

Bowerbank (L.A.)
A

CIRCULAR LETTER

TO THE

Individual Members of the Legislative Council

AND OF

THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

OF JAMAICA,

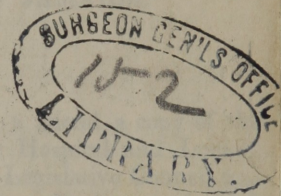
RELATIVE TO

THE PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND LUNATIC ASYLUM

OF KINGSTON.

BY

✓
LEWIS QUIER BOWERBANK, M.D.



—◆—
JAMES GALL & CO.,

BOOKSELLERS, PRINTERS, AND PUBLISHERS,
KINGSTON, JAMAICA.

1859.

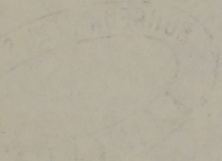
CIRCULAR LETTER

1850

Individual Members of the Legislative Council

1850

THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY



OR JAMAICA

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND LUNATIC ASYLUM

OF KINGSTON

JAMES GARDNER BOWLER BANK AND

JAMES GARDNER & CO

BOOKBINDERS, PRINTERS, AND STATIONERS

15, BARKER STREET

A CIRCULAR LETTER

TO THE

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

AND OF

THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OF JAMAICA.

SIR,—I have this evening received from a friend a copy of the message and documents relative to the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum of Kingston, recently sent down to the Legislative Council and the House of Assembly, by His Excellency Governor Darling, and which has been printed for the use of Members.

On reference to the Volume of Votes of Assembly, for 1858-59, I find that a previous message and documents, on the same subject, have been published.

I am bound to declare that these documents do not represent the truth, or the whole truth; but, on the contrary, are partial, and calculated to mislead. Several letters of Clergymen to whom the Governor's circular was sent, most of which I myself read, and have good reason to know were communicated to His Excellency, do not appear among the documents printed, nor is their absence in any way accounted for; nor have they subsequently been laid before your Honorable Board. I refer particularly to the letters of the Revd. Mr. Campbell—the then Chaplain; the Revd. Mr. Gardner, the Revd. Mr. Street, and Mr. Trueman, and would suggest that, as a matter of simple justice, that these other communications should be laid before your Honorable Board. I beg also to inform you that important portions of correspondence between His Excellency and myself, and of communications to the Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Attorney General for this island, have been omitted, and which, as far as regards myself, I now supply:—

Copy of Letter from Mr. Secretary Austin to Dr. Bowerbank.

No. 1375.

GOV. SEC. OFFICE, KING'S HOUSE,

20th December, 1858.

SIR,—I am desired by the Governor to acknowledge your letter of the 19th inst. and with reference to your allegation, that the female lunatic, "Rosa Henry," escaped from the private residence of Mrs. Ryan, I have to request that you will refer me to the parties from whom the proof of the correctness of that allegation can be obtained. It was with a view of eliciting any counterstatement you might be prepared to make, that the extract of Dr. Scott's letter was communicated to you.

His Excellency desires me to add, that by enabling him to refer to, and obtain the statements of those who are prepared to afford "indisputable proof" of the truth of the present charge, and to support any other charges you may be prepared to prefer—any abuses which may exist in the Hospital and Lunatic Asylum will be much more promptly remedied than by reserving the information you possess on those points for the British public or Her Majesty's Government.

The question of appointing a Tribunal of any kind, to which you so frequently refer in your correspondence, is, in fact, no longer in His Excellency's hands. Your pamphlets having been brought under the notice of the Secretary of State, His Excellency was required to report upon the subject matter of them. In complying with this requisition, His Excellency distinctly requested instructions as to whether a *Commission* should be appointed to conduct an enquiry. The Secretary of State replied, as you have been already informed, that any such enquiry should be conducted by the Governor himself, and that he should report his own opinion upon the state of the two Institutions. More recently, the Secretary of State having laid before him your letters up to the date of the 8th October last, has adverted to that enquiry as one to be conducted upon the Governor's "own responsibility and in his own person."

Since His Excellency has been in possession of the Secretary of State's views upon the subject, he has endeavoured to obtain such written and authentic statements as will enable him to judge whether any *vivá voce* or what other examination may appear ultimately necessary to the ascertainment of truth: and he is still prepared and anxious to receive any information tending to this end, which you may be prepared to afford.

