duties. Two candidates for the Indian medical service—one having obtained a certificate of honour—will, I also hope, carry useful knowledge acquired here to the same vast and interesting field of labour, while other members of the class from England and the Cape will, I trust, on their return home, find their attendance on the psychological course amongst their pleasantest and most valuable reminiscences."

Retiring Pensions to County Officers.

A remarkable illustration is at the present time afforded of the justice of the proposal which we have frequently urged, namely, that the retiring pensions of Medical Superintendents and other County Officers should be a fixed and definite payment proportioned to the length and nature of service rendered, and that its amount should not in any degree be left dependent upon the prejudice or partizanship, good or ill feeling, the courage or the fears of a shifting and uncertain body of men, either as the Visitors of Asylums, or as Magistrates acting in Quarter Sessions.

The County of Cornwall is at the present time agitated from Launceston to the Land's End, by the momentous question whether the Magistrates of the County did, or did not, perpetrate an act of reckless and extravagant expenditure in adding £66 a-year to the retiring pension of Mr. Everest, the late Governor of the County Gaol; and whether the Visitors of the County Asylum have not in like manner been guilty of a high crime and misdemeanour against public ecomomy, by voting to Mr. Hicks, the late Superintendent of the County Asylum, the pension which, after 20 years service, is indicated by Act of Parliament as the due reward of good and faithful service. The columns of every Cornish newspaper have for weeks past been crowded with indignant discussions held at Boards of Guardians, and at public meetings on this subject. It will hardly be believed in the more staid and sober parts of our island, what an intense amount of public agitation and personal feeling this paltry sum of £66, added to the pension of a faithful servant, has occasioned. But Cornwall is a peculiar county and its Celtic inhabitants, like all of that stock, are apt to be led away by their feelings, and it is the

https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.7.36.288 Published online by Cambridge University Press

accident of the hour whether these happen to be noble or mean, excited by great or paltry considerations. The half-insulated position of the county, moreover, renders it intensely provincial, and an explosion of feeling, however unreasonable, has no opportunity of losing its force by expansion, as in the more civilized and centralized portions of our island. Cornwall, however, is not so different from other English counties that this iniquitous agitation against the just payment of a public servant should not be commented upon as an example and a caution. So much has been said and written on the subject that it will be difficult to condense the leading and essential facts of the case within our limits. The true issue has been so overloaded with personal and political vituperation, that it requires an effort of analysis to get at the simple facts. The following brief history, however, may be depended upon :—

Thirty-two years ago the County Gaol of Cornwall was in a deplorable condition, and it became needful to appoint a man of high qualities as the Governor. Mr. Everest who, as a naval officer, had served his country at the Mutiny at the Nore, and elsewhere, was solicited to accept the appointment. He came to Cornwall to see the gaol, and determined not to accept the appointment; but in consequence of the inducements held out to him by Mr. Pendarvis, Mr. Tremayne, and others, he was at length induced to take it; giving up, in order to do so, an appointment in a Royal dockyard, which would now have provided him, had he continued in that service, (as it has done his brother,) a pension of £500 a-year. It is universally, and without question, admitted that since his appointment he has been an officer of rare excellence; not only a careful economist, and a strict disciplinarian, he has been found equal to emergencies in which other men might well have failed. Mr. Kendal, the Member for the County, said at the discussion on the subject which occupied all the speeches at the Callington Agricultural Meeting, "I can tell the meeting that, although the present Governor is an excellent officer, yet that he is not fitted for such an office as Mr. Everest at first undertook. I have known that man rush into danger, and carrying a pistol in each hand, to quell a riot; and I have known a time in which five hundred miners surrounded the gaol, but Mr. Everest was prepared to meet them, and defeated their object." From all quarters, even from men who are most afraid of having to pay a few

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farthings more a year towards Mr. Everest's retiring pension, there has arisen a chorus of praise on his past invaluable services; and not one word has been said to the contrary.

