

"Unfettered," as the Canadian Thompsonian boasts himself, he glories in his freedom from an intimacy with the various articles of the *materia medica*, yet he proclaims himself everywhere as fettered to the employment of Lobelia, cayenne and steam. "Unfettered," he "thunders the death knell of medical intolerance," and "sounds the shrill (piping!) notes of alarm." A "magazine" is forthwith issued,—we thanked our stars that it proved not an "infernal machine," and contained no powder, so full of sound and fury was it.

After announcing the object and plan of this "magazine," the editor states, that he sends the present number to one hundred gentlemen, each of whom is expected to obtain ten subscribers at 5s each, the amount to be remitted at the receipt of the second number: after which, the editor pledges himself to continue the Journal for twelve months; then follows a critical examination of the Upper Canada Act of Incorporation, an operation performed much to the editor's satisfaction, who winds up his remarks in the following complacent manner:—"Let none, therefore, accuse us of enthusiasm, for no zeal, however ardent, can soar above the magnitude and importance of our theme." This is succeeded by "a regular dialogue," between the ghosts of deceased physicians who, by Mr. Dick's magic wand, are made to "burst their cerements" and "revisit us in pale glimpses of the moon." Next follows the Constitution of the Thompsonian Medical Reform Association, adopted Dec. 12, 1848; and the remainder consists of Thompsonian letters, a temperance song, and gleanings, profane and religious, to amuse all tastes. In this respect it is most decidedly "unfettered;" for Thompsonianism "pales its ineffectual fire" before three-fourths of the number is completed.

**ART. LXXXVI.—Report to the Commissioners of the Temporary Lunatic Asylum at Beauport. Quebec: January, 1849.**

This is the first report of the above institution, and, as it contains a short but too faithful narrative of the management of the insane in this Province, antecedently to the establishment of the asylum, we will quote from it as much as relates to this subject:—

Towards the close of the last century an order in Council was passed, authorising an appropriation for the maintenance of insane persons in the Province of Lower Canada. These insane persons were intrusted to the care of certain religious communities in the respective districts of Montreal, Quebec, and Three Rivers, the Government paying a yearly sum of about £32 10s. for the support of each patient.\*

As in similar institutions in Europe, at this period, insane persons were confined merely as unmanageable, or as dangerous to the community, or to themselves. No measures were adopted for their restoration to reason. They were shut up in separate cells, debarred intercourse with the world, and with each other, were left to brood over their disordered fancies, until they became maniacal, tore their clothes, became filthy in their habits, and, from a well-known law of nature, that the faculties become dormant for want of exercise, became imbecile or idiotic. Occasionally a patient was removed by his friends, rarely was one discharged

restored to reason. Over the portals of these receptacles, might, with truth, have been engraved the well known lines of Dante, "*O Voi che intrate, lasciate la speranza.*"

Strong representations were made from time to time by different Grand Jurors, of the general unfitness of these receptacles; of their filthy condition; of the damp and want of ventilation of the cells; and of the general treatment of the unfortunate inmates.

In justice to the religious ladies, it must be said, that they themselves were desirous to be relieved from their charge, and repeatedly urged the unfitness of the place of confinement, and the necessity of better means of accommodation for the patients under their care.

In 1843, Sir Charles Metcalfe assumed the Government of the Canadas, and in his first speech at the opening of the House, urged the necessity of an improved system of treatment for the insane. During the session, notice was given by the Hon. T. C. Aylwin, of his intention to bring in a Bill to provide for the care and treatment of the insane, but owing to the press of other business the session passed over without any action being taken in the matter.

During the subsequent recess, the Governor General caused the different places in which the insane were confined, to be visited, and estimates formed of the expense of their removal to the country, and of the cost of their care, maintenance, and medical treatment.

At the subsequent meeting of the Legislature, the Governor General again brought the subject of asylums for the insane before the House, but the session was extremely short, and passed over without any further reference being made to the matter.

During the summer of 1845, His Excellency having made an agreement with the undersigned, \* directed the insane persons then confined in the districts of Quebec and Three Rivers to be removed to a place fitted up for their temporary reception at Beauport, in neighbourhood of Quebec, and where they were accordingly removed on the 15th September, 1845.

At this time the insane persons in the district of Montreal were confined in the Jail: this, however, was destitute of almost every requisite for a Lunatic Asylum. It was surrounded by buildings; there was no land on which the patients could be employed; the yards were insufficient for exercise; and, moreover, the building was required for its more legitimate purposes. Under these circumstances the Governor General directed the removal of the insane from the district of Montreal to the Temporary Asylum at Beauport. This Temporary Asylum was situated 2½ miles from Quebec, and was leased for the purpose from Col. Gury, M.P.P.

The property comprised the Manor House, an extensive block of outbuildings of stone, and about two hundred acres of land. The grounds were diversified, were sufficiently well wooded, had a southern exposure, and commanded a magnificent view of the city and harbour of Quebec.

The principal building was capable of being fitted up to accommodate 120 patients, with their attendants.

On the 10th September, the arrangements were completed for the reception of 100 patients. The apartments consisted of a public dining room, a corridor for male patients, 108 feet by 12 wide, with bed-rooms opening into it, containing 40 beds, and one large dormitory containing 24 beds. The female patients occupied a day-room 36 by 18, a work-room 40 by 22, and five bedrooms containing 40 beds. Several female patients, capable of sewing or being otherwise employed, were lodged with the Warden and Matron in the Manor House.

On the morning of the 15th September, 1845, the insane persons in charge of the religious ladies of the General Hospital in Quebec, were transferred to the Asylum at Beauport. Much interest was felt by the undersigned in the removal of these unfortunate beings. One had been confined 28 years, several upwards of 20 years, and the remainder for various lesser periods. During the whole of this time they had been shut up in separate cells, in a low one story building, and surrounded by a strong cedar fence 12 feet high. They had never been permitted to leave the building, most of them had never been allowed to leave the separate small cells in which they had been confined, and excepting on an occasional visit from the Grand Jury, they had rarely seen any person but those who ministered to their urgent wants. Of these patients almost all were filthy in their habits, many were considered destructive, and the remainder had become imbecile or idiotic.

\* The sum allowed by Government for the support of each patient was one shilling and eight pence per diem, there were besides occasional appropriations for the repairs of the building and fence.

\* Drs. Doyle, Morin, and Fremont.