

Dr W. F. FASON (J. M.)  
To American Med Jnrs,  
own private & confidential  
advocate, or any other  
merit

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AN OLD  
MATTER IN A NEW PHASE;

OR A

DUP.

BIRD'S-EYE PEEP BEHIND THE SCENES.

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# AN ADDRESS,

ENTITLED, FOR CONVENIENCE,

## An Old Matter in a New Phase ;

OR,

### A BIRD'S-EYE PEEP BEHIND THE SCENES,

WHERE (THE RULE AND NOT THE EXCEPTION) IS: "NO PUNISHMENT BUT FOR ALREADY PUNISHED INNOCENCE,  
AND NO SAFETY BUT FOR TRIUMPHANT CRIME."

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—Pilate asked "What is Truth?" (See John 18th chap, and 33th verse.)  
Jesus said "Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free." \* \* \* "—Because  
I tell you you the Truth ye believe me not." (See John 8th chap, and 32nd and 45th verses.)

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By **J. M. VASON, M. D.**



Atlanta, Georgia:  
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1871.



TO THE  
GEORGIA LEGISLATURE, ESPECIALLY;  
AND GENERALLY, "TO ALL GOOD ONES BELOW," OF GEORGIA AND ALABAMA;  
AND ALL MANKIND,  
THROUGHOUT THE CHRISTIAN AND ENLIGHTENED WORLD,  
THIS COMPLAINT IS ADDRESSED;  
AND DEDICATED WITH TOKENS OF UTMOST REGARD AND ESTEEM, THANKS AND  
OBLIGATIONS, TO THAT MOST INDOMITABLE AND IRREPRESSIBLE EN-  
QUIRER AND INVESTIGATOR AFTER TRUTH, ON SAME LINE,

CHARLES READE,

AUTHOR OF "HARD CASH," ETC., LONDON, BY

THE WRITER.



## PREFACE.

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This address, which I have before this called "Communication," and "Document No. 2," including "Document No. 1," referred to in text, is what it professes to be, a *faithful and true* Exposition of the Affairs of the Georgia Lunatic Asylum; or, its Management, Conduct and Treatment of Inmates, Patients, &c., under Medical Superintendence of Dr. Thos. F. Green. By one of its inmates, who '*saw and heard, and knew and felt*' all things related.

*Ruat justitia, fiat Coelum*

(Horatian Latin counterpart.)—Rue that justice which intervenes the will of heaven.

*Note Explanatory* of "Documents No. 1," given *here* instead of in note to body of text, referring to, etc., as first arranged, which may be considered partly prefatory, or introductory, to this Address.

These manuscript papers, "Document No. 1," are a truthful and faithful narration of *matters of fact*, (much too voluminous and expensive, for the writer's means, for publication, *at his own private individual expense*, for gratuitous distribution, unless printer's fee could be satisfactorily arranged, at risk of publisher, &c.,) respecting the management, conduct and treatment of inmates, &c., of the Georgia Lunatic Asylum, under medical superintendence of Dr. Thos. F. Green; as these *indellibly* impressed themselves upon the *sound and sane* mind and memory of Dr. Vason, the author, while he was an inmate, in close confinement, *in said prison*, from 29th March, noon, 1867, until a few days before 19th July, 3 P.M., 1870, when he left the Asylum,—having been *most honorably* adjudged to have been long before that time entitled to a Certificate of Discharge by the 1st and 2nd assistant physicians in charge, who upon conference with the local Board of Trustees, assenting and confirming the same, by their recommendation, &c., during a protracted absence, North, of Dr. Green, Medical Superintendent; who, upon his (Dr. Green's) return, first, stopping at Atlanta, Ga., *ignored* the action of said Assistant Physicians and Board of Trustees in the premises; and but for his (Dr. Green's) *providential* absence, Dr. Vason, inmate, as above, would not have been discharged, but would have been kept in close confinement in said

prison to rot, and starve, and die, during the incumbency, or life, of said Medical Superintendent, or the lifetime of the writer, as all the circumstances of this whole, *most infamous, and odious Transaction* shall verify, should a thorough and searching investigation ever be made by the Georgia Legislature, *through a special commission*, clothed with plenary powers to send for and compel the attendance of persons and papers, and to administer oaths, &c.