And now, after having been Governor of the County Gaol for thirty-two years, and being eighty years of age, under the advice of the leading magistrates, he has sent in his resignation. This advice, it appears, was given in consequence of his ill health, which led his medical man to go to Mr. Kendal and say, "If you do not take Everest away he will die in the gaol." Mr. Everest, therefore, resigned, taking no care and using no influence about the pension which for the short remnant of his years he is to enjoy, but in confident reliance upon the justice of the county, leaving the magistrates to award to him that remuneration which the laws of the country gave him a right to expect.

The Act of Parliament permits the Magistrates of the County to grant a retiring pension to the governor of a gaol after thirty years service, of two thirds of his salary and emoluments. The salary of Mr. Everest had been £400 a year, and his emoluments £200 a year, so that he had a right to expect a retiring pension of £400 a year. The Magistrates of the County however, at the last Midsummer Sessions, with the fear of the ratepayers before their eyes, only awarded him £200 a year. They did this by a vote of 13 to 12, so that the injustice was perpetrated by the vote of one man. When this decision was made known to Mr. Everest he was naturally indignant; indeed, considering the length and character of his services, he felt the vote a personal censure, and that instead of retiring with honour, it seemed to stigmatize him with disgrace; and he presented a memorial to the magistrates expressing these feelings. At the following sessions at Michaelmas last, the attendance of the magistrates was larger and more influential, and the Lord Lieutenant of the County having proposed that the standing order of the Court, that no money be voted without a notice, be suspended for the occasion, the addition of £66 to the pension already voted to Mr. Everest was carried by a majority of 28 to 9. This addition made the pension two-thirds of the salary without the emoluments. The amount of this vote, be it remarked, was £66; and, since 1-8th of a farthing in the pound on the rated value of the county gives £118 12s. 8d. it follows that 25 472nds, or about 1-19th of a farthing would give £50, and 1-14th of a arthing would give £60 13s. 5d; so that the momentous financial question in debate is on 1-14th of a farthing in the pound on the rated annual income of the county.

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To supplement the financial question, however, a political element crops out which threatens to make this paltry 1-14th of a farthing added to Mr. Everest's pension the turning point of the next county election. The main supporter of this tardy act of justice to Mr. Everest, was Mr. Kendal, the Conservative member for East Cornwall, and the active opponent to it was Mr. Poole Carew, who was turned out of Parliament under circumstances which have left a deep impression, at the time when Mr. Kendal was elected. Mr. Poole Carew not only voted in the minority, but entered a protest against the legality of the vote. The next movement in the agitation we find proceeding from the Board of Guardians whose Union House is situated in Mr. Poole Carew's parish of Anthony, although it does not appear that that gentleman took any part in the deliberations. The Clerk of this St. German's Board of Guardians, stated at a meeting of the guardians, that the Poor Law Board had given their consent to the guardians considering the propriety of the vote which had been made at the last Quarter Sessions. It is difficult, however, to discover from whom the Clerk to the St. German's Union procured this information, since the earliest correspondence on the subject which is on record took place subsequently between the Poor Law Board and the St. Austell Board, in consequence of a resolution which had been adopted by the St. German's Board, and of a circular letter addressed by that Board to the other Unions. The discussion at the St. Austell's Board on the 23rd of November last, was introduced by the announcement of the formal permission of the Poor Law Board to discuss any subjects connected with the County Rate, communicated, it must be acknowledged, in a very costive manner, but still given, as the following will show :—

"The Clerk (R. G. Lakes, Esq.), then read the following letter which had been received from the Poor Law Board, in reply to a communication from the Guardians, requesting to be informed whether the resolution of the St. Germans Board of Guardians could be properly discussed.

Poor Law Board, Whitehall, S.W.,
16 Nov., 1860.

SIR—I am directed by the Poor Law Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th inst. As the Guardians may be called upon to pay the County Rate on behalf of the parishes of the Union, the Board are not prepared to say that the subject of the resolution of the Guardians of the St. Germains Union referred to by you is so far alien from the duties of a Board of Guardians as to prevent the Guardians of the St. Austell Union from entertaining it.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,
G. GILPIN, Secretary.