With reference to the concluding passages of your letter, I am to observe that your letter of the 16th inst. was answered by the first post

after it was received, and that it did not contain any allusion to a presumed necessity for attempting to detain the Ship "Tropic."

I have the honor to be Sir,

Your obdt. humble servant,

HUGH W. AUSTIN,

Gov. SEC.

Copy of Letter from Dr. Bowerbank to Mr. Secretary Austin.

SIR,—I am this day in receipt of your communication, No. 1375 of yesterday's date. I was well aware of His Excellency's object in forwarding me the extract from Dr. Scott's letter.

As regards the proof connected with Rosa Henry's escape from Mrs. Ryan's private residence, I would again refer His Excellency to Dr. Scott himself, and the Board of Commissioners; and I must repeat to His Excellency my determination to lend no aid whatever to any particular or limited enquiry, or to any but a full and fair investigation of the whole matter in question. The frivolous attempts hitherto made to deal with subjects of comparatively minor importance, (mere specimens of abuses existing) while the gravest charges have been purposely avoided, have only afforded opportunities to one Member at least of the Executive Committee to affect "to laugh in his sleeve" and to talk boastingly of what he is pleased to call my failure, to prove the abuses of the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum. The mode of examination hitherto pursued by His Excellency has been highly unsatisfactory, and in my humble opinion much more calculated to suppress than to elicit the truth. In addition to this, the Commissioners of the Hospital in their partial and mock enquiries, have already discharged some of their *old* officers, evidently in the hope of intimidating others from speaking the truth, and of doing their best to discredit the testimony which they too well know will be forthcoming.

If after this explanation, the fact of Rosa Henry's escape, as stated by me, is still desired, I can only repeat, I can prove it—and will do so, so soon as a fair and proper commission is appointed; and what is more, I will prove, too, that a cat-o-nine tails has been seen in the Lunatic Asylum.—Nay, even worse than this. For His Excellency's Information, I beg to assure you that the abuses of these institutions are very numerous; and I beg entirely to differ from His Excellency with reference to his remarks as to an appeal to the British Public and Her Majesty's Government.

I carefully perused the Secretary of State's directions to His Excellency with which he politely favoured me, and I did not there observe that he forbade the appointment of a commission : he merely directed His Excellency to conduct it himself and to make his own report thereon ; but when the Secretary of State thus wrote, he was not aware that His Excellency Governor Darling had already prejudged the case, and taken a one-sided view of the question—that he had affected to discredit the purity of my motives ; that under the pretext of publishing official correspondence in a Government Gazette, he had libelled me in a paper published at the expense of the public, and sold for a shilling a copy for the benefit of one of the Executive Committee, and two members of the Board of Hospital Commissioners. With reference to subsequent directions, I know nothing, not having been favored with a sight of them ; but I must confess after all that has taken place, I am not in the least surprised at a British Statesman directing the Governor to conduct any examination on his own responsibility.

I repeat again, for His Excellency's information, that so long as he pursues the course he has been doing, he will not elicit the truth. If he wishes even now to know the real state of matters, let him appoint a proper enquiry, and if after all that has occurred, he thinks right let him preside "in his own person" at that enquiry.

But after what has passed, I candidly and honestly confess I have no faith—witnesses have no faith—the Public have no faith in him as sole Judge, and under this impression they will neither fritter away time, nor subject themselves to be placed in unnecessarily unpleasant positions. With reference to your concluding paragraph, you are aware that I stated in my letter, that having received no answer from you, and that hearing the Tropic was to sail the next morning with a material witness on board, I thought it right to lay the whole matter before the Coroner.

That Gentleman, after some apparently unnecessary delay, appears by the annexed communication, to have satisfied himself that there was no necessity for any further enquiry. I can only observe, that for many years I have been engaged in active practice, and my full belief is, that a case in which a strong healthy seaman receives a blow on his head from another person, with a heavy iron weapon, and of which he complains to the day of his death—eleven days after, does require a very full, and a very careful enquiry. As regards the Hospital portion of the question, I shall reserve that for the present ; but any one conversant with such matters will at once perceive that there has been great negligence. I must again express my trust that the

whole of the correspondence between us is regularly transmitted to Her Majesty's Secretary of State.

I am, Sir,

Your obdt. servant,

LEWIS Q. BOWERBANK.

