

ble necessity should any fellow-being be cast into a madhouse. The retrospect of even the most fortunate of those who have been subjected to this alternative must be distressing. No one who has carefully and with christian commiseration examined even the best wards of our most celebrated modern asylums will fail to shrink from the apprehension of so dire a calamity befalling himself as that of becoming an inmate."

With all due deference to the judgment of the superintendent of our Provincial Lunatic Asylum, we most emphatically dissent from the opinion expressed in the concluding sentence of the above quotation. We know not what maybe the condition of the "best wards" of the Toronto asylum, as we have never had the pleasure of visiting that institution; but as regards the "best wards" of some of the most celebrated modern asylums of Great Britain and Ireland, public as well as private, we can positively assert that there is nothing in either their appearance or arrangement so repulsive as to make any one shrink from the apprehension of so dire a calamity befalling himself as that of becoming an inmate; and this we say after having carefully, and, we trust, with "christian commiseration" examined them, and the treatment of the occupants thoroughly. It is certainly a dire calamity to have reason unseated, and every mind will startingly recoil from the contemplation of such a sad event being possibly theirs in the future of their life; but did one admit to himself the possibility of becoming insane, we are certain he would not shrink with apprehension at the idea of being treated in the well arranged private ward of a modern asylum.

What opinion are we to form, moreover, regarding the superintendent of a lunatic asylum in the 19th century—in which the benefits to be derived from the treatment of the insane when conducted in properly constructed and efficiently officered institutions are fully recognized,—who uses such language as the following:—"under no consideration other than that of unavoidable necessity should any fellow-being be cast into a mad-house?" What sad and melancholy visions are conjured up by these few words? Gloomy prison-like buildings—iron barred gates—grated windows—dark and filthy cells—cruel keepers—clinking chains—fearful shrieks—emaciated bodies, and all that went to make up the idea formerly held by the public, concerning those places denominated "*mad-houses*," into which poor unfortunate humanity was "*cast*."

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#### OBITUARY.

**THE LATE DR. TELFER OF TORONTO.**—This Gentleman lately deceased was one of the oldest practitioners in Toronto. He was a native of Scotland, was educated in Edinburgh, and passed the Royal College of Sur-