.

It next comes to be considered how far the common or statute law as it stands at present provides a remedy for any of the forementioned inconveniencies, and what are considered as nuisances in a town at common law independent of the provisions of any act of parliament, and of the means which the law provides for removing them.

Where

There can be no doubt that all the several matters that have been already noticed as injurious to the health of the inhabitants of the Liberties, and tending to generate and spread contagion, are offences against the common law of the land, and may be presented as such by a Grand Jury or the persons concerned may be indicted, and upon proof being made of the existence of the nuisance, judgment will be given. That the nuisance be removed or the party fined, and in some cases the sentence of the court may extend to both fine and order of removal.

In some cases the judgment of removal is a complete remedy. The nuisance once abated, the public inconvenience is at an end, as for example where a gate or other obstruction has been erected across a highway, or a dunghill made in a place which renders it peculiarly noisome and dangerous to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

In others a fine upon the party concerned may be the only means of procuring effectual redress, and if the sentence of the court on the first indictment should

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prove

prove inadequate, fresh indictments may be preferred, and the fine repeated till obedience to the orders of the court shall have been enforced, as where offensive trades are carried on and persisted in after the sentence.

If a nuisance of the first description should be renewed by the same person after it had once been abated by the proper officer under authority of the court, such a repetition of the offence would make it proper to inflict a fine as well as pronounce a second judgment of removal.

All nuisances are within the jurisdiction of courts of session of the peace, and of others having similar powers within limited jurisdictions.

And where the inconvenience is manifest and the usurpation upon the rights of the public flagrant on the part of the individual concerned in erecting the nuisance, it may be abated by any person whatsoever without the judgment of any court, as in the instance already put of a gate erected across a highway.

Imprisonment may be superadded to fine if it be necessary to enforce obedience to the sentence of the court (a).

The following examples will illustrate the doctrine of nuisances and justify the inference that the dunghills, slaughtering houses, and stagnant pools of the Liberty might be all proceeded against as nuisances in the proper court.

A glass house, a swine yard, a slaughtering house, have been considered as nuisances in a great town, and the persons concerned in them fined.

(b) When the Plague prevailed it was decided that if a person divided a house in a town for poor people to inhabit, by which
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(a) The sentence perhaps would not fall upon the proper person, and this seems to be the only objection to this mode of proceeding. The occupier would be the person liable to the indictment, perhaps the existence and continuance of the nuisance may in general be considered as the fault of the landlord.

(b) Such an indictment was held good for dividing a house in Hertford, and such indictments are frequent in London.

it may become more dangerous in the time of infection of the Plague, such a proceeding was an indictable offence, and the house so divided a common nuisance.

To manufacture acid spirit of Sulphur, Vitriol, or Aquafortis, in the vicinity of dwelling houses has been deemed a nuisance.

Stopping wholesome air is a nuisance. Erecting a dye-house so near the houses of others, as materially to incommode them by the stench of smoke and other nastiness, has been considered as coming within this rule.

A soap-boilery, a calendar man, a brew-house *in close parts of the city of London* has been deemed nuisances, ruinous houses are unquestionably nuisances.

Of Parliamentary provisions for the removal of nuisances, and particularly in the city, and liberties of Dublin.

These are chiefly contained in an act passed in the 26th Year of the reign of his present
present

present majesty, c. 61 being an act “ for
 “ the improvement of the city of Dublin
 “ and the environs thereof, by the better
 “ paving, lighting, and cleansing the same.

The 5th Sect. recites, that the properly ^{29 G. 3.}
 paving, cleansing, and lighting the several ^{c. 61, s.}
 streets, &c. in the city and county of the ^{5.}
 city of Dublin, &c. and the erecting of
 fountains and conduits for the use of the
 poor and the public, will tend greatly to
 the free intercourse, health, accommoda-
 tion, and safety of its inhabitants, &c. and
 that it will also be of great advantage if
 common sewers and drains were made in
 the manner therein after mentioned, and that
 it will conduce to the above purposes if the
 erecting of fountains &c. paving, cleansing
 &c. ordering, designing, and making com-
 mon sewers, drains, cess pools, &c. &c. be
 put under the care of the same corporation.
 It then proceeds to erect a corporation con-
 sisting of six directors, and five commis-
 sioners for the better regulating and order-
 ing the paving, cleansing, and lighting the
 squares, streets, &c. &c. and for prevent-
 ing and removing annoyances, obstructions
 and nuisances within the same, and for de-
 signing

signing and making common sewers within the limits of the Circular Road, whether within the county of Dublin, or within the city and county of the city of Dublin and Liberties thereof, (except the Liberty of Donore,) and (*in respect of lighting only* the Liberty of St. Sepulchre) and empowers them to carry into execution the provisions of this act for the above purposes.

Sect. 38 Recites that the public fountains already erected had been found to contribute greatly to the health, convenience, and benefit of the public, and particularly of the Poor of the city, and to the cleanliness thereof. It then empowers the said directors and commissioners, &c. to erect in the streets of said city, &c. *or in the liberties thereof* as to them shall seem proper, such number of fountains, &c. for the supply of Water, as they shall think necessary,

Sect. 39. Empowers them to water the streets, to cause wells to to be dug and pumps sunk.

Sect. 40. Empowers them to build and make sewers, &c. in such streets and other places in the said city as to them shall appear expedient

dient, provided that the inhabitants shall contribute, &c. and at their own cost, &c. cleanse and keep them in repair.

Provides the modes in which the com-
missioners shall proceed in making such
sewers and rating the inhabitants and em-
powers them to make cess pools. Sect. 41.

Provides that in case any private sewer,
drain or cess pool shall become choaked up
and ruinous, so as to affect or injure pave-
ment or become offensive to the inhabi-
tants, the person in said section particularly
described, shall within 4 days after notice
proceed to cleanse, scour, and repair same;
and in case of default or delay on the part
of said persons, directors and commission-
ers are empowered to cause the same to
be done, and the costs thereof are made a
charge on the persons liable to repair, and
are to be apportioned and levied in the same
manner as other rates and assessments under
this act. Sect. 42.