Dr. Vason, the writer, suffered imprisonment, in close confinement in said so called Asylum, three years and three and two-thirds months,—having been *Kidnapped*, first, in Tuskegee, Ala., (where he had formerly, before that time resided, for nearly a quarter of a century,) while sojourning there, on a visit from Georgia, to close up his business matters, preparatory to his permanent abode and location in Atlanta, Ga., and confined in the common prison of Macon county, Ala., for about forty days, (making, in all, three (3) years and five (5) months of imprisonment.) The *time and date* of imprisonment in Alabama being from 20th February to 27th March, 1867, under edict of Judge of Probate Court of said Macon county, Ala., at special term, held from 13th to 26th February, 1867, *noon at night*; eight days being consumed in that celebrated and ever-memorable *Trial* of Dr. Vason, charged with insanity, &c. Said trial and proceedings *were precipitated and instituted* by a band of *base and infamous scum of the earth, of Satan's cohorts*; a *ku-klux klan raid* upon the *old anatomy of Dr. Vason, his goods and his spirit, animus, or mental faculty, &c.*; and *conceived* under circumstances of the most *diabolical cruelty*, by an *Anti-type of the great Arch fiend himself, in propria persona*; the father of all lies, iniquity, &c. Afterward, Dr. V. was *kidnapped* as above, in the Georgia Lunatic Asylum, having been *conveyed, in chains, in charge of common malefactors*, to impress quasi appearance of conviction of insanity upon all beholders, from said prison in Alabama to said prison near Milledgeville, Ga.

This manuscript narration, as above referred to, being Dr. V's "Scenes and Experiences in a Mad-house," of more than three years of the very best days of his whole life, he wrote out, more than a year ago, in great haste, and at much labor and expense, (Dr. V. being then an *elamoussanary* stranger, *homeless, friendless and penniless*, just out of prison walls;) and he has been, at all times since, willing, ready, anxious, and most fully prepared to submit it to the Georgia Legislature; which contains full references to time, place, event and circumstance, *to Persons and Papers*, for proof positive, demonstration and illustration,—all in confirmation "strong as proofs of Holy Writ," &c. But all this trial,

and Kidnapping, and long Imprisonment, was at the sacrifice and expense—the wanton, wicked and malicious waste and devastation of Dr. V's little moiety of estate left by the results of the late civil war, by Dr. V's so called *friends, and their greedy, rapacious, cormorant allies* in Alabama, and *t'ieir wicked, corrupt, dishonest and incompetent colleagues* in Georgia, *in and outside* of said Lunatic Asylum. By all of which, to conclude this *explanatory note of reference*, Dr. V. and family are completely impoverished, and *doubly and thrily* condemned by *overt and criminal acts of men*, to pay the sanction of the primeval curse “by the sweat of brow,” etc.

J. M. VASON.

Atlanta, Ga., Dec., 1871.



## INTRODUCTION.

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Your complainant believes that, in this Republican Government, and enlightened age of progress and reform, the humblest citizen in the land is not obnoxious to the charge of licentiousness, if he shall feel it becomes his patriotic duty to criticise and ventilate the official acts and conduct of the highest or lowest executive, or ministerial officer of the State, or its municipal government; for the distinct purpose either of bestowing deserved praise and meritorious plaudits, or of administering just censure and reproof.

The only apology I offer why I thus appear in public print, is, the very great Public Importance of the subject matter treated; and the patent fact that no other appropriate opportunity has been afforded, by which I might have been heard by the Georgia Legislature; to whom the subject, first, more legitimately presents itself, through the intervention of certain very honorable gentlemen—members of that body—to whom, before this, I have addressed several communications upon this subject; which indicates that I have not been wanting in all proper diligence to present this very important matter to the notice and attentive consideration of the Legislature, by making the usual approach to reach that body, through my representatives.

I add, that it commends itself, that I am solicitous that every one who feels interested, “to put him or herself in my place,” in spirit and truth, may do so speedily, for their own good.

I disclaim all intention to be considered either an Interloper or a public Prosecutor, or wanting of the utmost respect and courtesy towards the certain very honorable gentlemen alluded to. No personal imputation or reflection is intended, save to public Administrator. My only desire and object is to do good. Reticence longer being inexcusable, I distinctly propose, upon the principle that fools dare step in boldly where angels fear to tread, to publish upon the house-top, and not whisper in the ear, God's truth; and enlighten the public mind upon a subject of which it is *totally ignorant*.