Kingston, 21st. Decr. 1858.

Copy of Letter from Mr. Secretary Austin to Dr. Bowerbank.

No. 1411.

GOV. SEC. OFFICE, KING'S HOUSE.

27th December, 1858.

SIR,—I am desired by the Governor to acquaint you, that as your letter of the 21st inst. is couched in terms of studious insult, based in several instances upon mis-statements and serious perversion of facts, and as no object of public advantage can, after your final refusal to afford further information in support of your allegations of Hospital mismanagement, require that his Excellency should hold further correspondence with you. His Excellency has directed me not to submit to him any communications which you may, in future, address to me for that purpose.

His Excellency will, of course, forward any representation you may desire to make to the Secretary of State, provided that duplicates of it and of all enclosures, not already upon record in the Governor's Secretary's Office are supplied at the same time.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedt. servt.,

HUGH W. AUSTIN,

GOV. SEC.

Copy of Letter from Dr. Bowerbank to Mr. Secretary Austin.

SIR,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch, No. 1411, of the date of the 27th December last. In reply, I beg to assure you, for his Excellency's information, that it never was my

intention studiously or otherwise to insult him; at the same time, I feel it due to myself to deny, that anything I have said or written has been "based upon misstatements and serious perversion of facts."

In accordance with the concluding paragraph of your letter, I beg leave to forward to you for transmission, by the present packet, a letter addressed to her Majesty's Secretary of State, as also a duplicate of the same.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

LEWIS Q. BOWERBANK.

Kingston, 10th January, 1859.

Copy of Letter from Dr. Bowerbank to the Right Honorable Sir Edward B. Lytton, her Majesty's Secretary of State.

SIR,—Under the impression that you are already, to some extent, acquainted with the circumstances which have lately taken place in this island, relative to the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum of Kingston, and with the efforts which I, as a Practitioner of Medicine of some years standing, have been making to bring to light existing abuses and mismanagement in these institutions, I have now the honor to call your attention to a Despatch, No. 1411, which I have received from his Excellency Governor Darling, of the date of 27th December last, in which his Excellency states, "that as your letter of the 21st inst., is couched in terms of studious insult, based in several instances upon misstatements and serious perversion of facts, and as no object of public advantage can, after your final refusal to afford further information in support of your allegations of Hospital mismanagement, require that his Excellency should hold further correspondence with you, his Excellency has directed me not to submit to him any communications which you may, in future, address to me for that purpose."

With reference to this communication, I have to assure you, that it would be a matter of the deepest regret to me if I could charge myself with having offered any kind of insult or disrespect to Governor Darling, as her Majesty's representative in this Island, and I would also regret, if under the provocation I have received in my honest endeavours to reform great public abuses I had made use of any expression which could be found fault with.

I now most solemnly pledge my personal and professional character to you and to her Majesty's government, as I have already done to Governor Darling, to substantiate by the evidence of myself and many other witnesses every fact which is set forth in my several printed pamphlets, and will also adduce other facts, many of which have come subsequently to my knowledge, which will prove that fearful cruelties and abuses exist in these institutions, but more particularly in the Lunatic Asylum. I am again reluctantly compelled to declare that obstacles and difficulties have been thrown in the way of an investigation into these abuses by the Local Government, and so evident was this opposition, that I was advised to pursue the course which I adopted, viz., to decline to adduce any evidence, except before a competent and impartial Commission of Enquiry.

I pledge myself to prove, that no effectual step has yet been taken by his Excellency, the Executive Committee, or the Commissioners, to ascertain the truth of the allegations I have preferred.

I can prove, by the majority of Clergymen resident in Kingston, that the following inference is incorrect, "that communications which his Excellency has had from the other Ministers of Religion in Kingston, lead (with two exceptions) to the conclusion that there is no dissatisfaction felt either by themselves or amongst their flocks, in respect to the management of the Public Hospital since the existing act came into operation."

A Bill authorizing the Governor to appoint a Commission to enquire into the alleged abuses of the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum was prepared by one of the members for Kingston. Some delay in its introduction took place in consequence of a request of Mr. Jordon, a member of the Executive Committee and Chairman of the Hospital Commissioners. At the close of the Session, after many of the Country members had left town, this Bill was brought on and was lost, by the following gentlemen, Messrs. Jordon, Hosack, Osborn, and Espeut, Commissioners of the Hospital, quitting the chamber, and thus allowing the House to be counted out.