Enables the corporation for the purposes
aforesaid and others therein recited, to levy
and assess once in every year or oftener,
one Sect. 52.

one or more rates and assessments, upon all and every the houses, shops, warehouses, &c. &c. &c. then built or which thereafter should be built, within the limits of the Circular Road, (except such houses as are in the Barony of Donore), as therein mentioned.

Se&t. 56. Exce&t the liberties of St. Sepulchre's, Thomas-court, and Donore, from the provisions respecting lighting, and from the charges on account thereof.

Se&t. 61. Imposes assessments on churches, and public buildings, &c. for paving.

Se&t. 62. Ditto. for lighting, &c.

Se&t. 78. Vests power in the directors and commissioners to remove a great variety of
 104 to
 109. nuisances, encroachments, and annoyances therein particularly set forth from the public ways, &c.

Se&t. Provides, that if any person, &c. shall
 110. lay, &c. any coal ashes, dung, building or other rubbish, street dirt, night soil, filth, or offal whatsoever in any of the streets, lanes

lanes, quays, squares, courts, alleys, or in any other places whatsoever within the limits of the Circular Road as herein before mentioned, or if any person, &c. shall empty any boghouse or begin to take away any night soil from any house in any of the streets or passages within the limits of this act, before the hour of eleven at night, or shall continue so to do after the hour of six in the morning, or shall load or carry away any such coal ashes, &c. except in a cart or car floored and enclosed by a boarded frame work, or shall permit or suffer any part of their loading to fall out, &c. or dirty any of the streets, &c. the same shall be deemed obstructions nuisances and annoyances under this Act and persons offending being convicted before the Lord Mayor or other magistrate, shall forfeit 20s.

Provided always that if it shall be proved before the said directors and commissioners, that there was not any yard, dirt hole, or other receptacle for said coal ashes, or other rubbish belonging to the house or tenement before which the same or any of them shall be laid, that in such case it shall

Sec^t/
III.

and may be lawful for the said person or persons who shall be fined as aforesaid, to deduct from the rent payable by him to his landlord the one half of such fine as he, she or they shall have been obliged to pay.

- Sect.
 113. Provides for the cleansing of footways, &c.
- Sect.
 114. That the water from the tops of houses, shall be conveyed to the ground by pipes or trunks to be fixed to the fronts, sides or ends of houses, &c.
- Sect.
 122. Imposes a penalty of 5l. on any person damaging a fountain, &c.
- Sect.
 134. Declares heaps of dirt, &c. in footways, &c. nuisances, and imposes further penalties.
- Sect.
 137. Inspectors of nuisances to be made constables.
- Sect.
 138. Provides that in case of any overflowing or damage from the breaking or stoppage of any sewer, drain or cess pool, &c. com-
 missioners

missioners on complaint made, may order same to be inspected, and to be opened, cleansed, repaired or rebuilt, as may be judged necessary, and empowers them to assess and levy the charges as therein directed.

By the 30th Geo. 3d. c. 56. there are several further regulations on the subject of nuisances, &c. on roads, but little that has reference to the subject immediately under consideration. The following provisions however of this last mentioned Act require to be noticed.

It is among other things provided, That if any landholder or occupier of land, shall By S. 61: lay or cause or suffer to be laid upon his land within *the City of Dublin or Liberties thereof*, for manure, or any other purpose, any filth, offals of blood, or the scrapings of any slaughter house or of shambles, or of the emptying of privies, without immediately covering the same with such quantities of lime or earth as shall be sufficient to prevent any stench or annoyance therefrom, or shall lay or deposit any *dung-bill*, or other offensive *manure* within 100 feet

feet of any road within the county of the said City, such person so offending shall forfeit for every such offence, 40s.

And by
Sect. 66.

After reciting that the foot and carriage ways within the barony of Donore are almost impassable, provides, That the Grand Jury of Thomas Court and Donore be empowered to present such sum or sums as they may think sufficient to repair same, and to appoint such overseers as they may think proper, and that said overseers may have the same powers as the directors and commissioners of the paving board have as to the repairing, levelling and altering all such carriage and footways, and to the removing of nuisances and other obstructions within said Barony, &c.

Remarks on the foregoing clauses and extracts.

Sect. 40,
41, 42,
and 138.

The powers vested in the directors and commissioners of erecting fountains, and making and opening sewers, drains and cess pools, are highly useful and salutary, and the exercise of these powers may perhaps be called forth at some future period in such

such a way as may greatly forward the purposes of this institution, but from a view of the provisions of these two acts of parliament, which are the principal acts which relate in any degree to the subject under consideration, it is manifest, that nuisances, &c. *as connected with public roads*, were chiefly in the contemplation of the framers of them, and that *other nuisances*, not immediately prejudicial to the safety and accommodation of passengers, were not directly within the purview of these statutes, and are left in general as they stood at common law. Some of the provisions contained in them which may seem exceptions to this general observation *either do not apply to the evils which are principally felt as nuisances in the Liberties or are inadequate to the removal of them.*

See Sect.
104 to
109. and
134

For example, the 110th Section contains a very sufficient provision for preventing accumulation of *filth in the streets*, &c. but it has no reference to the great nuisance complained of: *The accumulation of filth in the back yards*, and the latter part of the section makes it penal on the inhabitants to resort to the only means at present in their

their

their power to relieve themselves from this inconvenience; namely, by *country cars without being boarded or floored*, and that *come to town only in the day time*.

The 111th Section was manifestly pointed at one great grievance in the Liberty. The want of dirt holes, &c. in consequence of the default of landlords, but the prevailing practice in this neighbourhood of levying the rent of the several rooms weekly, by small sums, from 1s. to 2s. 6d. per room, seems to be an insuperable bar in the way of the tenants making any effectual use of this privilege against the landlord.