AN OLD MATTER IN A NEW PHASE, OR A BIRD'S-EYE PEEP BEHIND  
THE SCENES, ETC.

Without further preliminary or explanation, I proceed to divulge and declare the *Formulæ* which obtain at the Georgia Lunatic

Asylum. The *lux-loci*, or law of the place—a sort of *locam teneus*, that exists like a thing in nature, (but very unlike “a thing of beauty, a joy forever;”) as day and night, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest; which swerves not, is unchanged as the doom of fate—tyranny, the most despotic; laws of the Medes and Persians;—stand aside! It is simply Deity personified,—*secundem artem*,—The gods below ruling with a rod of iron, like the God above, in mercy.

## \* FORMULÆ.

☞ 1st. If there be a God, He may know of so great a convulsion in nature as an earthquake, &c. All else is solely the result of chance and accident. Bother—God’s Providence!

☞ 2nd. Secresy and Deceit, the hand-maids of Hypocrisy, are justifiable here, within these prison walls, which, otherwise, would have “ears to hear.” Wherefore, it is ruled most highly detrimental to patients to receive visits and letters from relatives and friends; and no correspondence or communication can be allowed, only in particular cases.

☞ 3rd. The only infallible sign of improvement of patients, is their acknowledging their insanity, and *vice versa*.

☞ 4th. The only standard of accrediting patients, is, that they must, at all times soever, praise and compliment Dr. Green, Medical Superintendent, and the Institution, as immaculate. Then their letters may be safely written, and after inspection, be sent abroad to relatives and friends. Such patients may be allowed to walk or ride outside of prison walls, beside the privileges of the grounds. But the contrary disposition of mind is ruled punishable by strict confinement under bolts and bars, and cut off from all mankind.

☞ 5th. It is ruled most detrimental to patients “to have and to hold” a very small pocket knife, a purse or a Bible,—particularly if they be capable of reading and appreciating the latter, or to use the former properly; and most especially if they are possessed of independent, stubborn and investigating minds, (which God gave them,—the result of their physical organization,—) and fully competent of self-control, and of thinking and acting right, for themselves. Wherefore, it is ruled that Bibles must be totally eschewed, and very small knives and purses allowed only to the simple and demented.

☞ 6th. Before patients can be possibly entitled to a Certificate

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\* See note A, page 13.

of Discharge, they must necessarily, at all times soever, have conformed, in their deportment, to the foregoing formulæ; and besides obtaining the permission of their (so called) friends, who committed them to prison, and became their legal guardians, they must believe and vote that Dr. Green, Medical Superintendent, "is God and no other," and most solemnly bound and committed to secrecy.

7th. Carollaries from above. (1.) The demented are more frequently dismissed on probation, or discharged, than those most especially, who, having been connivingly kidnapped *sound and sane* by their "good friends," starve and rot and die in prison, unwept, unhonored and unknown, save to the All-seeing Eye above. (2.) All outsiders—most especially visitors—*real* friends and *true* relatives of patients, (not even the very nearest local residents) hear and see and know and feel only what is unreal and factitious—secrecy being the wand and watch-word. None but the fully initiated can hear and see and know and feel *the truth*.

#### REASON FOR THE FAITH WITHIN, &c.

The reason 'which I rise to explain,' "why I am full of matter, and constrained by the Spirit, also, to show my opinion," and am not unwilling to lend my humble efforts to assist in a proposed investigation, by the Georgia Legislature, of the affairs of the Georgia Lunatic Asylum; and why, also, I myself, in *propria persona*, detest, as a sacred Christian duty, with an honest, just and most virtuous indignation, his administration, is this—to-wit, that Dr. Green, Med. Sup't., by the constant cultivation and continued exercise, for a long series of years, say the last twenty-five years experience in his specialty, of his own arts of cunning, duplicity and chicanery; fortified by the natural or acquired shrewdness and diplomacy of Belial himself, who can make the worse appear the better cause, and armed with a sort of Mephistophelean and Machiavellian intrigue—the office-seeker's and holder's kaleidoscope—has managed, by such a persistent course of time-serving\* and pandering; to acquire an influence all-prevä-

