

Canada Medical Journal.

MONTREAL, AUGUST, 1865.

THE BEAUPORT ASYLUM.

The boasted privilege of every Englishman is the most unbounded freedom of speech, hence the characteristic of our countrymen is to be honest and out-spoken. It was in the exercise of this acknowledged right, in the last number of our periodical, in reference to matters connected with the Beauport Lunatic Asylum, which has brought on us a storm of abuse from Dr. James Douglas, one of the proprietors of that institution. The Beauport Asylum occupies a somewhat anomalous position. It receives a large amount from Government each year, and is under Government inspection. The patients are nearly, if not altogether, pauper, or at least from that class who have to be supported in this institution at the public cost. Still the asylum is private property, a regular contract existing between the Government and the proprietors of the grounds and buildings, to receive all patients sent to them at so much a head per week. We should like to be informed as to the terms of that contract. Although it may be a contract between the Government and a private individual, we think, as we are called upon to contribute our quota of \$67,000, which annually goes into the pockets of the proprietors of that asylum, we ought to have the right of demanding the terms of that contract. We feel certain that had the Toronto Lunatic Asylum been a private speculation, with a contract binding the Government down to certain terms, there would not, at the present day, exist in Upper Canada four other institutions for the relief of those mentally deranged. In the letter of Dr. Douglas, which we publish, it will be seen that he is fully alive to the necessity of having an asylum in the district of Montreal. Coming from such a source, one whose opinion has been looked upon by the Executive as *the authority par excellence* in Lower Canada on the subject of insanity, we suppose we may reasonably hope the affair settled, and that in this district we will, before long, see an asylum in progress of erection—one which will not be considered by even the imperial authorities a miserable make-shift, an opinion expressed in the