The provision in the 30th G. 3, ch. 56, Sect. 61, relates to accumulations of filth, *voluntarily* made for some *particular purpose*, and could not be construed to apply to the dunghills, &c. &c. in *back yards that are accumulated of necessity*, and the grievance attending which, proceeds from *the want of adequate means for their removal*, which the legislature has not by this or any other act of parliament (as is believed) supplied. Without some such provisions, the imposition of fines on the occupiers, who are in general

general, very poor persons, would be as inoperative as it would be unjust.

The removal of the second class of nuisances noticed in the first part of the foregoing observations, namely stagnant pools and ditches may perhaps be forwarded by the exercise of some of the powers vested in the paving commissioners.

The Third class, namely, that which includes dairies, slaughter houses, &c. remains untouched by any of the provisions of these acts.

The next consideration will be, *“ what other means should be resorted for removing them, besides a vigilant and active enforcement of the existing laws.”*

Before we enter upon the discussion of this branch of the subject, it may be necessary to anticipate an objection which may arise in the minds of some readers, in perusing the following observations namely; *“ That we are overstepping the limits of our province as trustees of a House of Recovery, and intruding into matters, which*

“ which are out of our proper sphere and
 “ belong more properly to the department
 “ of general police, and as such, should
 “ be left to the wisdom of parliament.”

To a person well acquainted with the circumstances of the liberties of this city, and with the objects to which the attention of the managers of a Fever Hospital must be directed, the objection will meet a ready answer. The inseparable and necessary connexion of this branch of our subject with the internal operations of the House of Recovery in order to give complete efficacy to the whole system of measures to be adopted in order to abate contagion, will strike his mind at once with irresistible evidence, but as the subject may be new to some, and the state of the Liberty unknown, (except from the descriptions herein given,) to others of our readers, it will be necessary shortly to state the detail, by which we are gradually led, and at length unavoidably compelled into this discussion.

It must be remembered in the first place that the object of every such institution is not merely to relieve persons actually labouring

bouring under fever, but to counteract the progress of infection, and to eradicate as far as possible the causes of it. It is obvious therefore that the best conducted system of internal management will fall very short of attaining this end, unless it be combined with a system of external operations for purifying and ventilating the houses from whence the patients are removed, and introducing gradually a sense of the value and importance of cleanliness amongst them by practical illustrations of the benefits resulting from it.

Hence a set of rules to be observed by the inhabitants of those houses from which the Patients are removed, and of rewards for a punctual compliance with them, has constituted a part of the system of the Houses of Recovery at Manchester and Waterford, and probably of every other similar establishment, and the Society "*for bettering the condition of the poor in Cork,*" seeing the importance of an attention to this object in a more extensive point of view, and aware of its influence on the morals as well as health of the people, have from the first commencement of their in-

D stitution

stitution, and previous to their taking any measures for the establishment of a House of Recovery, offered annual rewards for cleanliness in persons and habitations to the lower classes of inhabitants in that city. All these examples were before the trustees of the Fever Hospital or House of Recovery in Cork-street, when they framed their original and fundamental regulations, and accordingly by the seventh of these regulations it is provided :

“ That the committee (in whom the
 “ management of the institution is vested)
 “ shall be fully competent to make all such
 “ rules and bye laws as may seem best fit-
 “ ted to carry the objects of the Institu-
 “ tion fully into effect, as well for the
 “ internal regulation of the House and
 “ the admission of patients, as for pre-
 “ venting the spreading of contagion in
 “ the houses and neighbourhood from
 “ whence the patients shall have been re-
 “ moved, and for the introduction of such
 “ habits of cleanliness, as may diminish if
 “ not destroy the operation of those cau-
 “ ses that have contributed to make such
 “ an

“ an institution so necessary at the present
 “ time, &c.

Though the House of Recovery be as yet only in progress, and the period when it will be ready for the reception of patients still at some distance, the consideration of the means of giving efficacy to so important a branch of their original system cannot be deemed premature, and it has accordingly occupied some portion of the trustees attention. The plan of inducing habits of cleanliness by rewards, has been considered, and will probably be adopted as one of the measures conducive to this object, when the detail of regulations for the conduct of the institution shall come under discussion, but tho' the operation of rewards may have a considerable influence and that it is impossible to calculate the effects of introducing cleanliness in any one instance; it is manifest that no exertions in this way can completely work their effect, while the back yards of the houses continue choaked up with heaps of putrid filth, and until some means are devised for the regular and periodical removal of it. The trustees therefore were necessarily led
 into

into a consideration of the great and prevailing nuisances within the district of their operations, and suggest the following observations as matter for consideration,

FIRST
POINT.

The first step must be, *the actual removal of all the accumulations of filth that exist at present.* This may seem at first sight a task of Herculean labour, but it must be remembered that it is all useful and profitable manure, *That the Grand Canal affords a ready channel for sending it to a considerable distance in the country; That cars from thence are employed at present every day in carrying away some portions of it, and tho' the poverty and indolence of the inhabitants induce them to submit to the nuisance in some instances altogether, and in others to be contented with a partial and temporary abatement of it, yet the same means might, if properly applied and exerted, be adequate to its complete removal.* The landlords might in some instances be prevailed on to assist—the attention of farmers in the country might be excited by public advertisements; the proprietors of the carts employed in cleansing other parts of the City might be induced

duced to co-operate. *All these means might be brought into action at once, if the importance of the object with a view to the health and safety of all the inhabitants of Dublin were once duly felt, if the executive government were to take it up as a matter of public concern, and place the superintendence of this necessary work under the direction of proper persons to be vested with the necessary powers for carrying it effectually into execution.*

When this object shall have been effected, the next consideration will be to devise means to prevent its recurrence, the first that occurs as necessary for this purpose is the construction of necessary sewers from different parts of the Liberties (at present unprovided with them) to communicate with the great public sewer that runs thro' the Coombe, or such other public sewer as may be contiguous. By the 40th S. of 26th Geo. 3. Ch. 61, already cited. "the paving commissioners are authorized to build sewers when necessary, the inhabitants contributing towards the expence." The jurisdiction of the paving commissioners does not include the whole

SECOND POINT.

of

of the liberties (the Barony of Donore being expressly excepted) and the contribution of the inhabitants could probably not be reckoned upon as a resource, but a moderate extension of the powers of the commissioners in this respect could not, it is apprehended, be deemed liable to any objection. The object might be thus attained at an inconsiderable expence, and tho' the occupiers are in general unable to contribute, the landlords might with great propriety and justice be taxed towards the carrying on a work which would in a very short time greatly enhance the value of their property.

