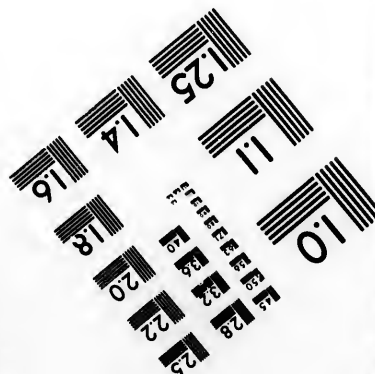
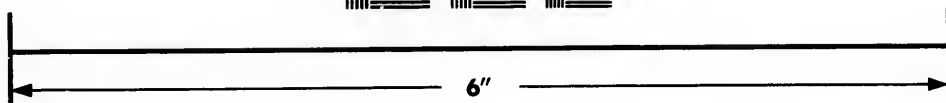
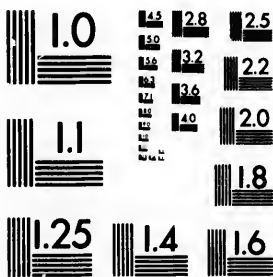


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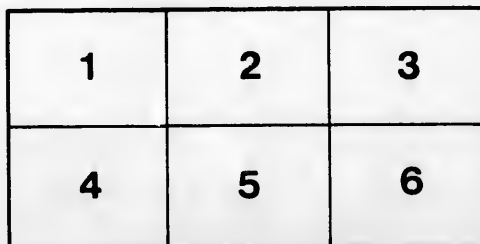
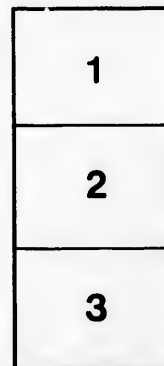
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Wrinkles in Ancient Asylum
Reports.

BY
DANIEL CLARK, M. D.,
Toronto, Canada.

FROM
American Journal of Insanity,
January, 1890.
UTICA, N. Y.



WRINKLES IN ANCIENT ASYLUM REPORTS.*

BY DANIEL CLARK, M. D.,
Medical Superintendent Asylum for the Insane, Toronto, Canada.

This paper is read with a good deal of trepidation and misgivings. The writer is not sure but the members of this learned assembly may resent the attempt to palm off upon them old and dead issues, when newness and originality are the order of the day. Brethren are beseeched to have patience and forbearance while the exhuming process is going on. It is possible that after the resurrection has taken place, you may mercifully consign the writer and his manuscript to a dime museum as rare specimens of fossilized humanity and of musty records, upon which might be labelled: "Let the dead past bury its dead."

In the midst of the reading of so many able papers and of keen discussion by members it may not, however, be out of place to rest a short half hour in listening to my wondrous tale of antiquity from the banks of the Nile and from the days of yore. Incredulity may turn its nose skyward at my recital; skepticism may disdainfully curl its upper lip at my simple story; scorn may point at me its long, gaunt finger; ignorance with accustomed effrontery may hiss out its impotent impertinences, but, I am sure, the experienced, wise, practical and tolerant members of this Association—to whom I cling with fraternal affection—will accord to the translator that due meed of praise which justly belongs to indefatigable labor, scholastic endowment and truthful narration. Let me here parenthetically say, I am not the archæologist whose praises I am modestly sounding in this connection. Now, to my story, which you will agree with me is more wonderful than "The Arabian Nights Entertainments," or is that of the sleeping youths of Ephesus. It is not apocryphal, nor mythical, nor a vision of the night, but was doubtless a verity in the history of the early Egyptians.