\*By dancing attendance upon the annual sessions of your Legislatures, attempting to manipulate men and measures, honorable members and more honorable committees, to his own selfish views and interests really, but ostensibly, as he professes, for the interest of the Institution, in the way of suggesting increased annual appropriations, already reaching some one hundred thousand (\$100,000) dollars, to meet its wants and necessities; *which*, while the Med. Sup't. should remain at the Asylum to administer to patients, could be done by the fiscal agent, the Steward and Treasurer, whose more appropriate duty it manifestly becomes, if anything was wanting, other than the approved Annual Report of State Lunatic Asylum, *absolutely* made up by a competent Board of Trustees, who, selected on account of their exalted moral and social, and great

lent, potent, and portentous for evil, and evil only; to catch the ear of party cliques, rings, wire-pullers, mountebanks and jugglers; and withal, personally immersing himself with an assumed, but false and hypocritical odor of sanctity, to ingratiate himself into the favor of some of the best and most influential men in the land; and to deceive, knowingly, wickedly and maliciously, very many of the high, right and just-minded; yea, pious men and women of the age, for the sole object and purpose to subserve *self* and *secure position*, with its honors, emoluments and perquisites, at the sacrifice and expense of the sacred rights and honor, the welfare and happiness, the health and lives, and very existence of poor unfortunates committed to his tender mercies.

I append a paragraph, which was the conclusion of the several communications\* addressed to certain highly honorable gentlemen, for the use of the Georgia Legislature, bearing date from 2nd to 25th ult., enclosing manuscript "Documents," entitled, "A most persistent effort to conquer Truth and vindicate the cause of Justice and Innocence," by One who has learned "to suffer, labor and wait," and "possess his soul in patience."

In this matter of a proposed investigation of the affairs of the Georgia Lunatic Asylum, I may stand alone. But thus standing, animated by the spirit and zeal of a martyr, clad with the panoply of truth, justice and innocence, and armed and securely fortified by the impenetrable shield of faith, hope and charity—faith in God, hope for the triumphs of truth, and sympathy and charity of and for my kind, I will stand unmoved and unintimidated before Almighty God, and in the presence of all mankind, and fight a world (of prejudice) in arms.

To the honorable, generous, noble and virtuous souls of my native State of Georgia, and to the brave, chivalric, philanthropic and charitable lovers of their kind, throughout the world, I appeal; and if there be one truly Christian, sympathetic heart, interested to feel for other's woes, who really desires "to put him or herself in my place," in spirit and in truth, I hail him or her as my brother, or my sister, not by ties of consanguinity, but the dearer social tie of amity and friendship, which dwell in angelic bosoms.

For the very feeble expression of sentiment above, and all my efforts in the premises, I hold myself most solemnly obligated, for their truth and veracity, to myself, God and my country. And

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political worth, *would know no guile*. Also, being 'cheek by jowl,' and 'hand and glove' with all good, clever fellows, and favoring all State political Administrations soever, not omitting his own specialty, so-called—the very bread of his mouth, and the breath of his nostrils, &c.

\* See note B, page 14.

most especially do I hold myself most fully responsible to any and all those who may desire to suppress truth and throttle investigation in the interest of a *superannuated, time-serving and pandering partizan protege*, at the head of the Georgia Lunatic Asylum; of whom, in fine, it may be added, in the words of good old Job, "The heavens shall reveal his iniquities, and the earth shall rise up against him."

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(NOTE A.)

The knowledge of these formulæ, as they appear in the text, is the result, in the history of a somewhat eventful life of the writer, of a school of sad experience, taught at the Georgia Lunatic Asylum—formerly in full view of the Capitol of the Empire State of the South—under the shadow of the temple of Wisdom, Justice and Moderation; and within the very precinct of the sanctuaries devoted to the service of the most High God; in an enlightened Christian community, who profess to adore the name of the Divine Author of truth, who came to a dark, superstitious, idolatrous, lost and ruined world, to become the harbinger of "Peace on earth, and good will to men." But said State Lunatic Asylum is a place in God's moral heritage, where perfect heathen darkness and ignorance, vice, lowest degradation and depravity, in human form prevails, *licensed, unchecked and 'run riot'—a very Pandemonium on earth, and Hell in microcosmical miniature.*

This is mainly because no discipline, which can be called such, of physical, medical and moral treatment, or enlightened scientific system of *hygiene* and regimen, adapted to the wants and necessities of its inmates, which can be termed curative or remedial, *has ever*, in the course of the last twenty-five years, *been instituted*, nor ever will be, during the *regime* of the present incumbent, who devotes all his time to the *mere working and mechanical machinery of the concern, to secure a life-interest position for himself, and his forbears, &c.* Who, in one word, although fertile of expedients, and prolific of professions, is nothing but a *sacrilegious pretender*, who hates and dreads truth and exposure, as he should fear God. And wherefore he is, in heart and practice, an infidel to God and man, and why the Holy Bible and "other good things" are totally eschewed. J. M. V.

