England is bad, and if they saw the slightest chance of reversing it and establishing the old system of visiting physicians, in my opinion, they would do so.

The PRESIDENT: Do you not think Dr. Thurnam that the discussion preceding and following the proposal of the Resolution, will of itself explain the circumstances out of which it arose?

Dr. THURNAM: If the discussion is published in the *Journal* my object is attained. My desire is that the enunciation of such principles in London should not be taken by men of authority as if we were as a body dissatisfied with the medical organization of asylums in England, which is not the case speaking generally.

The PRESIDENT: I see the force of your remarks. What the Irish members require from us is an expression of our opinion and our experience so that they may apply it to themselves. No one will read this Resolution who will not read the discussion upon it at the same time.

Dr. THURNAM: I think that will meet my views.

The Resolution was unanimously adopted.

The following paper was then read:

A CASE OF HOMICIDAL MANIA, BY DR. DAVEY.

The case, to which the observations I am about to make refer, is not, I think, without some interest to us, both as medical men and as the proprietors or superintendents of private or public asylums. It is calculated, as I believe, to illustrate the not very enviable position we may be, under circumstances, placed in, in reference not only to the Commissioners in Lunacy, but to the public; whose servants the proprietors and superintendents of asylums, of all kinds, are to be considered. The case, moreover, follows, and very properly, the paper of Dr. Conolly's, entitled "On the Prospects of Physicians practising," in our specialty.

On the 2nd of April, 1859, I received as a patient, at Northwoods, Dr. James Pownall. He was then suffering from slight maniacal disorder. The history of the case, as furnished by the friends, and found on the "*order for reception*," and in the "*medical certificates*," amounted to this, viz:—At the age of 22 years, he (Dr. J. Pownall) suffered from his first attack of mental alienation; that the present

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was the third illness;* that between the visitations of cerebro- mental disease (visitations occurring after intervals of 14 years and 4½ years about), he had conducted a large and first-class general practice, and, what is more, had become so highly respected by his fellow townspeople as to be chosen by them for their chief magistrate, &c. Dr. Pownall was described to me as naturally an amiable and estimable man; but, on the other hand, when insane, as most violent, and dangerous to himself and to others. On the authority of those most intimately acquainted with Dr. Pownall, I learnt that the first indications of mental disorder in him were marked by a mistrust of his nearest relatives, and by a suspicion of their intentions in so far as his interests were concerned. He declared, after a time, that poison was mixed with his food, &c., &c. The persistence of these delusions had resulted in acts of violence to himself and others; he became, in fact, suicidal and homicidal. During the last attack of illness, in 1854, it was told me, he, Dr. Pownall, had shot a patient of his own in the leg when they were out together shooting; but that the Coroner's inquiry into the cause of death of the same gentleman, and into the general facts of the case, went to prove the fatal injury but a pure accident; however, there were those, I was told, who took a different view of the case.

The medical certificates, dated 2nd April, 1859 (the day of admission at Northwoods), described Dr. J. Pownall as "having made a murderous attack on his mother-in-law, whom he usually respected and loved;" that "for the last two or three months he had become an altered man," was "low and desponding;" that "he (Dr. P.) had made an attempt to destroy himself."

On the arrival of my patient at Northwoods, and after reading the medical certificates, I lost no time in visiting him to ascertain his then present state. I found Dr. Pownall slightly agitated, but nothing more than this; he spoke calmly and addressed himself to me and others as became a gentleman. On prolonging my conversation, he cried, and expressed the deepest sorrow for the violence shown by him to his mother-in-law, &c. I referred to the painful circumstances of his removal from home, and begged him to give to me anything he might have about him where-

* In the "Statement" received by me on the admission of Dr. Pownall to Northwoods, the question, "*Whether first attack*," is replied to, "*No.*" The "*duration of existing attack*" is answered thus: "*Frequent occurrence—two weeks.*"

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with he might injure himself or others. He gave me at once two pen-knives. Pr. Pownall went on quietly and comfortably at Northwoods; he appeared, day by day, to have little or nothing the matter with him. He walked out, within a month of his arrival at Northwoods, quite unattended; he joined my family and children in their walks, and rode out with my son and myself. In fact, Dr. Pownall and I stood towards each other in the light rather of friends than anything else. At the end of May I wrote to Mrs. Pownall, telling that lady of Dr. Pownall's very comfortable state of mind, giving it as my opinion that it became her to make the necessary arrangements in anticipation of her husband's return home, provided there were no peculiar or local reasons why this might not be. Mrs. Pownall replied, she felt it her duty to consult her friends on the matter.