A few years ago Rameses I and Rameses II were exhumed from their sarcophagi in the home of their fathers. The latter is said to have been the gentleman who endeavored to make expert brick manufacturers out of the male population of the Israelites,

*Read at the forty-third annual meeting of the Association of Medical Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane, held at Newport, R. I., June 18-20, 1880.

who were merely visiting the semi-aquatic Egypt. It was a mean advantage that was taken of these vagrant descendants of Abraham, and showed a sad violation of the laws of hospitality. After nearly four thousand years have passed the dilapidated, swathed, perfumed and shrivelled *corpora* of these Pharaohs have been shovelled up and made to do duty as curiosities to be stared at by the *ignobile vulgus* of A. D. 1880. These task-masters refused clay to the brick-makers, but time has had its revenges, and now their own clay is doing service as antique specimens of humanity. The first Rameses met with an accident to his skull—if the exhumers of His majesty are to be believed. Sections of his parietal and frontal bones on the left side were cleft in twain. The lethal weapon may have been a tomahawk, a battle axe, a Highland claymore, or a dragoon sabre. Possibly some of the ancestors of the Queen of Sheba had something to do with causing this savage indentation in the head of Pharaoh. They were neighbors, and like some such, were far from being as friendly as adjacent nations should be. The records say that the king was not doomed to make his exit at once from this terrestrial ball, but that this slight unpleasantness in his head caused such outbursts of monarchical mania as to necessitate his being sent to a temple for safe-keeping. It is very probable that the Pyramids were intended as hospitals for the insane of this noted dynasty, and that the chambers in their deepest recesses were made dense and dark to keep out lunar influences. Of course empty sarcophagi were placed in these reception rooms to warn these royal maniacs that they were mortal, and to show them where they must shortly lie, if they did not behave themselves in their tantrums. When Rameses I died in due season, his notorious son gathered up all asylum reports of all the land, written on papyrus in various languages, of which the Aryan, Cuneiform, Chaldaic, and Coptic were the most frequently used. It seems they would have nothing to do with Hebrew after the Red Sea episode, which seemed to create national disgust at the Israelitish emigrants and their language. The mummy of the defunct monarch was found wrapped in these interesting asylum records, as they seemed to be of no general use in those apostate days, any more than they are now, except to supply wrapping or powder paper for the medical practitioner or grocer in some sequestered village or rural hamlet. This wastefulness and carelessness in the use of invaluable documents, upon which busy brains had expended much time, great mental energy and exuberant verbal offshoots indigenous to that

world of psychic power were the means of preserving this classic shroud of asylum lore in the land of temples and tumuli to posterity and immortality. A good friend of mine, who is an ardent Egyptologist set to work to decipher these dug-out reports and to translate and paraphrase them into sturdy Anglo-Saxon.

It is pleasant to read these remnants concerning our *confrères* in those prehistoric times. It is my privilege and duty to give a few specimens to this august assembly, and to show how much they were like ourselves in their life-work, worry and fallibility.

This land of the Pharaohs was divided into three great Provinces or States and these were named respectively Europa, Americanus and Canadensis. It will be noticed how similar are the names of these three divisions to those now in use. We are miserable imitators after all, and monkey-like (*vide Darwin*) show the copying propensity of our quadrumanous ancestors. These countries were situated by the Great Sea, the Red Sea and on both sides of the Sacred River. They were full of insane people and divers kinds of mentally defective. The papyric manuscripts show that on an average one was thus incapable for every 450 persons of the hundreds of millions of its inhabitants. This is a startling statement to make to our sane and level-headed race. Were we in such a deplorable condition as this indicates, our panic-stricken cry would be "Who then can be saved?" The translator further says, that the writers of these ancient reports show in their productions a diversity of style, opinions, speculations and idiosyncrasies which are in striking contrast to the unanimity of to-day. This shows how much our civilization has led to mental uniformity and stagnant concord in comparison to these independent thinkers, many of whom degenerated into hobby-riders and cranks, who were both disputatious and childishly dogmatic for such a logical age. It is only fair to say on the other hand, that these Egyptian superintendents were thorough, radical, energetic and industrious in their work. These prehistoric fragments give evidence of men of executive ability of no mean order. Such were not merely medicine men. They not only gave varied nostrums in comparison to which the witches' broth, immortalized in Macbeth, would be a delectable dish, but they had also to see to it when beef-steak was done to a turn; when a mess of pottage was boiled enough; how much water normally belonged to milk, and how much came from the cisterns or Father Nile; why the bread made from flour of excellent wheat, such as Joseph and his brethren raised, and that without being winter-killed, had more