THIRD
POINT.

When the present accumulation of filth shall have been removed, and the means provided for keeping up a regular system of cleanliness by the construction of the necessary sewers, what remains to be done in order to restore and preserve it in this part of the City of Dublin depends chiefly on the exertions of the inhabitants themselves, which must be called forth 1st. By a vigilant exercise of the powers already vested by law in the manor courts of punishing the offensive neglect of cleanliness. 2^d. By rewards to such as shall distinguish themselves

themselves by superior attention to this point, as well in their persons as in their habitations, and here the beneficial influence of the House of Recovery, and the regulations therein established for the preservation of cleanliness within its own doors, will be sensibly felt in another, and perhaps a still more forcible way; the rapid recovery of every patient (whose life is saved) will be contrasted with the long protracted visitations of languor and disease which they have so often experienced in their own habitations, and will convey a practical illustration of the importance and value of domestic cleanliness. Thus by the aid of the two preliminary measures already stated, the way will be prepared for the operation of those remedies which it is in the power of the trustees to apply, but there is one other point in which the aid of the Legislature may be required, and in which it may be applied without any reasonable ground of objection whatever; It has been already observed that the houses in the Liberties are in general unprovided with necessaries;—It is not intended to propose the enactment of a law directly compelling the landlords to build such offices at the beak

of their respective tenements, but as it is a notorious fact, that they are generally non-residents and totally careless whether the tenants are provided with any domestic means to assist them in preserving cleanliness, it is submitted, "Whether a law empowering
 " the proper jurisdiction to impose fines,
 " whether in a summary way or otherwise,
 " on the landlords as well as the occupiers
 " wherever the necessary means of cleanliness were unprovided," might not have a salutary operation. The justice of the principle of such a law has been already recognized in the 111th Section of the foregoing act already recited, by which, "The
 " tenants or occupiers are authorized to
 " deduct one moiety of the fines imposed
 " on them out of the landlord's rent, in
 " cases where no receptacle for dirt was
 " provided." The circumstances that render this law inoperative, have been already stated; but the enactment of it is a full sanction to the principle of that which is now suggested, and shews that the evil against which it is directly levelled, had not escaped the notice, and had been deemed worthy of the interference of the legislature.

As to the second class of nuisances, viz. stagnant pools, &c. they are comparatively of subordinate consideration, and if the means already pointed out of constructing additional sewers should be adopted, the removal of this nuisance, (with the exertion of some vigilance and activity) would necessarily follow.

The third class, That of dairies, slaughter houses, deserted and ruinous, houses will be the subject of some observations at a future period.

The trustees have thought it their duty to submit these observations to the public. The undertaking in which they are engaged, has been honoured with a considerable share of public confidence and support, and they have felt themselves bound to suggest the means of rendering it as extensively beneficial as possible. They have stated the existence of a great public evil immediately connected with and materially obstructing the progress of their operations, they have detailed the provisions of the common and statute law, as applicable to the removal of it, and they have shewn them to be inadequate, and they have pointed out such public measures as in concert with the labours of the superintending

committee, would be perfectly adequate to its complete suppression. They have defined the exact point to which public interference must extend, and at which private exertion must begin, and they have shewn how inefficient the latter must be, unaided by the former. Having thus discharged their duty to the public, they will rejoice if the statement they have made shall give birth to any general spirit of exertion, for the suppression of the evils complained of, and will heartily co-operate themselves in any measures that may be rationally devised for the purpose, but if the subject shall not be deemed of sufficient magnitude to deserve the public attention, or if the importance of it should not be felt in the degree which it appears to them to merit, they will not be discouraged from pursuing that course of operations which lies within their power. They cannot fully reach to the cure of certain evils, but they may make considerable progress, and they will indulge the expectation that the success of their labours notwithstanding the difficulties with which they are obstructed, will in time produce that conviction which their arguments may fail to impress.

1 35 1

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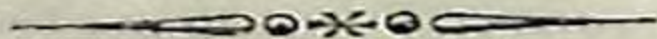
Short Letter

TO THE

TRUSTEES

OF THE

INTENDED FEVER HOSPITAL.



FROM

MAURICE MORGAN, M. D.



Dublin.

PRINTED BY J. BARLOW, 29, BOLTON-STREET.

1802.

A

LETTER

TO THE

TRUSTEES

OF THE

INTENDED FEVER HOSPITAL.

I Beg leave to address to you, gentlemen, as Trustees of the intended Fever Hospital, a few observations on the nature and prevention of contagion. I am not certain, indeed, whether they might not, with equal propriety, be directed to another body of men, who, perhaps, conceive themselves little interested in such a subject—I mean the Commissioners for making wide and *convenient* streets in this capital. One of the greatest public conveniences which a large city can possess, is the full and free enjoyment of those two vital elements,

B

air,

As, however, a divided duty is seldom well performed, it appears proper that in this, as in other great cities on the continent, there should be established, under the auspices of government, a *Board of Health*, whose sole and undivided attention might be directed to the proper means of preventing the progress of contagion, by supplying the poor with those articles at a cheap rate, (such as lime for white-washing the inside of their houses, soap of the commonest kind for domestic cleanliness) which would, in a short time, purify these pits of infection, and in a great degree supersede the use of a large and expensive hospital establishment.