Subsequently the same member for Kingston introduced a Bill, empowering the Governor to appoint a Commission under the Broad Seal to investigate public abuses generally. This was passed—a clause being inserted by Mr. Hosack to the effect, that the same should not come into force before receiving the assent of her Majesty.

Another Bill, emanating from the Government, has also been introduced and passed, by which the Commissioners of the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum are denuded of their office, and their powers transferred to a paid official and to the Governor of the Island. This measure is generally regarded as a complete acknowledgement of the

truth of the charges of mis-management preferred against the Commissioners, and is considered, in this light, by most of themselves, one of whom has publicly declared that they had been unjustly condemned and ignominiously dismissed.

This change, I trust, will remedy some of the abuses; but it can not dispense with the urgent necessity for a strict and impartial enquiry into the cruelties and abominations which still exist in these institutions, especially in the Lunatic Asylum, and which, I believe, render it, in the emphatic language of some of its former victims, "a hell upon earth."

Despairing of obtaining justice from the authorities here, I purpose in a few weeks embarking from this Island for England, and will take with me a mass of evidence which, I trust, may shew the necessity of the enquiry which has hitherto been so substantially denied.

I have the honor to be Sir,

Your most obdt. humble servant,

LEWIS Q. BOWERBANK.

Kingston, Jamaica, 10th Jany. 1859.

Copy of Letter from Mr. Secretary Austin to Dr. Bowerbank.

No. 43.

GOV. SEC. OFFICE, KING'S HOUSE,

January 11th, 1859.

SIR,—I am directed by the Governor in reply to your letter of 10th inst, transmitting a letter addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to refer you to Paragraphs Nos. 208 and 209 of the Colonial Regulations. Copy hereunto annexed.

208.—"The Governor is bound to transmit to the Secretary of State every communication so received by him, accompanied by such report as its contents may appear to him to require.

209.—He is to do this with all reasonable despatch, consistently, however, with the delay requisite for the *preparation* of such report."

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedt. servt.,

HUGH W. AUSTIN,

GOV. SEC.

Dr. L. Q. Bowerbank, Kingston.

Much to my surprise on the 29th January, I received the following communication with its enclosure from her Majesty's Attorney General, and on the previous or same day, I saw letters of a similar purport, which had been received from the same officer, by the Revd. Mr. Gardner and Mr. Trueman.

Copy of Letter from H. M. Attorney General to Dr. Bowerbank.

Spanish Town, January 26th, 1859.

SIR,—In reference to the enclosed extract of a letter from you to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, I have the honor to invite information (additional to that contained in your already published pamphlets, for which I have now the honor to thank you) on the fearful cruelties and abuses said to be existing on the 10th January instant, (or theretofore or since) in the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum.

You are not, probably, aware that in the absence of any *specific* charge of a breach of the law committed, an inquiry on oath into the alleged abuses would not only fail in point of legal solemnity, but be a *violation* of the Island Statute, 6 Vict. c. 24. s. 8.

I shall feel no hesitation, however, in acting as promptly and as confidently on your parol, if your information warrant it, as I would on any oath.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedt. servt.,

ALEXANDER HESLOP,

Attorney General.

Extracts of a Letter from Dr. L. Q. Bowerbank to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 10th January, 1859.

“I now most solemnly pledge my personal and professional character to you and to Her Majesty's Government, as I have already done to Governor Darling, to substantiate by the evidence of myself and many other witnesses, every fact which is set

“forth in my several pamphlets, and will also adduce other facts, many of which have come subsequently to my knowledge, which will prove that fearful cruelties and abuses exist in these Institutions, but more particularly in the Lunatic Asylum.”

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“This change, I trust, will remedy some of the abuses, but it cannot dispense with the urgent necessity for a strict and impartial enquiry into the cruelties and abominations which still exist in these Institutions, especially in the Lunatic Asylum, and which I believe, render it, in the emphatic language of some of its former victims, “a hell upon earth.”

True Extracts.

HUGH W. AUSTIN,

Gov. Sec.

Copy of Letter from Dr. Bowerbank to the Attorney General.

Kingston, 29th January, 1859.

SIR,—I this day received your communication of the date of the 26th inst.—I should indeed have been delighted had I received it months, nay, a few weeks previously, when I should most certainly have complied with the invitation contained in it.