specific gravity and less porosity than was good for digestion; why Boston baked beans and pork, pumpkin pie, corn cake, buckwheat pancakes, custard, roast beef and plum pudding were not up to the usual standard of excellence, and cooked within the orthodox half of a degree of Fahrenheit. Nor was this by any means all of their qualifications. The harassed chief medical officers of those times had to nose out every smell which was not as sweet as the aroma of the spices of Arabia, and with detective pertinacity were compelled never to give up the sniffing process until, from the effluvia of a dead rat up to the odors of real estate where no such should be, the mystery was solved and the vitiated air had once more resumed its pristine clarification and purity. These poor fellows were obliged to record these weighty matters of asylum work on papyric scrolls to show that they were not veritable sleeping Rip VanWinkles. Not only so: but they were compelled to be expert judges of horses. At one time horses were very scarce, and there was a corner in the market, which necessitated sharp business capacity to cull out good animals from a residue; seeing an equine gap had been made about this time by a tidal wave in the Red Sea. They had to know by intuition or instinct a Percheron horse from a Clyde, or an Arabian from a Nubian charger. Spavin, windgalls, heaves, glanders, and various equine distempers had to be subjects of daily diagnosis to these medical men. They were compelled to have, among multiform accomplishments, veterinary science at their fingers' ends, so to speak. They were required to be *au fait* in distinguishing the radical points in milch cows, were they crossbreeds, Galloways, Durhams, Jerseys, or the common herd, marking the difference between beef producers and milk yielders. The Berkshire pig, the porker "to the manner born," and all the degenerate broods must come under the head of medical work and study. In fact, swine are recorded in these asylum medical treatises so unctuously and are set forth so learnedly that like the description of "Lamb's Roast Pig" in the Celestial Empire, we smell as we read ham, bacon and spareribs sending down the ages a rich aroma of porcine effluvia which strikes our Schneiderian membrane with such effectiveness as to set its near neighbors, the salivary glands, into copious streams of hot saliva. Time would fail were I to relate to you these gifted men as botanists, vegetarians, mechanics, laundry and clothing connoisseurs. They were men of universal genius. In fact, the racy equine, bovine and swinine descriptions so sagely and classically depicted in stately reports, show that in this respect, their literary

efforts transcend our skill and are veritably a lost art. We never discuss these every day mundane matters now-a-days, because our transcendentalism soars upwards into the blue empyrean, or some other equally exalted place. The translation goes on to show that some of these unfortunate superintendents were also required to exhibit their knowledge of natural history, not only of rodents, but also of all the varieties of entomological life which carried on an "irrepressible conflict" against the peace, comfort and general welfare of these communities. Modern asylum tenants sympathize with the ancients in the unequal strife against these plagues of Egypt. By a sort of diabolic succession these scourges are not yet stayed, which have showed a robust vitality unparalleled in history.

In the time of Rameses II a medical system sprang into existence based on strictly scientific principles. It was founded by a philosopher of repute. He asserted with a good deal of emphasis that all diseases were conquered in an absolute manner by specific remedies. This law of exactitude raised the art of the practice of medicine at once into the high plane of science and if adopted put an end to hypothesis and empiricism. One of the tests to prove this new doctrine was the capacity or power of certain medical agents to produce in a healthy body certain unfailling signs and symptoms analogous to those generated in varied diseases. It was found that when such were assorted and classified in a sort of parallelism each medical agent was the true remedy for those pathological conditions thus associated. Herein was a great law enunciated from which there could be no appeal. It was formulated in the dictum "*similia similibus curantur.*" Not only so, but it was asserted with a good deal of dogmatism that the potency of remedies was intensified in proportion to their attenuation: the more divided, the more effective, and so on *ad infinitum*. Triturations, sublimations and dilutions were of paramount importance even down to the edge of the great nothingness. Atoms, monads and molecules were sought after with great avidity. The more they were divorced from one another the more did they reach the *summum bonum* of therapeutic activity. As might be expected a fierce controversy arose over this new doctrine and is graphically described in these literary remains thus strangely resurrected. The bleeders, the blisterers and salivators of that heroic age, as might be expected, fell foul of these innovators like wolves on the fold. Sarcasm the most biting, irony the most cutting, satire the most bitter and invective with a persecuting tinge in its