The friends alluded to placed the case before the "Commissioners in Lunacy." They referred it, through myself, to the Visitors. In a letter dated "4th June, 1859," and addressed to me, the Commissioners gave it as their opinion, that, "having regard to those antecedent circumstances, which they will, in confidence, communicate for the information of the visitors, should they require such knowledge for their guidance," they "see much danger in an immediate or unconditional discharge" of Dr. J. Pownall. It is added, "they are of opinion," on 4th June, 1859, "that such discharge should be preceded by a leave of absence, under the 86th section of the act, whereby the patient's power of self-control may be tested *for some little time.*" (The italics here are my own.)

The antecedents of Dr. Pownall were duly set before the Visitors; those gentlemen made two especial visits to Northwoods for the purpose of satisfying themselves of the sanity, or otherwise, of my patient. On the 15th of July, the date of the second visit, the Visitors wrote thus to the Commissioners of Lunacy:—"We ourselves are released from all difficulty in the case by the information of Dr. Davey, that Mr. Ogilvie has made arrangements, with the concurrence of Mrs. Pownall, for his," Dr. Pownall's, "removal, to live with a medical practitioner, and a proper attendant, in a secluded village in the country; and that he," Dr. Davey, "expects he (Dr. P.) will be removed from this house to-morrow." Not until the 10th day of August was it found practicable to obtain the services of an attendant, deemed efficient and trustworthy. On that day Dr. Pownall left Northwoods. He was discharged "*recovered*,"

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and is so registered in the books of the Asylum. At Dr. Pownall's urgent entreaty I wrote for him, and gave into his possession on leaving the house, a short certificate to the effect that he *was* discharged cured, *i.e.*, was *not* under any legal restraint. His sensitiveness on this head was very acute, and I saw no harm, but much good, in helping to soothe his feelings, thus far; and so also it was I told the attendant, Richard Pook, *in the presence of Dr. Pownall*, in my own drawing room, that he (Dr. P.) was discharged "as a sane man;" and, not improbably, I might have added, that his (Pook's) going with the patient "*was a mere form.*" However, I sent with Dr. Pownall to Mr. Leete, Surgeon, of Lydney, Gloucestershire, the following note, viz.:—

Northwoods, near Bristol, 10th August, 1859.

My Dear Sir,—I write this with the view of making you acquainted with the circumstances of Dr. Pownall's case, and with the view also of introducing you to Dr. James Pownall himself. As to the case, it was one of ordinary mania, ushered in with suspicious feelings towards others, and realizing after a time a dangerous climax of excitement. The disorder appears to have taken on a more or less temporary character. Dr. Pownall has been here some four months, and during the whole of this time has appeared free from all indications of mental disease. I consider him now quite well. The fact of there being an attendant with him is accounted for thus: the Commissioners of Lunacy some two months since advised that in case of Dr. P.'s discharge this precaution should be adopted, regard being had to the *antecedents* of my patient, *i.e.*, Dr. Pownall.

Yours very truly,

C. Leete, Esq. J. G. DAVEY.

This note, which was found, ultimately, among Dr. Pownall's papers was never given by him to Mr. Leete, for reasons I know not. On the 30th August, just twenty days after leaving Northwoods, Dr. Pownall murdered, by cutting her throat with a razor, the female servant of Mr. Leete.* On the 2nd of September I received from the office of the Commissioners in Lunacy the annexed letter, written on the 1st inst., viz.:—

Office of Commissioners in Lunacy, 10, Whitehall Place, S.W.,
1st September, 1859.

Sir,—In the Copy of the Visitor's Entry at Northwoods, of the 15th of last July, respecting the case of Dr. Pownall, transmitted

* The evidence of Mr. Leete, on the trial, proved Dr. Pownall to have been, to all appearance, quite well to within a few hours of this sad casualty.

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to this office by the Clerk to the Visitors on the 20th July, it was stated that Mr. Ogilvie had "made arrangements, with the concurrence of Mrs. Pownall, for his (Dr. Pownall's) removal to live with a Medical Practitioner, and a proper Attendant, in a secluded village in this County, and that he expects he will be removed from this house to-morrow."

Notwithstanding this intimation, however, the Commissioners did not receive until the 15th August an official notice from you of the discharge of Dr. Pownall on the 10th of that month.

I am now directed to request that you will communicate to me, for the information of the Commissioners, what the circumstances of Dr. Pownall's removal were, and whether he was placed, as above stated, under the care of a Medical Practitioner, and with the supervision of a proper Attendant?

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

JOHN FORSTER,

Dr. Davey, Northwoods, Bristol. Secretary.