Such a Board, constituted we will suppose of five persons, one to be appointed by the College of Physicians, one by the Royal Irish Academy, one by the Dublin Society, and two by Government, would be of the greatest use, not only as curators of the public health, but as correctors of those frequent *panics* respecting fever, which are most generally the *only* infection that really takes place, and which a report from the authority of the Board of Health would help to dissipate, if not entirely remove. There is a panic, for example, at present, which I believe to be a most groundless one. Excepting a very few cases of the sore throat, which always accompanies the scarlet fever, having proved of a malignant and mortal kind; that particular fever has been, as it generally is,

not of a dangerous nature, and fevers of a kind similar to the one which is prevalent among the poor, have not been more numerous or more fatal in the wealthy part of the city this season than they were the last. One or two deaths become the subject of conversation, and with the customary exaggeration of old women, male, and female, the epidemical panic begins to spread, to the great emolument of the medical faculty, through all its gradations. This panic, however, has had its use; it has contributed to forward the plan of a House of Recovery; but any charitable establishment, especially of a novel kind, is so agreeable to the generous temperament of the Irish character, that the sums subscribed in the first feverishness of charity, generally stimulate to such expenditure in the erection of buildings, and preparations for the proposed institution, that a deficiency is soon experienced, and the institution may be said to shift from the foundation.

It would seem much more prudent to get annual subscriptions, than large original donations, which tempt to an injudicious and disproportionate expence in the first fervour of the business; and I am glad to notice, in the liberality of his annual subscription, the name of a man whose benevolence is always forecasting as well as fervent, and who looks to the permanence of the charity he favours, while the zeal of the first founders in

all such institutions is apt to cool into indolence or indifference.

The nature of contagion is better known than formerly. As the derivation of the term indicates, contagion never extends to any considerable distance, and when it happens to do so, it is carried, or transmitted by articles of raiment or bedding, which have been in *contact* with the patient, or by persons who have been touching the patient, or those articles which have been thus infected. Contagion, therefore, generally, if not always, proceeds from contact. Were it of a nature very diffusible throughout the atmosphere, the westerly winds which blow with such constancy in this island would waft to the eastern part of the city, the fever which prevails, so much in the Liberty, and which must continue to prevail there until proper regulations be introduced for internal purification of the houses, and external cleanliness of the lanes and alleys.

The fever of the Liberty is of the low nervous kind, brought on generally by poor diet, and anxiety of mind, putting the body in that state which is passive to the effects of close and contaminated air. I agree with an ingenious physician, (who has, in my opinion, not duly appreciated the merits of a House of Recovery, in his observations on that subject) that this fever is not very frequently fatal; but it is so subject to *relapse*, by
 a con-

a continued exposure to the sources of infection, that it may in some houses be really called a chronic rather than acute disease. Perhaps, indeed, death itself would be preferable to this long *disease of life* prevailing in a poor man's family, which incapacitates either himself, or his wife, or his children from labour, at the same time increasing the necessity for it: and an institution like that of a Fever Hospital, which lightens the burthen of life so far as to take the poor patient into a proper place, and by the administration of that cordial regimen which forms the best remedy in such cases, returns him, *in a short time*, to his home in health, where he might have remained for many weeks on a bed of sickness; such an institution is certainly a charity of the most meritorious kind. Men in a certain degree grow habituated to bad air; but poor diet, with the alternation that takes place between intoxication, and depression both of mind and body, when increased by the anxiety that attends providing for a small family, gives a power to the dose of contagious air which is *always present*, to operate on the system, and frequently overcomes the strength of habit. A cordial regimen, by which I am far from meaning, as Dr. Kennedy has in his pamphlet incautiously mentioned, with seeming approbation, a warm or *hot* regimen, since external heat is always a depressing power in these fevers, but a regimen of a cordial restorative kind, so far as depends upon the use of diet more nourishing than is generally given in fevers, and a pretty free exhibition of wine

wine with bark, such is the curative course in this malady, which can be pursued with much more certainty, and much greater economy in a House of Recovery, than at their own homes.

Solitary instances of this fever, from time to time, occur in the other parts of this city, among the people whose habits of living enable them *in general*, to resist the effects of contagion. The fever, in these instances, assumes a different *form*, and is frequently *fatal*. I believe young men who, often, in a fit of intoxication, wander at night into some of the houses in the Liberty, bring to their homes both moral and morbid contagion, and when some days after, they are seized with a fever, they forget, or are ashamed to mention the real source of the infection, ascribing it to the effects of cold, or fatigue.— They often fall a sacrifice to the violence of the fever; but even then, the disease is *seldom allowed to grow infectious*, by the attention to cleanliness, the frequent change of raiment and bed clothes, attended with proper ventilation.

Servants, also, are frequent carriers of contagion from houses in the Liberty to their respective homes, and often bear about them articles of clothing which have been, as it were, imbued with infectious matter. It is possible that they themselves may have either natural or artificial

6
ficial strength of constitution to resist the power of the infection which they bear about them, and yet the dose may be strong enough to have its full malignant effect upon some other person of the family. Tradesmen, also, who live in the Liberty, may be able, by habit, to resist the effects of contagion in their own houses, and yet by coming into houses at other parts of the city, may carry in their clothes that contagion which is of too subtle a nature to be discoverable by the smell, and until cleanliness, that virtue of the body, become more in the wish, I should perhaps say, in the *power* of the major part of the inhabitants of this city, a fever will continue to prevail among them, and will occasionally make its appearance among the higher ranks, notwithstanding all the efforts of the House of Recovery.