composition were hurled at the devoted heads of these medical discoverers. They flourished, as all systems do under persecution, and by a sort of apostolic succession an infinitesimal remnant remains in that land of mummies and crocodiles to this day. They have taken for a crest a sarcophagus with a mummy rampant in it. The motto is emblazoned on the dusty casket in letters so prominent as to be easily read all down the ages *Nihil desperandum*. The founder of this minute system had a good deal to do with the insane, hence these remarks are germane to the subject matter.

It is worthy of note here that some great military man in one of the provinces had made a discovery in finding a unique cure for insanity. It consisted in putting the afflicted under blue glass. As might be expected a learned discussion at once arose as to the varied effects on the human body of chemical, thermal and actinic solar rays and especially upon nerve tissue. Speculation ran rife over this strange doctrine of therapeutics and it is worthy of note that few of the learned psychologists of that age raised a doubt as to its efficacy. By a sort of law of selection those afflicted with the "blues" were put into and cured in blue rooms. Those having mania were struck dumb and mentally paralyzed at the surrounding blueness. Blue glass did wonders, while the blue sky of nature had in a sense "to pale its intellectual fires." This sombre color acted as a sedative, a soporific, a tonic and possibly a cathartic. Pseudo-philosophers wrote learned treatises on the wonderful effect of this occult color. Such did not dogmatically assert that the human ova were roused to unusual activity under its influence but they gravely asserted that the egg of another of the species biped felt its vivifying agency and the potential chicken became an actuality lying on the kitchen table while being made ready to consist of the duality of ham and eggs. Even the rice, the lotus, the sacred cat, the Holy Bull and the lethargic crocodile felt its diffusible stimulation; so saith these authentic records. It might be well for our advanced radicals in asylum progress to test this ancient remedy. On second thought, it seems to me I have heard a faint echo that such has been tried; not because of the knowledge such experimenters possessed of the contents of these manuscripts, but because of the old adage that "Great minds run in the same groove," or possibly "History repeats itself," or it may be "There is nothing new under the sun." The materia medica and therapeutics of those days are an interesting study to the archaeologist. It is found that in one refuge for the insane in Canadensis

raisins were highly recommended as a cure for mania. They were prescribed in large quantities and when the patient was well stuffed he became quiet. *Quantum sufficit* was all that was necessary to produce a temporary capitulation. Here is a wrinkle for some modern asylum crank who may be itching after evanescent notoriety among the *ignoble vulgus*. In this same principality manuscripts were found written in Coptic, which declared that a medical savant had delved into an investigation of the ultimate elements of nature. He was as familiar with the primitive atoms and molecules of matter as they clustered together by natural selection as he was with the members of his own family. He knew their shape, whether square, spheroidal, oblate or triangular. He knew their groupings, relations, affinities, behavior, misbehavior, especially in a subtle body called the ethyl series a diffusible stimulant which was then much used as a medicine. Knowing so well its secret history he warned his scientific and medical brethren of the bad effects of this mischief-maker on living tissue, especially brain substance. As Copernicus, Bruno, Kepler and Galileo had watched with eager interest the planetary systems as they made the grand march in "a wilderness of harmony," so had he similarly traced these atoms and molecules of ethyl pirates as they raided in their devastating course through intervascular and intercellular spaces, along nerve fibres, on the parities of nerve cells or in the sanguineous streams of life. The proofs of his theory were found in the death rates and recoveries. He could make these fluctuate upwards and downwards with arithmetical precision, in accordance with the administration or withdrawal of this hated foe. In an appendix to this summons and report, we find a waggish friend propounding a conundrum and mildly suggesting that unless there was uniformity in age, physical condition, duration of disease, hereditary tendencies, no specific results from drug administration or the want of it could be traced except very remotely and generically in relation to so-called specific causes. The learned author replies sarcastically to the ignorance and verdancy of the questioner, and showed with lofty scorn that he despised these premises of the syllogism. He dealt only with the intuitions which suggested conclusions of *a priori* order. As an example of this Jovine power he did not hesitate to calculate among his recoveries the so-called "improved" patients, a classification which might mean much or nothing—so that by this latitudinarian grouping he might be able to establish a verdict against the indicted ethyl atoms and molecules. In justice to this theorist it should be said that the days of logic had not yet