My reply is subjoined, viz.:—

Sir,—In reply to yours of yesterday, requiring me to "communicate" to you "the circumstances of Dr. Pownall's removal" from Northwoods, I beg to state that the delay to which you have alluded arose out of the difficulty experienced both by Mr. Ogilvie and myself to obtain the services of an efficient and able attendant. Moreover, Mr. Ogilvie did not seem at the first to realise the necessity of a "proper attendant," to accompany Dr. Pownall; and hence, also, the arrangements were somewhat delayed. Dr. Pownall left this on August 10th inst., with an Attendant, and they went to reside "with a Medical Practitioner," living at Lydney (Gloucestershire). The non-arrival at your office of the notice of Dr. Pownall's discharge, before the 15th August, I am unable to account for. Your obedient Servant,

J. G. DAVEY.

J. Forster, Esq., &c., &c.

When I applied at the Gloucestershire Quarter Sessions in in October, 1859, for a renewal of my license, I was called on—almost immediately on entering the Court—to give some account of Dr. Pownall's case of which much had been said, as I afterwards learnt, before my arrival; I was asked, in fact, to justify the steps I had taken in this painful matter. I spoke of the disorder as having been described to me as *paroxysmal* and *impulsive;* and as such I believed it to be. I said that during such an attack he must be considered as a most dangerous person, and that I felt persuaded that one day, during a paroxysm, some calamity might occur; that, at such time, Dr. Pownall was certainly not to be trusted—

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and that knowing and feeling this much I had acted with due caution. I went on to state that from particulars which had lately reached me, it seemed probable that the last attack from which Dr. Pownall had suffered, was dissimilar to all former ones—that it had *not* been preceded by any delusions as to poison being mixed with his food, &c., and that therefore the presence of delusions in him could not have prompted to the fatal act for which he had to answer. I explained that the disease from having been of an ordinary character had probably become extraordinary or "exceptional;" (this was the word used by me). This exceptional form of insanity, I added, was so rare and unfrequent, that I had met with but of a very few instances of the kind; ("TRANSITORY HOMICIDAL MANIA,") that "*it was a disease which came on quickly and lasted but a short time*"—"*was unattended with premonitory symtoms. It lasted till the impulsive feeling was gratified, and some act was committed by the patient by which he was, so to speak, morbidly satisfied, and directly the patient was so satisfied mental health was restored.*"* (See Newspaper Report.) I told the Court, moreover, that I felt I had the support of the Commissioners in Lunacy for the course I had adopted; and that the refusal of the Visitors "*to enter on the case at all, threw the responsibility on the Commissioners in Lunacy and myself.*"

On the 5th November, 1859, I received the following Letter from the Assistant Secretary to the Commissioners in Lunacy:—

Office of Commissioners in Lunacy, 19, Whitehall Place, S.W., 4th November, 1859.

Sir,—The attention of the Commissioners in Lunacy has been drawn to a Report in the *Bristol Times and Felix Farley's Journal* of the 22nd Oct. ult., of certain proceedings at the last Michaelmas Quarter Sessions for the County of Gloucester, relative to the case of Dr. Pownall.

In the course of the discussion which took place upon that occasion, when all concurrence of the Visitors in the discharge of Dr. Pownall was repudiated, it was stated that Dr. Pownall had been discharged by you according to Act of Parliament. You are represented to have said that you "had the support of the Com-

* These words are quoted in the report just published by the Commissioners in Lunacy, from the account given in the local newspaper press of Gloucester of the "*Michaelmas Sessions.*" But inasmuch as they appear in such "*report*" in an isolated shape, and are dissociated from what I said before and from the remarks which followed them, their due application and right meaning are *not* conveyed to the reader. This fact, no doubt, escaped, by some accident, the author or authors of the aforesaid "*report.*"

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missioners in Lunacy;" and, again, that "the whole responsibility of Dr. Pownall's discharge from Northwoods fell upon yourself with the Commissioners in Lunacy."

I am instructed to enquire from you whether your statement was accurately reported, and, if so, to request that you will explain the grounds upon which you made such a statement—as it relates to the Commissioners in Lunacy.

I am, Sir, Your obedient Servant,
THOS. MARTIN,
for the Secretary.

Dr. Davey, Northwoods.

The annexed is my answer to the foregoing letter.—

Northwoods, Bristol, 5th November, 1859.

Sir,—In reply to yours of yesterday's date, which treats of the case of Dr. Pownall, I have to inform you that I have no knowledge of having myself referred to any "Act of Parliament" for justification of the discharge of the gentleman named from Northwoods; but I have said more than once that there was no *law* that I was aware of to justify the detention of Dr. Pownall in a licensed Asylum. Further than this, my statement is, I believe, not inaccurately reported; inasmuch as I did say that I had *virtually* the "support of the Commissioners in Lunacy," and that the visitors declining the responsibility attached to this case, it—the responsibility, such as it is, regard being had to the acts of Mr. Ogilvie and Mrs. Pownall—must be divided between the Commissioners in Lunacy and myself.