To R. G. Lakes, Esq., Clerk to the Guardians of the St. Austell Union, Trevarrick, St. Austell."

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This, of course, opened the flood-gates of discussion all over the County, and there has been little talked of since at boards of guardians, and farmer's clubs, and parish meetings, but the wicked and wilful extravagance of the Lord Lieutenant, and Mr. Kendal and other magistrates of the county adding £60 to the retiring pension of Mr. Everest. Mr. Kendal's place in Parliament especially is loudly threatened; letters are addressed to him "M.P. *pro tem.*," and if he were not one of the staunchest and most independent men in the world, he would perhaps be compelled to attach some weight to these spiteful manifestations of popular fickleness and injustice.

One thing is clear, that if all this acrimonious discussion comes to the ears of Mr. Everest, 80 years old, and in very bad health, it will very probably have the effect of shortening the brief space of tranquil life to which he might otherwise look forward; and so these passionate Cornishmen will have talked to some purpose, if, in discussing the amount of the poor old gentleman's pension, they abbreviate the term during which it can be enjoyed.

Much less has been said about Mr. Hicks's pension of £200, apparently because it will partly be paid by the subscribers to the charity which is a constituent part of the Cornwall Asylum. This pension has been mainly objected to, because after 20 years of service, Mr. Hicks is still only 52 years of age and in good health, and these liberal west country gentlemen argue that, so long as a public officer's health and strength enable him to discharge his duties at all, he ought to be kept to the collar; and since they grudge a maintenance to the poor old servant who has almost died in harness, it can scarcely be a matter of surprise that they should deprecate the extravagance of giving a permanent run to grass, to one who has any work left in him. These gentlemen would use up their officers like the old racer, who

"Drew sand, 'till the sand in his hour-glass stood still."

The remarks on Mr. Hicks's pension, though not so acrimonious, have been even more offensive than those on Mr. Everest's. Mr. Hicks' personal appearance and manners have been referred to again and again in these public discussions, in the most insulting manner; and if it is to become the rule that the Superintendents of County Asylums are only to receive retiring pensions on the condition of their personal peculiarities being rendered the subject of discussion all over the County by illiberal and ill-bred men, there can be few gentlemen holding the position

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of Medical Superintendent who would not rather decline than accept the alternative.

But what must be said of the Poor Law Board who in one sense appear to have been the authors of this mischief, by giving their sanction to the new function which has been recently assumed by boards of guardians, namely, that of sitting in judgment upon the acts of the county Magistracy in Quarter Sessions assembled? What is to become of us all if we are to have a little Parliament in every Board of Guardians discussing county questions with an eye to the repudiation of obligations in the first instance, and to electioneering tactics in the second? Is not this radicalism broke loose, and of the worst kind? the radicalism of "we do not like to pay our just debts, and we will not if we can help it, and we will revenge ourselves if you saddle us with them." What will be the next subject that the Poor Law Board will not think "alien from the duties of a Board of Guardians?" Will it possibly be the repudiation of the income tax or merely a discussion on the budget? In the name of all decent order and honesty, let us have County financial boards, and without delay, rather than these little local parliaments everywhere discussing the acts of their superiors on the fascinating principle of—We won't pay!

But whether for the future the County finances are to be managed by the county Magistrates acting under the intimidation of boards of guardians, orwe are to have financial boards in which the same class will be represented in a legal and orderly manner, it is clear that the claims for pensions by such officers as the Superintendents of Asylums, and the Governors of Gaols, ought to be so determined by the law of the land, that such an unseemly storm of selfish anger against an act of the merest justice, as that which now agitates the Cornishmen, would be impossible. A fixed and unquestioned claim for pension, be the amount ever so moderate, will be infinitely preferable to the expectation of a higher rate, accompanied by the possibility of discussions which a gentleman must inevitably shrink from with sensitive horror. Even the magistrates must find the discretionary powers which they at present possess a most disagreeable responsibility, and one which, if they are wise, they would desire to be well rid of.

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