

our readers are aware, was selected by the Lords Justices to personally examine and report his opinion upon Mrs. Cumming's state of mind. He did so at considerable length, stating that he had no doubt of her sanity and competency to manage herself and property. It was therefore deemed of considerable and vital importance to damage, if possible, the *vivâ voce* evidence which Dr. Winslow gave at the trial; Sir Frederick Thesiger brought all his ability, ingenuity, talent, adroitness, and experience to effect this desirable object; and Dr. Winslow and Dr. Barnes, whose evidence it was considered equally necessary to damage, had to undergo examinations which have been pronounced by an eminent and distinguished member of the bar, to be the severest, most trying, and searching cross-examinations ever heard in a court of justice upon abstract points of science. They were not, however, to be baffled by Sir Frederick Thesiger; and the latter, at the conclusion of the struggle for supremacy, was compelled to exclaim, "that Dr. Winslow was more than a match for him." These examinations, extending over many pages, form quite a psychological curiosity, and should be carefully perused by every person likely to be called upon to give similar evidence in cases of insanity. Appended to the trial is a verbatim report of the three personal examinations to which Mrs. Cumming was subjected by the commissioner and jury.—We are glad to perceive that Dr. Webster is continuing his notes of visits to the lunatic asylums of France.—In conclusion we shall only observe, that it will always gratify us to hear that the profession in the provinces are exerting themselves to promote the circulation of this periodical, thus showing their sense of Dr. Winslow's praiseworthy endeavour to advance an important branch of medical science.

THE EVIDENCE OF DR. DAVEY IN MRS. CUMMING'S CASE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The annexed letter, or rather a copy of the same, I have this day sent to the editor of another journal, in answer to certain remarks contained in his last issue, and in which it is stated, that in consequence of my expressed belief in animal magnetism, &c., the committee of this asylum have required me to resign my appointment, &c. The whole statement is nothing less than a mischievous perversion of the truth; and inasmuch as it is not unlikely to affect my future position and interests, if the most efficient means be not taken to render my denial as public as possible, I take the liberty to request you will do me the favour, on principle, to allow my subjoined reply a space in *your* next number; and particularly so, as you have to no small extent aided the erroneous impressions which have gone forth to the world respecting my evidence "*in re Cumming*." Under both past and present circumstances of the case at issue, I feel you will not withhold from me the act of justice I now venture to ask at your hands, as the editor of the principal medical journal of this country.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

March 22, 1852.

J. G. DAVEY, M.D.

To the Editor of ———.

SIR,—I have just now seen, by mere accident, your editorial remarks on the "Colney Hatch Asylum," in which you have incurred the responsibility of informing the public, that in consequence of what you are pleased to call my late "exhibition" in the Cumming case, "the Middlesex magistrates," acting in the spirit of your "remonstrances," contained in your journal for January 24th, "have proved themselves not unworthy of the trust reposed in them," and, agreeing with you "that it were monstrous to permit a mesmerist to have the medical charge of their pauper lunatics," have required me to resign my office.

Now, Sir, unless I am greatly mistaken in my estimate of my medical brethren, they will be rather "gratified to learn," to quote your own words, that not only is it altogether *untrue* what you have ventured to state in reference to the Middlesex magistrates and myself, but what is more, these gentlemen, not less than myself, know full well, and have all along known, that the printed *reports* of my evidence given on the trial of the much-afflicted Mrs. Cumming, are, to use the expression

of a Middlesex magistrate who officiated as one of the jury in the case aforesaid, "*grossly misrepresented*." My time, Sir, is far too valuable than to allow me on every occasion to rush into print, though it may be to correct either a blundering or a mischievous editor, or I may have informed yourself, and others of your *confrères*, some weeks since, that not only have I never recommended nor practised "animal magnetism" or "mesmerism" at either of the county asylums at Hanwell or at Colney Hatch; but what is more, my *experience* of its utility was afforded in a very far distant country, Ceylon, whereat, I may add here, the native practitioners have for ages past tested its importance as a remedial agent.

The second paragraph of your editorial, like the first, could scarcely be more untruthful than it is, (that is, so far as regards myself,) and at variance with the *facts* of the case. So long, Mr. Editor, as you were content to attribute to me a mere error of judgment, or what may be *so considered*, I cared not to contradict you; but now that you have associated the same with an assumed act of the Committee of this Asylum, and have endeavoured to show that they stand in the relation to each other of *cause and effect*, it has become my duty, not only to offer your position or inference an unqualified denial, but to inform you, 1st, that I do *not* think that that man who disbelieves in "mesmerism," or "clairvoyance," is "of an unsound mind;" 2nd, that in having attributed such an opinion, or such an expression to me, is excessively illiberal, altogether unjustifiable, and in no way to be reconciled with what did actually transpire on the occasion referred to; and 3rdly, it was this part of my evidence which was being spoken of when the said magistrate and juryman above alluded to, declared the same to have been "*grossly misrepresented*,"—these were the words employed, and they were heard by all present. My own uncorroborated assertion you may be inclined to discredit.

Having then informed you what is untrue, or what has not transpired here, I may add for your information—feeling so interested as you appear to do in whatever may befall myself at Colney Hatch—that the "Middlesex magistrates" have, in a public document, in my possession, expressed themselves as perfectly *satisfied* with my proceedings and evidence "*in re Cumming*"—and which "public document," or "resolution," was forwarded to me many weeks since, and constituted an acknowledgment of an "explanation" required of me in consequence only of the said "foolish" and "gross misrepresentations" (Middlesex magistrates) of the medical press of the metropolis, a very fair specimen of which is contained in your last issue.

To conclude, and finish this disagreeable correspondence, I must add that, some nine or ten days since, I informed our much respected chairman, B. Rotch, Esq., (whose indisposition has alone prevented him from answering the unworthy reflections made on me at the Sessions House by Mr. Laurie—and whose able advocacy of my cause would have altogether anticipated these my remarks)—"that in consequence of certain private affairs, lately transpired, I was under the necessity, as a matter of duty to myself and family, to resign my present appointment at the County Asylum at Colney Hatch;" and that this, my resignation, was accepted with "regret." If it be any satisfaction to you, Mr. Editor, to know the expressed opinion of the matter of my retirement from this important establishment, I may add that it is declared to "be a heavy loss."

In my new position, you will doubtless hear more of me than heretofore. I appeal, Sir, to your sense of honour and right, to allow this my reply to your editorial remarks of both Jan. 24th and March 20th, to appear in your next number. Doubtless you will consider some apology due to me for the error you have been guilty of, and the reflections thereby cast on my name and position. Your future proceedings in this matter can alone enable me to decide on what farther steps I may adopt in reference to yourself.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. G. DAVEY, M.D.

The County Asylum, Colney Hatch, Middlesex.

CHARITABLE BEQUESTS. — The late Mrs. Anna M. Ogle, of Eaton-place, Belgrave-square, has lately bequeathed the sum of £7000, to be applied to such charitable purposes as the trustees may think fit. Amongst a great many other charities, the following medical institutions have received legacies:—King's College Hospital, (Building Fund,) £500; The Verrall Spinal Institution, £500; The Westminster Hospital £470; The Royal Westminster Ophthalmic Hospital, £470; The Small-Pox and Vaccination Hospital, £470; and Metropolitan Convalescent Hospital, £470.