"The "grounds" on which I rested, and do still rest, the foregoing facts and explanations are these, viz.:—The Commissioners of Lunacy, in a letter addressed to me, bearing date "4th June, 1859," recommend only a conditional discharge of Dr. Pownall; and a conditional discharge *was* carried into effect by not so much myself as Mrs. Pownall and Mr. Ogilvie, and with this object, viz., to test "*the power of self-control for some little time*," to quote the words of the Letter just referred to.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
J. G. DAVEY, M.D.,
Proprietor and Med. Sup. of Northwoods.

Thos. Martin, Esq.

With the above facts before you, are you surprised that I feel hurt at the kind of notice taken of Dr. Pownall's case in the report which has just now appeared under the authority of the Commissioners in Lunacy? I think not.

Blame is attributable to me for discharging Dr. Pownall as I did! I would ask you—*Could I have detained him longer?* What *law* would have justified me, in August of 1859, in keeping a man to all appearance sane an inmate of Northwoods, under the plea that because he had been

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maniacal and dangerous to himself and others in 1839-40, and in 1854, and again in the months of January, February, March, and the beginning of April in 1859, he would become so yet again? As I told the Visitors, and as they reported it to the Commissioners in Lunacy, in the entry in the Visitors' Book at Northwoods, bearing date July 15th (1859), I am still of opinion that I could *not* have detained Dr. Pownall legally, that to have detained him, "though liable to such recurrent paroxysms of mania" as his antecedents proved him to be, would have been to expose myself to an action-at-law, and would, too, have been unjustified by *precedent.*

With the above facts before you, let me ask, was I not justified, nay, more,—required, to insist on Mrs. Pownall and her adviser (Mr Ogilvie) making arrangements for the removal of Dr. Pownall from Northwoods. Did I not right in refusing, in July and the early part of August, 1859, to certify to Dr. Pownall's insanity—as a means necessary to his being sent to another asylum? Mr. Ogilvie is, I learn, a gentleman of long and large experience in medical practice. He was for many years the proprietor of a private asylum; and has, at this time, the charge of "nervous" patients living under his roof; and on him must rest all the responsibility of *not transferring his brother-in-law to another asylum*, and of placing him with Mr. Leete; as well as of *not telling Mr. Leete of Dr. Pownall's homicidal propensity* when in his paroxysms of madness; and, last, but not least, *of sending Dr. Pownall his razors.**

I may add, "The arrangement ultimately carried out of placing Dr. Pownall with Mr. Leete" was the act of Mr. Ogilvie, and not, in any way, of myself. Mr. Leete was altogether unknown to me. One word more,—far be it from me to impute any improper motive, in opposing Dr. Pownall's liberation, to Mrs. Pownall and Mr. Ogilvie in this unhappy transaction, yet I must add, that however anxious they were to secure the *proper control* over him, (Dr. P.) that part of the arrangement and that part only which involves the hiring of an efficient attendant (*"one,"* too, *"intended to have a full control or authority,"*) for Dr. Pownall's security, &c., is mainly due to myself—and this much is borne out in the foregoing mere statement of *facts.*

The attention of "The Select Committee on Lunatics," now sitting, is most respectfully invited to the foregoing case; it might suggest something practical and good.

* Dr. Pownall was *not* permitted to use his razors at Northwoods.

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Dr. CONOLLY: I must say in corroboration of the statement of Dr. Davey, that the Commissioners very seldom visit so small a house as mine with half a dozen ladies, without some suggestion that makes one uncomfortable, about the detention of a patient. When a patient has been received, and is very much better after coming into the asylum (a thing quite familiar to everybody), the Commissioners always cavil about the matter, and always dispute whether the patient ought to have come at all; and superintendents feel themselves so harassed and worried, that I am perfectly certain that, although this is a most unfortunate instance of Dr. Davey's, such things are taking place all over the country every month, and patients are discharged prematurely and improperly. In an establishment which I visit, I have known persons have a great many different attacks, and the moment they begin to be convalescent there is no rest given to the medical officers, and these persons must be sent away. The consequence is they are sent away, and they very often come back next week very much worse. This is one of the many evils which I think we are suffering from; and I have no doubt it led my esteemed friend Dr. Davey—than whom a better man does not breathe in the world—to be uneasy at detaining Dr. Pownall. The fact is very lamentable, and we cannot but feel for a suffering brother under these circumstances.