On reference to the communications which have taken place on this subject, you will find that I have already stated to the Governor and the Secretary of State, my determination to bring the matter personally before the attention of the Home Government. In accordance with this pledge, I am now making preparations to sail in the next packet, and my private matters will require the short period of time I can spare before leaving the island.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedt. servt.,

(Signed)

LEWIS Q. BOWERBANK.

The Honble. Alexander Heslop,

Attorney General.

The foregoing letter was written on Saturday evening, (29th). On Monday, (31st.) it was (as usual) to have been sent over to Spanish Town by a messenger, but in consequence of the person being out of the way, the letter was put into the Post Office. In the month of April, while I was in England, it was returned to my house from the Kingston Post Office, marked "*Refused.*"

I left Jamaica on the morning of the 11th February, and reached Southampton on Thursday the 3rd March.

On the following Tuesday I called at the Colonial Office, and left my card for Sir Edward B. Lytton, with the assurance that I should receive an early answer.

Not hearing from him, I requested Mr. Wyld, the member for Bodmin, to bring the Hospital Question to his notice, which this gentleman did in his place in the House of Commons on the evening of the 16th March—as shewn by the following extract from the *Times*, of the date of the 17th March.

"LUNATIC ASYLUM, KINGSTON, JAMAICA."

"Mr. WYLD asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies if her Majesty's Government had appointed, or intended to appoint, a commission to enquire into the present state of the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum of Kingston, Jamaica?"

Sir E. B. LYTTON.—The state of this Hospital and Asylum had occupied the very serious consideration of the government. They had not appointed, nor did they intend to appoint, a commission to inquire into the subject; but they had directed the Governor to make stringent inquiries on his own responsibility, and to give every facility to parties who desired to make any statements with respect to it."

It must here be borne in mind that Sir Edward B. Lytton, when making this reply in the House of Commons, had on the previous day, 15th March, addressed a despatch, No. 99, to Governor Darling which altogether ignored my presence in London, censured my conduct, and applauded the Governor for what he had done.

This latter communication No. 99, forms the first of the documents accompanying the Governor's message now before your Honorable Board, and I am surprised to find that another despatch of the same date, No. 100, addressed by the Colonial Minister to Governor Darling, has been omitted, more especially as it figures in the Royal Gazette by Authority, of the 7th April last; nor would I here allude to it, but for its acknowledging the receipt of a despatch from His Excellency, "and also a copy of a correspondence with Mr. Osborn, one of the late Commissioners of that Hospital and of the Lunatic Asylum, on matters arising out of the charges brought by Dr. Bowerbank, as to the arrangement of these establishments."

What this valuable production from the dismissed Commissioner was, I know not ; but its omission from the printed documents, leads me to conclude that it was not fit to see the light.

On the morning of the 17th March, I called upon Mr. Drummond Wolfe, the Private Secretary to the Colonial Minister, with whom I had an interview, and who told me that Sir E. B. Lytton took great interest in the matter, and requested me to address a letter to Sir Edward, which he promised should be forthwith delivered. I did so the next day, taking the note myself to the Colonial Office. Receiving no answer, I wrote the following (which has been omitted in the message).

COPY.

EASTBOURNE TERRACE,

PADDINGTON,

30th March, 1859

SIR,—On the 17th inst., by your suggestion, I addressed a letter to Sir Edward B. Lytton, which I enclosed to you and left at the Colonial Office on the 18th inst.

May I beg the favour of being informed whether this has been received.

I have come to England, as I pledged myself to do, prepared with written evidence to lay before the Government, in proof of all I have stated relative to the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum of Kingston, Jamaica.

I am well aware that I have arrived at an unfortunate time, when the attention of the Colonial Minister is engrossed with matters of great importance ; but I should esteem it a particular favour to be informed, whether I shall have the honour of being granted an interview, or, if I might suggest, that, previous to this interview, some gentleman attached to the office, might be appointed to go over the documents with me, and report upon them.

I trust you will excuse my again troubling you ; but the accounts brought by the last packet, confirm the necessity of the real state of these Institutions being made known here.

I am, Sir,

Your obedt. Servt.,

L. Q. BOWERBANK.

Drummond Wolfe, Esqr.

In reply to this, I received the following:—

COLONIAL OFFICE,

10th April, 1859.