dawned and the Alexandrian library was only "in the good time coming." It must always be remembered that some original thinkers are ahead of their age in recondite discovery, and it ill becomes limited and lazy intellects to throw ridicule, sarcasm and cutting irony at the heads of those who are thirsting for and should receive posthumous if not antehumous fame and immortality.

The graphic description given of the life and death conflict between a molecule of alcohol and a molecule of nerve tissue would make the fortune of a modern novelist or of a transcendental and fleshly poet. The alcohol monad seizes—speaking after the manner of ordinary mortals—the nerve unit by the throat. The unit is plucky and takes as its motto: "No surrender." The assailant is as pertinacious as a bulldog and as aggressive as a Canada thistle. The defender of the citadel of life fortifies every part with engineering skill, which commands our admiration. The assaults and repulsions, the mining and countermine, the fight above, below around and promiscuously of the besieger and beleaguered with victory at all times on the side of alcohol, show so much one-sidedness that we wonder the nerve molecule does not at once surrender to its death-dealing antagonist and give up the ghost if promised a decent burial and a monument "sacred to the memory" of the vanquished. It is said facts do not warrant this *magus* to pass off for history these flights of imagination, but what have facts to do with the matter? In those primitive days visions, dreams and fancies held full sway over men's mind. That period of romance has passed away. *Esto perpetua*. At the same time it is an interesting study to see in these records the psychological workings of our revered brethren at this early epoch in the history of our race. This one illustration shows how apt they were to theorize on insufficient data. They could perform clever acts of jugglery with figures, tables and general statistics, and seemed to know that, deftly handled, nothing lied like figures. In this connection it was interesting to notice the manifestation of a sort of "unconscious cerebration" in the compiling of the *per capita* cost of patients to the State. Efforts were made in many directions to show a small outlay and by this sign to prove economy and efficiency. It seemed to be lost sight of that *cure, comfort* and *reasonable* expenditure, in which there was no useless waste were the means to accomplish the best work and that should have been the ideal sought for in all conditions of asylum life. Cheap and miserly might sound well to the penurious taxpayer, but in the end it was

the most expensive to the State, as it usually meant fewer recoveries, more chronics and an ever increasing bill of costs as this army of helpless, hopeless and hapless grew in alarmingly disproportionate numbers. In this statistical effort to show a diminution of outlay there was no uniformity in the estimation of the factors involved. In some only the clothing and board of the insane were considered; in others the salaries of all *employés* were added; in others ordinary repairs, furniture, furnishings and extra labor in permanent construction swelled the bill of outlay; in others all outlay except that on permanent construction was included in the yearly estimate of cost, yet invidious comparisons were made based on these multiform and varied factors. In that day specialists in medicine were so numerous, that nothing was left for the general practitioner to exercise his skill upon except that vacuity now named the *Iter a tertio ad quartum ventriculum*. It was also to be expected in that age of divisional medicine that the useful uterus and its appendages should be chargeable with being a prolific cause of insanity. The uterine specialist saw in its varied mood and tenses omens and causes of nearly "all the ills which flesh is heir to." Slight tiltings to the different points of the compass, a minor and harmless tendency downward, a vesical tumefaction somewhere in its domain, a slight supersensitiveness which it was natural to expect in any ordinary organ in its normal condition, were all looked upon as hideous agents of disease. As a result of these vivid imaginings the vagina and uterus were turned into veritable apothecary shops containing unguents, caustics, medicated solutions and instruments of torture too horrible to mention in this supersensitive age.* These epidemics of exploration had spread upwards and outwards. The ovaries were said to be very naughty and more ornamental than useful. Did the epileptic female insane show a tendency to fits strongly at periodic times; then was it fashionable to guillotine those rebellious organs. Were these detached laboratories even slightly diseased then was the excision declared to be a triumph of medical foresight and skill: were they healthy then was it a good riddance to cut out these supernumeraries. In that practical age it was not thought barbarous to msex the many for the problematical benefit of the few. The waggish translator puts in a foot note here and sarcastically asks why the male sex are not treated in an analogous way and thus have eunuchs multiplied in the land. The surgeons