The PRESIDENT: I think we can all see after the event, that it would have been very desirable if Dr. Davey had not discharged Dr. Pownall, but we must all feel that such an accident might have occurred under the advice of any one of us. There are two classes of patients to whom such an accident seems most likely to occur—those who have periodical attacks of mania with intervals of sanity, and those who are able to conceal insanity while it exists. My attention has been recently directed to the length of time that a patient decidedly insane can conceal by a strong effort of will, the manifestations of insanity. I am sure we must all deeply sympathise with the misfortune which must have given our associate, Dr. Davey, a very great deal of anxiety and pain.

Dr. HOOD: I wish to be allowed to add my voice of sympathy to that which has been already expressed for my old friend and late colleague Dr. Davey; and perhaps I may be permitted to do so from the fact that Dr. Pownall has been placed under my care since the sad catastrophe to which Dr. Davey has alluded; and I must confess from that

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time up to the present, although I have watched him with no ordinary care, and though I should say he was a man of weak mind, I do not know that I could attach any particular symptom of insanity to him. And supposing he was a private patient in my asylum, and the Commissioners in Lunacy asked me why I detained him, I do not know that I could give any definite reason for it. (Hear, hear.) I do not say, and I should be sorry for the Association to imagine, that I am of opinion that Dr. Pownall ought to be discharged now. Having made a homicidal attack, he of course holds a different position from that of an ordinary patient in a lunatic asylum, and I feel it would be very improper for me to recommend his discharge. I think that, sad and painful as his lot is and is likely to be, it is quite right and proper that the public should be protected from any outburst of such impulsive mania as he has evinced. I have been very much struck the last month or six weeks by this consideration, and have been taught, perhaps, the lesson how difficult it is to feel quite sure when you ought to certify that a patient is of sound mind. A patient was placed in Bethlehem twenty years ago, long before my career commenced; and I am sorry to say that he was there during a large portion of that twenty years without showing any symptom of insanity. He was placed there by the Board of Green Cloth, for having annoyed Her Majesty on one occasion in Rotten Row by presenting a petition to her, praying for some some place under government. I believe I may say that for the last fifteen years he was in the asylum without presenting any symptom of a recurrence of that particular character, and during the last eight years without any symptom of insanity at all. After a very strong effort, I was fortunate enough to obtain his discharge, from the Secretary of State. He had not left me five months, before I had a letter from Lord Palmerston wishing to know if I was aware that such a man was at large, having, perhaps, thought that he had escaped without my knowledge; and he sent me three or four letters that he had received from this patient for presentation to the Queen, and asking for the hand of the Princess Alice. I was sent for to the Home Office, and upon examination I found the patient was as insane as he ever had been and had delusions of precisely the same character as those he entertained twenty years ago. That occurred within five months and it might have occurred within one month; and if the man had stopped Her Majesty in Rotten Row, the Commissioners would have called out,

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and the public would have called out, "Good God! what could Dr. Hood have been thinking of in discharging such a man." I offer this as evidence of the way in which we may be deceived, and to show how impossible it is, however well we may know the antecedents of the patient, to know what his character will be after he leaves us.

The PRESIDENT: I am sure we are very much obliged to Dr. Hood for the valuable observations he has made on the subject. I believe there is now no Resolution before the Society, and that our business is at an end.

Dr. THURNAM: There is one matter which we ought not to neglect before we separate. I do feel that we owe a debt of gratitude to our Chairman for his conduct in the chair to-day; and we ought not to separate without giving him our very best thanks. (Applause) I am sure you will concur with me in thanking him for the able manner in which he has discharged the office of President. It has been to me a singular satisfaction to listen to his most eloquent address, and also to attend a meeting under his most able presidency.

Dr. CONOLLY seconded the motion, which was carried by acclamation.

The proceedings then terminated.

The Dinner was held in the evening at the Freemason's Tavern, Dr. Bucknill in the Chair, supported by Dr. Mayo, President of the College of Physicians, Dr. J. C. B. Williams, Dr. Quain, Dr. Sutherland, Dr. Conolly, &c.

The Religious Aspect of Ulster Revivalism, by the REV. W. M'ILWAINE, *St. George's, Belfast.*

(Concluded from p. 460, Vol. VI.)

The regions of religion and philosophy are distinct, but by no means opposed. Some professors of the Christian faith may have fallen into the error that revelation and science are antagonistic, but such a position has neither any foundation in fact, nor any countenance in the Divine record. Warnings, no doubt, occur in the apostolic writings under the head of science and philosophy; but these are directed against "science falsely so called", and such philosophy as is identified with "vain deceit." There can be

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