Sir,—Your letter of the 17th March is still under Sir E. Lytton's consideration; but I will take care that you have a speedy reply.

I am, Sir,

Your obedt. Servt.,

H. DRUMMOND WOLFE.

Dr. Bowerbank.

Another packet having arrived with accounts of fresh atrocities having occurred in the Jamaica Hospital and Lunatic Asylum, I called at the Colonial Office on the morning of the 6th April, and requested to see the under-Secretary, the Earl of Carnarvon, I was informed he had gone to Her Majesty's levee; but I was recommended to see Mr. Merivale, the permanent under-Secretary. The result of my interviews with this gentleman was very unsatisfactory, in as much as I was fully convinced that he had not made himself acquainted with the merits of the case, and was determined to believe nothing except through the report of Governor Darling. He however gave me to understand, that it was not the intention of the Colonial Office to take any further steps in the matter, and that I was therefore at perfect liberty to adopt any measure I thought proper.

I now appealed to the Earl of Shaftesbury, the Hon. Chairman of the Commissioners in Lunacy, and, at the suggestion of that Board, addressed a communication to them; the result of which was a full and careful investigation on their part, into all the published pamphlets, documents, and correspondence on this subject, which led to the communications between their Board and the Colonial Office, as set forth in the printed message of his Excellency.

Next comes the Report of the Director and Inspector of the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum, upon matters which he could know little or nothing of, except by *hearsay* from implicated and guilty parties. The existence of present abuses he confidently denies, and as to future ones, (to any extent,) either by night or day, they are out of the question under his Inspectorship.

The Inspector and Director not knowing anything about the matter, and not being likely to be enlightened by his guilty colleagues, (what man after seducing a cancer-stricken patient in a Hospital is likely to confess such a deed!) complains that he "has always found it impossible to trace the exact period to which Dr. Bowerbank ascribes the existence of such awful and abominable abuses," at the same time he confidently affirms them to be false.

He, in his blissful ignorance and desire to "save appearances" is "firmly of opinion, that if they (the alleged abuses) ever existed to the extent described, it must have been at a period long antecedent to the present."

He is induced to suggest (in the absence of dates) that some of the abuses alleged by Dr. Bowerbank in these respects, "are those mainly for which the Superintendent Ryan was dismissed in 1853."

"Who would call the tench a whale, or style a torch, Orion?"

Let me here ask the Director and Inspector, what was the real cause of Ryan's dismissal from the Institution? Did the Inspector ever hear of such an expression being made use of as "who robbed the sailor?" Has the Inspector ever yet directed his attention to this circumstance? Has he done his best to arrive at its meaning, even by hearsay—much less at its truth? Has he spoken to the Medical Officers on the subject? Has he enquired of the Female Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum about it?

This circumstance may have occurred long ago, but is that a reason why it should not be enquired into? Justice is said sometimes to be slow, but always to be sure.

If I depend upon the statements of others for information on which to ground my allegations—upon whose evidence, let it be asked, does the Inspector and Director depend for information, on which to base his bold assertions and wholesale denials?

I confess I cannot boast of my power of making any black person swear to anything I think proper.

The Director then proceeds to consider the various propositions submitted to Her Majesty's Secretary of State, by the Lunacy Commissioners, in dutiful accordance with His Excellency's desire, and certainly in doing so, he bears out the truth and correctness of my allegations. He himself proves that when I wrote my pamphlets,—that previous to his appointment to his present office, matters were

indeed bad ; although let it be remembered at this very time, the House Surgeon denied all my statements, and His Excellency the Governor had previously declared these Institutions perfect.

The rules and regulations for the present guidance of these Institutions, drawn up by the Director and Inspector, and approved of by His Excellency the Governor, are in themselves unique, and point distinctly to the existence of gross abuses and mismanagement.

One act I must not here omit, that is, to vindicate the character of a man whom the Director and Inspector has shamefully slandered, relying, no doubt, on the fact that a dead man is unable to prosecute the libel. I have good reason to believe that Mr. Rouse, the late warden, was as *honest* and *temperate* a man as the Inspector and Director of the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum himself.