* So general were these invasions of the genital organs by legalized explorers that congenital modesty was lost to matron and maid in all that land.

of that remote day did not discuss this *fundamental* question. Had they done so it might have settled forever the question of hereditary transmission and marital relationship. The *animalism* of the race would have been shorn of one of its terrors to the generations following. The question began to crop up in political economy as to the propriety, nay necessity, from a national standpoint, to put beyond peradventure the procreation of such defective classes by the statutory enactment of such radical measures as are here hinted at.

Time would fail and your patience would become exhausted were I to describe to you the logomachy which took place over such matters as personal restraint of patients. The conundrum was propounded to the extreme *freedomists*, What is restraint? Is a mit, or a sewed sleeve, or an attendant's grip, or seclusion in a room, or a sedative, restraint? If so, then is not a locked bedroom, a secured ward, or a high wall also restraint? Is not a lunatic restrained in a sense when he is curbed from having his own sweet will to the same extent as have the sane? As usual this shorter catechism, with all the reasons annexed, forbidden and required, showed inquisitiveness more about a definition than about a fact. The war went on over this matter of misunderstanding, not to say misconstruction, until the mighty nation was quenched in eternal night, and the burning question is not yet solved. The hair-splitting tendency over petty and unimportant details seems to be inherent in the human race, and the old silliness of calling a weakly sentiment a principle has had much vitality. It is ever thus. At the same time and between the same combatants the question of healthfulness in relation to work by the insane cropped up to the surface. Was it good for all classes of the insane to labor? Should the anæmic work or rest? Should all work who may desire to do so, whether physically sick or well? Does work increase the morbid activity of the maniac and intensify it through increased physical exhaustion, or does it work along physiological lines and in the end tend to sooth his frenzy and tone up his system? What is work? Is it employment which is intelligent and useful or is it only an aimless and automatic exertion? Is carrying stones from one pile to another and *vice versa* work, or can this term be applied to walking tournaments up and down the ward? Some asylum statisticians were accused of including these excesses under the head of work. They were also wickedly charged with calling an hour's work or even the vulgar fraction of an hour as equivalent to a day's work. These insinuations were so monstrous

that they looked like the spleen of envious co-laborers rather than the statements of tabular facts. We Pharisees can thank God we are not like those miserable sinners in hiding facts by playing upon words.

In this connection, it may not be out of place to note that the Register General of Rameses II was instructed by the potentate to give him comparative evidence of the value of the work of the various medical savants in charge of the asylums. He set to work with great care and circumspection, as, in those days, did his work not prove satisfactory to this autocrat, where juries, *habeas corpus* and the *bill of rights* were unknown, he would have been minus his head some doleful day and not even have the pleasure of being mummified. His first difficulty arose in endeavoring to compare the death rates in Memphis, Thebes, Zoan or Regiopolis. They varied very much and ranged from three to fifteen *per cent*. Were he to test the medical skill of Drs. Effendi, Ben Ahmond, Ayoub and Bey Ahmed by the mortality list, then would the most renowned of this medical quartette suffer in reputation. Some asylums were in malarial districts and hotbeds of fever; some were supplied with the physical off-scourings of pestiferous, filthy and degenerate human swarms of crowded cities, while other refuges were filled with those from healthy uplands, rural districts or rocky ravines. The regions from whence the mortal supply came could be predicated by the death rate. In addition to these varied conditions, was the important factor that the patients varied because of congenital defects as well as in respect to comparative health. Invidious comparisons and unjust conclusions would be the result unless there was uniformity in all the conditions of health and disease. The recent cases by fortuitous fluctuations under this diversity of necessity ebbed and flowed. The aged primarily and surely followed the same inexorable law, as did the epileptics and hereditarily tainted. He saw that nothing but mad-house literature and erratic comparative tables could present the absurdity of positive statements in respect to the efficacy or harmfulness of medical agents on the one hand, or a test and standard of skilful practice or quackish imposition on the other. He justly declared that it would be as absurd to apply a uniform test as to compare health statistics in various sections of a principality, and to judge of the value of medical men in each district by the death rates or cures irrespective of conditions and environments.