In truth, the want of cleanliness in their persons and their houses is so much a national evil, originating, as I think, among the lowest poor, from a sort of self-abandonment, a despair of ever bettering their situation, and a voluntary devotement of their bodies, and often their souls, to dirt and pollution, that I am sometimes surprized at the mildness of fever, and at the little progress, or diffusion of contagion in this country. I am apt to think that nature has kindly given us a most efficacious preventative, which we often ignorantly murmur at—plenty
of

of *rain* water. Without speaking of the composition of *water*, made up of two ingredients, one of which is that pure air, which may be deemed the life of life, and without remarking that a decomposition of water into its separate ingredients, is a process which takes place in the chemistry of nature much *more frequently* than has been attended to; it is sufficient for my purpose of establishing the salutary effects of the great quantity of rain which falls in Ireland, to observe its power of cleansing the atmosphere in the most contaminated corners, thus washing the face of the Liberty, for example, in spite of itself, and not only doing so, but largely diluting, and by that means weakening the efficacy of those collections of filth which more cleanly animals endeavour to cover and hide under ground. Were it not for those frequent falls of rain which the west and south-westerly winds bring from the Atlantic, I should expect a specific contagion in some parts I have seen in this city, superintended as it is by Commissioners of different Boards to be found in the Almanac, which would rival the fever called Plague, in its malignancy, and take from it the exclusive title of the Pestilence.— Nature is a physician that deals in preventatives. The wisdom, or the instinct of some nations, such as the Dutch, have led them to such habits of cleanliness as best obviate the effects of the maladies incident to their climate,

but even where the very instinct of cleanliness seems to be changed into an instinct for dirt, the forecast of nature seems to have counteracted the increasing virulence of contagion, by depuration with frequent falls of rain, which, while it drops fatness on our fields, pours down health, as I think, upon our cities, or at least becomes an antidote to the poison of pestilential diseases. Water was, by the ancients, called the best of the elements—although the modern discoveries have degraded it from the rank of an element, in its virtues and various benefits, it still retains its blessedness.

A House of Recovery is certainly a mode of yielding relief to the miserable poor, and of improving the skill of the medical profession, by supplying those opportunities of regular treatment in remedy and regimen, which can seldom, if ever, be obtained, by the cursory call of an apothecary or physician. It is curious, but true, that the poor have seldom much confidence in a *second* visit from a medical man. If the remedy first ordered has not operated as a charm, they and their friends sicken alike at the drug and the doctor. In fact, medicine is seldom of much avail in the houses of the poor, for, if taken at all, it is in general unaccompanied with that appropriate regimen necessary to give it effect, and this regimen, often constituting the method of cure, is certainly most at command,

command, and exhibited with greater certainty of success in a well regulated public institution. If there be any part of the treatment which is new or uncommon, such, for example, as the external use of cold water at early stages of fever, this is practised with much less difficulty in an institution of this nature, which is thus rendered a cradle for useful discovery.

Among the various panics of the times, (those contagious maladies of the mind) none has had greater sway than the panic of innovation. This has not rested where it rose, in the department of politics, but appears to have in a greater or less degree, spread its benumbing influence through every profession. It is to be hoped, that the security of peace will suffer the inventive powers of mind to shoot forth in every direction, and that French principles will not sound so terribly in medical as political science. The revolution which the new philosophy has occasioned in the application of the subjects of medicine, is not less remarkable, and will prove more permanent than that which has shaken the settled order of things in the political world. If there has been some reason to apprehend, from the progress of the Yellow Fever in America, and some similar instances in the Continent of Europe, such as lately happened at Cadiz, that there are likely to arise

new specific contagions of much malignity, while the older ones, such as measles, small-pox, lues venerea, seem to assume a less malignant aspect, and to wear themselves out, (if I may use the expression) it is very fortunate, and I would venture to say, providential, that inventive powers, *even* of Frenchmen, should be able to find out the best means of disinfecting the air which immediately surrounds bodies so diseased, and thus having the antidote in ready preparation on the appearance of the poison. A Fever Hospital is one of the best opportunities we can have of putting the efficacy of such means to the test of experience.

It has been supposed, (and not without great reason) that such an establishment is a new mode, not so much of counteracting, as of concentrating febrile contagion. It is well known, in the hospital practice of surgeons, that a single ulcer of a very malignant nature will so infect the air of a ward, that sores and wounds in other patients confined in the same ward, will become more ill-conditioned, and of more difficult and tedious cure, in spite of the employment of the most powerful remedies and regimen, which in air uncontaminated by such poison, would have a full and speedy effect. It is, in the same way, concluded, that fevers of a contagious nature crowded together, would

would grow more malignant, or that the one of the most malignant type or form, would so influence the rest, that the whole would degenerate into a fever of a more fatal kind. In the foreign hospitals where two patients in fever have been obliged to occupy one bed, it usually happened that one of them died. Certainly this objection would be valid against such establishments, was it not completely obviated—first, by an improvement in the construction of such receptacles for the sick,—and second, by the still greater improvement in the means of rendering the portion of air immediately surrounding the patient pure and disinfected.

First,—In the construction of hospitals, and particularly of a Fever Hospital, I should imagine that the lodgment of the sick in *wards*, however convenient for the attendance, was the worst contrivance possible for the great design of the building, a speedy and effectual cure of the patients, and is indeed justly liable to the objection of concentrating contagion, which, though not of a very volatile nature, might easily be blown to the different parts of a long room, filled with fevers in all their different stages. Unless a delirium closes the senses of patients brought into such a “Lazar House,” I think their sight must be shocked, and their disease increased by the spectacle.

spectacle. Milton has described the large wards of an hospital, like that of the Hotel Dieu, at Paris, where the patients were literally left to the mercy of God :

“ Dire was the tossing, deep the groans ; Despair
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch,
And over them, triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delayed to strike.”

The architect of such buildings seldom conforms to the real purpose of the institution, and much money is always needlessly expended on large, lofty edifices, with ornamented fronts, and full of wards, which make a necessity of expensive contrivances for proper ventilation. As the Fever Hospital will be erected at the extremity of the city, where ground is cheap, I should be apt to think that a square, or two streets of neat small houses, with a Rumford fire-place in each, and every article of *appropriate* furniture, would answer much better the useful ends of the institution than any large pile of building, which probably will, in the first instance, nearly exhaust the fund already subscribed. It may be said, that the expence of attendants, upon such a plan, must be greatly increased ; but I think the police of such an institution, by permitting one of the patient's family to nurse-tend during the illness, without ever leaving the limits of the place for that period,

period, would be more economical for the institution, and greatly more useful for the patients. Nurse-tenders, and tender nurses, are very different creatures. I cannot think a more proper nurse could be found than a near and dear relation, when placed under the regulations peculiar to such an establishment.