With reference to the 25th allegation, the Director and Inspector reports: " I have been unable to detect any such impropriety ; but I should not hesitate to report, as *unworthy* of employment any officer, without regard to his rank, who I should, at any time, have good reason to know, either permitted or encouraged the visits within the institution of loose and improper females." This was penned on the 23rd Sept., 1859. Will the Director and Inspector repeat this? Will he declare that he has acted up to it? Will he declare that he has heard of no instance of gross profligacy on the part of officials—that no such case has been brought to his official notice—that he has heard of no acts of *responsible officials* in the institution, reflecting on their conduct as christian men and members of a liberal and honorable profession?

I will not here, Sir, take up your time, or waste my own in following the Director and Inspector of the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum throughout his long string of concessions of existing abuses, and effected improvements, or his erroneous surmises and reckless denial of statements which I have so repeatedly declared to be capable of the fullest proof.

Since my return to the island, gross and shameful abuses have been perpetrated within the walls of these miserably mismanaged Institutions.

It was only a day or two ago that the neighbourhood was alarmed by the appearance of fire within its walls, caused, it is said, by the burning of the old books of the Institution. Let it be asked if this illegal act was performed in the presence, or with the sanction of the Inspector and Director !!

At present, a boarded fence, some feet high, is being constructed on

the walls, to shut out the public gaze. Well may the Authorities within these walls attempt to conceal the dark deeds of cruelty which are daily perpetrated therein.

Again, there is reason to fear that acts of gross tyranny and oppression are practised towards the subordinate officials; that they are, at times, unjustly and illegally mulcted of their dues, and are summarily discharged at the whim and caprice of those in office, and if report is true, such is the influence exercised in this matter, that the oppressed are precluded from obtaining justice from the usual and legitimate sources.

And will it be accredited, that until the other day, almost every, if not every inmate of the Asylum had been illegally sent there, and improperly admitted. Such is the vaunted supervision and inspection exercised over these poor lunatics, deprived by law of their liberty—dead to their civil rights. Many of whom, from the moment they enter the Asylum, are consigned, body and soul, to the keeping, to the will of an individual, against whom charges of drunkenness, cruelty, and neglect have been brought forward by a credible witness, but which charges were “burked” and avoided by judges who dared not to face them!!

In conclusion, Sir, let me appeal to the sense of duty which you owe to yourself and to your country, to remove the stigma which these Hospital abuses have cast upon us in the opinion of all enlightened, honest, and unprejudiced persons.

Remember that these abuses, when first alleged, were denied to exist: now, some affecting construction, ventilation, and drainage are allowed to be true; others, it is maintained, if they ever existed, must have done so long ago; and others again are still pertinaciously and obstinately declared to be without foundation.

You are aware that the Commissioners in Lunacy have strongly recommended an enquiry. Two Colonial Ministers have been convinced of its necessity, in spite of official opposition, and have honestly declared their opinion. And lastly, His Excellency Governor Darling himself *now earnestly recommends* you to adopt the same course.

Attempts are being made by the same parties who have hitherto exerted every effort to screen themselves from enquiry, to deter, to frighten you from performing your duty, by exaggerated statements of its expense.

Surely such considerations are not to be put in comparison with questions involving the lives and health of your fellow creatures, or

the character for humanity and justice of your native or adopted land.

If after re-considering the whole Hospital controversy on its own merits, if after weighing well the reports of the Inspector and Director of these Institutions, any further enquiry should be considered necessary to persuade you to believe "even one tithe of the allegations of the Commissioners in Lunacy of England,"—such enquiry, on your part, will be unattended with expense, and therefore unobjectionable on this score; and I rejoice in the certain prospect, that such an enquiry, earnestly and honestly carried out, will tend to the further proof and elucidation of the facts which I have asserted.

Be not deceived, Sir, by the confession *now made*, that defects, as regards construction, ventilation, and drainage do exist, and that these can only be remedied by an expenditure of the Public money—and be not beguiled by the specious argument, that, therefore, instead of incurring expense in enquiring whether these defects *did exist* some months back, when they were alleged to do so, the funds should be appropriated to remedy the now allowed evils.

Remember, at the same time, that besides these physical defects, to remedy which, the advice of competent and experienced persons is required—other defects, other abuses have been alleged to exist. Remember that *all* were denied, and that in spite of patching, altering, and white-washing, it has been found necessary to concede the existence of many serious defects, too palpable, too evident to be longer concealed. Others, however—many others—from their nature, less recognizable by the senses, more difficult of proof, still exist. Remember that these are still denied, but that so long as they continue undetected, unproved, and uncorrected, it matters little whether the physical defects are done away with or not.

