

## TO THE PUBLIC

The Village Record, of June 28, publishes a letter from the notorious Dr. Bourne, contradicting the statement of the boy Hutchinson which appeared in a previous issue of the Record, and appending an extract from a letter purported to have been written by the Hon. David McConaughy, of this place.

The facts in relation to the boy Hutchinson are simply these: the matron of the Home was being prosecuted for assault and battery upon one of the inmates of the Home, and this boy, who is no doubt a bad one, was brought over here to swear her clear of the law. When he came he was comfortably clothed, and every word he told the editor of the Record was as true as gospel; and more, the Grand Army of the Republic, through one of its committees are now trying to find the whereabouts of the boy to put him on the witness stand to sustain a series of charges against the matron that will put to shame any that have been before made.

With reference to the statement of Honorable David McConaughy, in so far as it pertains to the two girls, he seems to have awakened rather late to the fact that they should be removed from the Home, and were it not that the handle by which he prefixes his name may be considered as giving weight to his words where he is not so well-known as in Gettysburg, this paper would need no contradiction.

The honorable gentleman dates his letter to the pious Doctor on the 7th day of June, six days after a committee of our citizens had taken steps to remove the girls from the Home, and three days after they had been taken before his Honor Judge McClean, and two days after they had actually left the home.

To us the letter bears upon its face the stamp of falsehood in reference to the girls, and, when the dates and circumstances are considered, appears the flimsy trick of a pettifogger written to bolster up the reputation of an institution that has become odious for its brutality and mismanagement.

The honorable gentleman states that the conduct of these two girls was doing the matron of the Home great injustice. The matron stated to the committee who called upon her that the girls had refused to mend their clothes, for which she had confined them to their beds (a species of solitary confinement that would not be tolerated in a prison warden toward a murderer) until it was undermining their health, when she adopted

what she termed the Bloomer costume to give them exercise in the open air (in the open sun with the thermometer at or near 100°) all the time giving them Cod Liver Oil for the consumption.

When remonstrated with for a policy she had adopted, she stated that she was acting under advice, and when asked if her adviser was the Hon. David McConaughy she refused to answer.

We submit that the punishment was the refinement of cruelty, and that if it was advised by the honorable gentleman the public have a right to know it. We leave the public to judge to whom injustice was done, the girls or the Home.

The honorable gentleman, who calls the Grand Army of the Republic an illiterate mob, states that the girls would do no work. When found in the garden in the matron's bloomer costume they were at work weeding onions, and perhaps the matron would have reduced them to imbeciles in both mind and body had she have placed over them the same driver who was superintending their work in the garden.

Finally he is impelled to write this letter "to suggest the urgent necessity of the removal of these two girls from the Home, out of his pure love for the Homestead." The more probable reason is that fearing another prosecution both he and the matron desired to place the girls beyond the reach of our courts. If this is not the fact why were they spirited away like a thief in the night? Why were they not taken to Philadelphia over the railroad by the usual route?

The Grand Army of the Republic have long and patiently remonstrated to no avail with the management of the Home, but they have now decided to act in the premises, and in doing so we know that we are sustained by all the good people of the county who are conversant with the matter. We have demanded an investigation of a series of charges made upon the sworn statements of late inmates and attackés of the Home. We demand that they shall be heard and the truth known, not in the spirit of persecution, but in the interest of charity and humanity and the protection of the persons of the <sup>orphans</sup> orphans of our fallen comrades, men who dared and died for the salvation of this union, and whose children have a peculiar claim, not only upon us, the comrades of their fallen fathers, but upon the entire community. We have invoked the aid of Governor Hartranft, of the President and Directors of the Home, and of the public, to assist us in obtaining an opportunity to prove a series of cruelties amounting to crime that will place the matron

of the home beyond the recognition of the meanest.

Not with the intention of breaking up the Home and throwing these waifs upon the world, but to secure an education and humane treatment for the unfortunate inmates.

It has been urged that the people of Gettysburg do not contribute to its support and have therefore no right to meddle with its management. That they do not contribute is true, and it is because they know too much of its management. The time was when they did contribute, and when the institution had a friend in every man, woman, and child in the place; that was when Mr. James Burns was its manager; but Mrs. Carmichael controlled his brother and he was removed, and the scandalous tongue of Dr. Bourns and that woman kept away the visiting committees of Gettysburg ladies and gentlemen, and the restraints upon this woman were removed. She has gone from bad to worse until the institution has become a public disgrace beyond the tolerance of decent people.

In view of these facts we ask of all people to cease contributing towards its support until the management is changed, and in the meantime the G.A.R. stand ready to provide for the inmates in their own homes at such time as they may be turned over to them, until such time as they may be provided for here or elsewhere.

We remain respectfully,

Skelly  
Corporal Shelly, Post, No. 9  
Grand Army of the Republic

Star-Sentinel  
July 18, 1877

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