Then again Dr. Effendi of Zoan is a cautious man. He does not rush out and away patients who may merely have recurrent mania or

remissions in melancholia, nor those about whose mental integrity he is doubtful. His conscientious scruples hinder him from putting these among his class of recoveries. As a consequence his cases of cure do not count up as they do under a system of rapid transit out and in. The number of his *cases* and the number of his *persons* discharged during a year nearly coincide. Few of his cases of recovered persons return with painful reiteration. His *exerit omnes* mean more than temporary change of residence. He has not to say every week to some returning and familiar insane person, "Oh, here you are again! Enter him as No. 6 during our reportorial year. *One person* will stand as *six persons* among our large percentage of recoveries. Blow ye the trumpet blow." Dr. Effendi questions such methods and eschews them as he would Diabolus of sulphurous fame, as being of that kind which "Lead to bewilder and dazzle to blind."

Dr. Ben Ahmoud, of Memphis, is of another type of man. He is sanguine, impetuous and of that go-aheaditive style so prevalent in those ancient days, but now happily extinct. His thrusting out of temporarily quiescent patients as recovered struck with astonishment his more conservative *confirères*. He looked with contempt at a meagre thirty or thirty-five *per cent* of annual recoveries on admissions and runs up his startling ratio to eighty and even ninety *per cent*. He points with pride to his unparalleled success in comparison to his more cautious neighbors in the sickly district of the Red Sea or in the densely crowded streets of Zoan. This great city must have been a very silly place, for Isaiah says: "The Princes of Zoan have become fools," that is, lacking in intelligence and judgment. (Isaiah XIX and 11 verse.) This medical officer's ingenuity is not by any means confined to this expeditious method of discharges. Patients were let out on probation with friends and for months at a time. If they should die at home during this trial period, although as yet patients undischarged, they were not put on the mortuary list. On the other hand did they recover at home they were entered among the asylum recoveries because such had not been formally discharged. At this early period ethics were at a low ebb. To-day we do not indulge in such statistical cooking. In some parts of this great land of the Pharaohs political feelings ran very high. It was often of red hot intensity which set up a wholesome ebullition ending very often in clarification. This was to be expected in any free country where discussion is necessary to open up and ventilate all sides of subjects affecting the weal or woe of a people. As is often the case in the bitterness of argu-

mentative fervor doctrines were enunciated and practically carried out in this party warfare which seriously affected the well being of the insane. The pendulum of freedom swung far in the direction of true liberty and in the recognition of personal merit wherever found irrespective of rank or lineage, but in its oscillations it went to the other extreme of adopting the arbitrary rule which proved so pernicious to many ancient nations. It was formulated in the old dictum "To the victors belong the spoils." It seemed to be taken for granted that official spoliation was a cardinal virtue in all true patriots. In those territories thus afflicted were two great political parties in antagonism to another, either existing in a sort of passive resistance, armed neutrality or active hostility to one another. Each faction was governed by intelligent, shrewd and watchful chiefs whose fidelity to party led to these abuses of power. These divisions were designated respectively the Hittites and Hammerites. At times so intense was their fealty to their own friends that asylum officers, who were engaged purely in works of mercy, were obliged to vacate their charges as often as the respective parties in turn gained the ascendancy. These devoted men might be kind, capable, honest, earnest and apt workers in their self-denying labors; they might even have spent the best years of their lives in the service without reproach, yet if they did not sound the party shibboleth, had not the accepted earmark or the brand O. K. burned by party leaders into the occipito-frontalis muscle they were unceremoniously hustled out of their beloved work to give way to—it might be—incompetent novices whose qualifications consisted of proficient stunp oratory or cunning wire-pulling in "ways that were dark." To the credit of that great people this pernicious system was not extensively practiced and existed largely above the great river and near the mountain of the Moon or more properly speaking the Lunar Mountains. In striking contrast to this degrading system are the more just and universal methods of to-day found in the civil service. No political elements ever enter into our selections. We would repudiate the insinuation with the scorn it would richly deserve. Loving kindness, capacity, enthusiasm in such work, aptitudes and professional skill always determine the appointments to asylum charges in this nineteenth century and in this Christendom. Herein are we wise beyond our revered ancestry, and the insane are gainers by this conservative policy of adopting a standard of merit and fitness and not of political usefulness and subserviency. Our daily prayer should be "We thank Thee our common Father on behalf of