Could such regulations be enforced abroad, I really do not see much benefit that could be derived from a local Lazaretto of this nature. And perhaps its use might be totally superseded, by a division of this particular quarter of the town into three or four districts, appointing a physician to each district with an adequate salary, who might be obliged to reside on the spot, and be enabled to dedicate a great portion of his time and attention, not merely to the cure of diseases, but to the gradual introduction of the preventative plan in the houses of the poor, and whose monthly reports to a Board of Health, might accurately ascertain the state, and degree of health and sickness in this quarter of the metropolis.

As however you, gentlemen, will probably be inclined to the erection of a single building, for the purpose of a Fever Hospital, it may not be improper to say a few words on the latest discovered means of purifying the air of such receptacles

receptacles of the sick, which have been found very effectual, and which I think may be concisely, yet clearly explained to those who are not of the medical profession.

Contagious matter seems to be of two kinds, floating or fixed. Some contagions are certainly diffusible to a certain distance in the atmosphere, and others which are less volatile in their nature can only infect by contact, such as the cow-pox infection, the syphilitic virus, and the poison which occasions hydrophobia. Of the former more volatile kind, which is mixed and diffused in the air at some distance, and may be carried by currents of wind to still greater distance, (though never very far, from the very circumstances of diffusion and consequent dilution) may be instanced the jail fever, the marsh fever, and all fevers from putrid exhalations. Contagious matter, whether of the one kind or the other, however subtle in its nature, seems to be a compound body, which therefore may be decomposed, and of consequence changed in its properties and effects by the action of powerful solvents. Heat, or more properly fire, is one of these agents which is able to change entirely the qualities of the most subtle bodies, and were it convenient or practicable to employ it *in the degree* necessary for the purpose of destroying contagious matter, it would certainly supersede the use of any other

other disinfecting substance. It has been found by experiment, that cold water, quick lime, resinous substances cast on burning embers, exploded gun-powder, are not certain preservatives, or capable of decomposing the putrid and pestilential miasmata, which to a certain distance are diffused through the atmosphere. It has been found, that the acids, particularly the mineral acids, are the most effectual agents for this purpose; but that there are strong objections to them all, except that of the muriatic, in the form of oxygenated gas. Common vinegar has the power of decomposing, or of neutralizing infectious matter, but, for this, the infected body must be immersed in it, or frequently washed with it. Radical, or pure vinegar, is still more powerful, but it is too expensive to be used in any large quantity. The acid of vitriol, now named sulphuric acid, is too fixed a substance for the purpose, and although the nitric acid destroys all contagious matter, there is a difficulty of depriving it of a nitrous gas, or vapour, which is prejudicial to health. The muriatic acid, or spirit of salt, is very effectual in purifying the air, and decomposing the matter of contagion, particularly by the great expansibility of its vapours, which makes them penetrate into all parts; but it is very lately discovered by repeated experiments, that the oxygenated muriatic gas has, with reason, the preference of all other means,

not only on account of the great diffusibility, but because its action is always certain in destroying the contagion fixed in the body, or floating in the air, which is merely a vehicle for contagion.

It is the very same vapour which, under *proper management*, has been used with such success in shortening the process of bleaching, and it acts in both cases on the same principle, that of a *slow combustion*. The result of a rapid combustion and a slow one, is pretty much the same. It is not a rapid combustion by fire, but a slow combustion by an acid, or rather the principle of all acidity; in short, it is a combination of pure air with the contagious matter, as with the unbleached cloth, which, by its union with either body, changes its colour, its form, its taste, its weight, and gives it properties totally new, makes the one innoxious, and burns the other white.

The more fixed, as well as the more volatile contagions are probably decomposable by the same means. The virus of the small pox mixed with oxygenated muriatic acid, will not communicate infection. The matter of venereal ulcer is destroyed by it, and perhaps the poison communicated by the saliva of a mad dog, may lose its horrible qualities by touching the bitten part with this acid.

The ingredients which supply this purifying vapour, are cheap and easily procurable ; common salt, manganese, and sulphuric acid. Two parts of common salt with one part of manganese, stirred together, adding gradually some concentrated sulphuric acid, is the whole process. The action of the vapour extricated from the salt and manganese on contagious matter, either fixed or floating, is to decompose it, and thus destroy its noxious effects on animal life. The action of the same vapour, mixed with the common air, has effects equally salutary, by enabling animals themselves to resist, with greater power, the morbid effects of pestilential effluvia. The support of vital force is the best preventative against contagion ; and this vital gas, mixed, *in a safe proportion*, with the common air, (of which it is itself an ingredient) and entering into the lungs and the stomach, as well as on the surface of the body, supplies a necessary stimulus, increases the action of the organs, and thus enables them to oppose the debilitating action of contagion, whatever its nature may be. I enter no farther into this topic, which you may think too professional for an address of this nature. I have mentioned it merely for its application and conclusion, that such an institution as you patronize is a suitable and appropriate place for confirming, improving, and abridging the ex-

perience of others, on a subject very important to the best interests of the community.

If there be, and I think there certainly is, reason to apprehend, in an hospital of this kind, an accumulation of infectious matter, not only in all articles of clothing, but in the furniture of every kind; it certainly becomes the bounden duty of the supervisors of such buildings, to have, in a state of preparation, all the means of disinfection with which science has guided and given light to experience. For example, the new method of cleansing, with greater celerity and more effectually, large quantities of fouled linen by an alkaline lie converted into steam, which penetrates through all the fibres of the cloth, and destroys, by the greater heat, the particles of morbid matter which may be lodged in the linen, ought immediately to be tried in such an establishment as that of a Fever Hospital.