An improved or handsome exterior will still cover and conceal a deteriorated and hideous interior. The new gate, Sir, looks well by day, but what of that, if prostitutes still enter through it by night.

Certain grievous charges have been made, and proof has been, and still is offered. On the other hand, these charges have been denied without proof adduced; their existence has been attempted to be concealed, and, as far as practicable, removed. A full and fair enquiry is the only remedy, the only way to arrive at the truth.

I have been accused of not specifying—of not giving dates—of shirking to give evidence. Remember that such a preliminary examination as you are *now* called upon to institute, does not require specific charges to be previously announced. To justify the holding

of such investigation, the mere assertion, the bare hint that abuses exist is sufficient. Institute such an enquiry---confront the opposing parties---the accusing and accused, then will be the time for charge and proof, for denial and proof. Do this, Sir, and you will then see why I have hitherto refused to submit to any partial enquiry, or to adduce more information on particular charges before interested and implicated Judges.

Grant fair play without fear or affection.

“Justum et tenacem propositi virum
 Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
 Non vultus instantis tyranni.”
 Mente quatit solidâ.—HOR.

The time, Sir, has now arrived, when you are called upon by the Executive to amend the Act regulating these Institutions, and which Act itself expires next year.

That recent illegalities and wasteful expenditure of the funds of these Institutions, have recently taken place, is undoubted; that from the paucity and peculiar constitution of the Medical staff, the advantages of these Institutions to science, to the Medical profession, to the sick, poor, and to the community in general, are more limited than they ought to be, no one can gainsay.

Enquiry is requisite. Reform is essential.

Petitions have been sent in by the members of the Medical profession, and by the citizens, the latter numerous and respectably signed, (each signature being attached) praying that the Public Hospital may be made what it ought to be. The declining condition of the island and of this city especially demands that its Public Institutions at least, should be made as available as possible; that their usefulness should be extended as much as practicable; and that they should be as economically conducted as due efficiency will permit. The Public Hospital of a city like Kingston, should be the receptacle for acute disease. A Hospital containing 180 beds should have its staff of Medical officers, not only two individuals, and should contain as patients, persons *requiring* Medical aid. It should not contain “many persons hardly requiring to be seen twice a week.” Such inmates are fit objects for a poor-house, a refuge, or an asylum. Their presence in a Hospital is wrong, is mischievous, is expensive, is ruinous.

If these Institutions are to be continued, (and great need of them is there,)—if an impoverished fast-failing country is to be taxed to

keep up costly Institutions of this kind, then, let them, in the name of reason, in the name of justice, for the sake of mercy and humanity, let them be properly conducted—let them be applied to their legitimate purposes—let them afford all comfort to the poor-sick, and every possible benefit to the public—let them, at any rate, cease for the future to be nests of jobbery and official subserviency—sops for political intrigue and favouritism.

Sir, as a Member of the Legislature of the Island, you are a guardian of its Institutions, and a protector of the rights of its People. To you, then, do we look for a reform of abuses—to you do we appeal for redress of wrongs.

For years past, enquiry into the Hospital management has been asked for. Now, Sir, is the time to determine upon its necessity. Listen not to any party, but take evidence on the subject. Make yourself acquainted with the management of similar institutions in other countries, and then you will be prepared to legislate on the subject. Away, Sir, with monopoly—with party interest. Away with the hole and corner work which has so long disgraced these Institutions. Let them for the future be thrown open to the light of day—to the whole profession.

“In the multitude of Counsellors there is safety.”

I cannot omit this opportunity of pointing out to you the fact, that during the two last Sessions, Bills vitally affecting the interests of the Medical profession have been introduced into the House of Assembly, without any notice whatsoever having been given to the Profession of an intention to introduce such acts, or any evidence being taken on the subject. And to judge from a perusal of these acts, they must have been framed by persons altogether unacquainted with the usages of the Profession, and the laws regulating it elsewhere, as also with the nature of the subjects treated on.

I would, again, take the liberty of suggesting, that whenever bills or reports in any way affecting the Medical profession are introduced or printed for the use of Members, a number of extra copies should be printed for the use of the Profession—if requisite, these might be sold at a fixed rate.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedt. humble servt.,

L. Q. BOWERBANK, M.D.

Kingston, 25th November, 1859.