the insane, that this Christian age is free from the Egyptian doctrine and practice of political election and rejection irrespective of worth and wisdom, ignorance and incompetency, wire-pulling and worm-crawling."

Another of the minor difficulties they had to contend against was the class of friends of many of the congenitally insane who were themselves on the borderland of mental alienation. The nervousness, the low intellectuality, the natural suspiciousness, the lack of ordinary judgment and discretion, the animal dogmatism and the asymmetrical mental development in many such who came honestly by all these untoward characteristics and were handicapped thereby gave untold trouble to medical officers who of necessity came into daily intercourse with this class. In fact so unreasonableness and unreasoning were many such outside relatives that they gave to officers and attendants a sort of waking nightmare to see them approach. They were torments in the oft repetitions of their questionings, opinions and senseless importunities. Clinics, wise sayings, hypothetical possibilities, and even positive assertions were thrown away on these unfortunates, and with a patience which even Job might have envied these encores of daily occurrence were borne with exemplary equanimity even by the most nervous or even irascible of asylum chieftains. Now-a-days that state of things does not exist. The intellectual exaltation of our people forbids the assumption that such extra-mural classes exist of the stamp and standard I have described. For this exemption we might sing with vim and unction a *Te Deum Laudamus*.

One or two of the Egyptian asylum reports complain bitterly of the press of that day. It is said sarcastically that there existed five classes of newspapers, viz.: the good, the indifferent, the bad, the very bad and the vile. The last three classes did all they could to bring public institutions into disrepute, however well conducted. The personal spleen in some was diabolical; in others the motive was not so much "malice aforethought" as the existence of a morbid sensationalism in the readers who sought after such pabulum, hence it paid to provide extravaganzas. Molehills were magnified into mountains; the delusions of the insane were taken as facts; the imagination of the ardent reporter was drawn upon to such an extent as almost to bankrupt it. Medical officers and attendants were looked upon and described as hideous ogres and monsters of iniquity. Evidence which would be ruled out of any well constituted court was presented as damning testimony of

atrocities. The chief officers were thus tormented to such an extent by those vampires of society as would have excited the pity and sympathy of even those toasted, roasted and pitchforked mortals described by Dante in his *In Inferno* and graphically illustrated by Gustave Doré. It is pleasant to note that all the press of that age did not glory in wallowing in cesspools of distorted fancy. Many evidences were given of honest, truthful, honorable and intellectual effort among these toilers of the press, and to them did all the faithful in the work of humanity look for justice and approval, and it was not in vain. They stood by the worthy in their great brotherhood of "sweetness and light," but they thrust the leprous forever without the camp. In all these respects there is a parallelism seen in the social problems of to-day, especially in the relation of the asylums to sane society and to the omnipresent and omnipotent press. Here I close my fragmentary translations. They must be of interest to all lovers of history and of our race. The members of this brotherhood may justly be classed among these and will agree with me that much may be learned from these musty records of the past, which I have endeavored to present with a modesty becoming an antiquary, who so long has been

"Born to blush unseen
And waste his sweetness on the desert air."

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