But, gentlemen, there are moral as well as medical means of preventing, I may say, of exterminating contagious fever, means equally powerful with those I have mentioned, but I fear, not equally applicable in the present state of the populace. For instance, one of the best means of counteracting the power of infection is employment. It is a fact, that wherever the
 minds

minds of men are busily engaged, their bodies are less susceptible of contagion. Employment ventilates the mind, and gives to the body an increased degree of vital force, through the efficacy of mental influence. It is the stagnation of indolence, and that torpor it brings over the frame, which favours both the generation and the progress, and at length the permanence of an endemic disease. I am strongly inclined to think, that the action merely of moral (I dare not venture to say political) means, would be sufficient to exterminate even that prince of pestilence, the *Plague*, from Constantinople, which is kept there in high preservation, as the Fever of the Liberty is here, principally by the indolence and bigotry of the inhabitants. An improvement in the manners of the populace of Turkey, a spirit of activity, a public education, would, however paradoxical the assertion may appear, become the best antidote against infectious diseases. Might not a similar effect flow from the same cause in this metropolis? Would not the body be more revered if the mind was raised to a more worthy situation, and is not the foulness which is contracted by the one, and which becomes the fomes of infection, a direct consequence of the base and degraded state of the other?

There is a hidden value in the most common things. It is the business of science to call it forth. It is the glory of charity, and the prime

prime distinction of a good government to cherish and bring to maturity what philosophy has elicited. The lowest rank of the people, is that black and dirty manganese which stains the fingers and offends the sight of those whose judgments glide along the surface of things. Yet it abounds in pure and vital air. This has lain long neglected in the coarse and unpromising ore, and it is the sagacity of scientific men, sanctioned by the wise benevolence of government, which is able to call forth the latent virtue of the lower people, the pure air of the community.

The manners of a people are, in truth, the original source of dangerous and infectious maladies. The moral brings on the morbid contagion. It is the cleanliness of mind and body, which, I think, eminently characterizes the sect of quakers, if that can be called a *sect* who practice the *whole* of what Christianity preaches, and who, in this city, distinguish themselves in the works of enlightened charity; it is the purity of a mind always employed, and never violently agitated, a purity which shines as it were through the elegant neatness of person and apparel, which is, in fact, the best preservative against fatal infection. Despotism that neglects and oppresses the people, is itself punished by the serpent Pestilence, which is generated amidst the dirt, pollution and mendicancy of the lowest order, then raises its reptile head, and spreads

spreads devastation and terror through the highest order of society, and makes its den in the fairest and most fertile portion of the globe. The Serpent that accompanies the ancient representations of Æsculapius, appears to me, an emblem of the Plague which medical knowledge robs of its fangs and its poison—and a fit *Device* for such an institution as that over which you preside, would be a Child playing with a Serpent, to shew the purpose of the Hospital is to make the poison of our pestilential fever innocuous.

A neglected people will thus become noxious to all other orders of the community; and I lament that charitable establishments of all kinds in this city, seem to have had so little effect in lessening either the quantity of misery, or purifying what may be called the *mephitism* of the lowest ranks. A Sunday School and a Fever Hospital are palliatives; and only palliatives of the moral contamination, and the consequent morbid contagion. Whatever *private* benevolence can effect, has been already tried—whatever influence *personal* character and conduct can possess, is exerted by Lord and Lady Hardwicke; and all that we have to lament is, that their political power cannot sufficiently complete what appears to be the sincere wish of their hearts. No private act nor establishment can purify the manners of the populace. The radical cause of their vitiated state, both corporeal and mental, is a bad habit which

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the British Constitution has for some time past contracted, (for it is not its *original* disposition) of undervaluing the lowest rank of society in Ireland, and treating them as objects of charity, not denizens of a free state. This vilification has gradually beggared the character, polluted the manners, and produced a corruption of morals always closely connected with every species of bodily defilement; and this train of ill habits, is, like other chronic diseases, to be cured only by a gradual and total change of regimen, (gradual, but not slow) which may raise the valuation of the people in their own eyes, as well as in the contemplation of Government. The family of the virtues is linked together by a strong attachment, and man in the full and quiet possession of all his rights, never fails to pay a just attention to the performance of his duties. One virtue introduces another, and the virtues of the domestic kind, the love of household order, the habit of cleanliness, the decency of apparel, in short, the purification of manners, depend much more than is supposed on an immediate reconciliation of government with the people, and a disposition in the public administration to make the condition of that people *such* as will contribute to the happiness of the society in which they live. A parental government would disdain to have its children, who are capable of employment, the mendicants of charitable institutions. I will venture to say, that the vices and the virtues of a people are always the necessary effect

effect of a good or a bad legislation. The people are the mud of the Nile. It may be allowed to generate the Pestilence, or it may be made the source of Fertility and Happiness to the Country.

I am, with best wishes for the institution you patronize, and for its *speedy commencement*,

your humble servant,

PIMLICO,
JANUARY 1, 1802.

MAURICE MORGAN.

POSTSCRIPT.

I have much pleasure in finding, that there is discovered in France a *cheap* and *efficacious* process of destroying contagious matter with which walls are penetrated, and as it were impregnated. It consists of a coating, or varnish, of which quick-lime, glue, milk and oil, are the principal ingredients, and which forms a speedy and complete coating of the walls, covering all the porosities, and destroying all the adhesive contagious matter, or mephitism. The use of this white-washing, or varnish plaster, ought certainly to be put to immediate trial, in any hospital, infirmary, or prison, workshop, or factory, which is in danger from infectious matter settling upon the walls. The name of the discoverer is Cadet de Vaux, and the measure is supported by the authority of the two most eminent French chymists, Fourcroy and Deycaux. Might not a wash of this kind for the walls of the habitations of the poor, and also a soap made of cheap materials for domestic use, be a proper way of expending a part of the large sum already subscribed for the Fever Hospital?