## (NOTE B.)

In his communications of 2nd and 25th November ult., Dr. V., besides stating distinctly, and solemnly declaring the cause of complaint to be the mal-administration (and mal-feasance in office) of one of the public State Institutions of Georgia—to-wit, of the Georgia Lunatic Asylum, under the medical superintendence of Dr. Thos. F. Green,—and furnishing to his (Dr. V's) own representatives, the very honorable gentlemen addressed, in way of reference, for any information of the complainant's (Dr. V's) character and status, in these premises, &c., the name of one of the oldest and earliest settlers of Atlanta, and one of the most reliable and reputable citizens for moral worth and integrity, and Legislators and Jurists of Georgia; who has been at all times accessible and approachable, and not unwilling to be interviewed upon the subject:

Dr. V., in his communication of 8th November ult., *did make the effort*, through same medium, (the most appropriate and formal approach to reach the Georgia Legislature) most humbly and respectfully; that a moiety of legislation was due that *most unfortunate* class—viz., by the amendment of the statute laws of Georgia, upon the subject of Insanity:

So that, persons so charged, before conviction, sentence and confinement in prison, (a fellow's doom and punishment, and passport to perpetual reproach and infamy, through all time,) might be entitled to the same civil rights and privileges with all other citizens soever, under *Magna Charta* and *Habeas Corpus*,—the right, not only of a mock-trial—*ex parte* proceedings, upon the *bare certificate* of so called *experts, one, two, or three subsidized creatures*, prefixing their name with *Doctor*—(God save the mark and pity the unfortunate!) But a *preliminary investigation* before a magistrate, or other judicial officer, for committal and bonds, or otherwise; and of the right of appeal to the Superior Courts, and impartial trial before a jury of their country.

This much—poor moiety! Dr. V. petitioned for, for reasons which he was fully prepared to state, and which would be made manifest, and become clearly indicated by a fair and just, a thorough and impartial investigation of affairs of the Georgia Lunatic Asylum.

Dr. V. adds that, in these premises, he has taken counsel with *no man*: but with the Good One above.

N. B.: In this connection, as appropriately as elsewhere, Dr. V. intimates that he is most fully aware that he is *here exposing himself*, but not “off his guard” to the shafts of malevolence, ridicule and criticism. There has been no room for fiction or fan-

cy, in these premises, or display of crazy imagination. If his critics, or reviewers, in a spirit of injustice, shall retort and ex-tort crimination for recrimination, or shall prefer not to risk exposure to rejoinder, and beg the question, by raising the hue and cry of persecution, (of Saint Green,)—by the senseless rhapsodies and muttering hallucinations of a madman 'broke loose' from Bedlam; then, and in that case, Dr. V. would be justified to anticipate, in advance, and commit and commend them, "with all he has, and is, and hopes to be," into the hands of God, 'to deal with;' who, it is taught in Sacred Writ, oftentimes discourses reason, and vindicates truth, "through the mouths of babes," and insane ones, or devils, and "hides it from the wise and prudent;"—that "*His own friends*" believed Jesus Christ "beside Himself," etc.; and from profane records, that "the undevout philosopher is a madman," etc.; and, to close this strange, eventful story, Dr. V. presents (last of all) the apotheosis of Milton to truth.—for their good—as a Christmas gift, etc.

"Truth came once into the world, with her Divine Master, and was a perfect shape, most glorious to look on; but when He ascended, and His apostles after Him, were laid asleep, then straight arose a wicked race of deceivers, who, as that story goes, of the Egyptian Typhon, with his conspirators; how they dwelt with the good Osiris, took the Virgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds. From that time, ever since, the sad friends of truth, such as durst appear, imitating the careful search that Isis made for the mangled body of Osiris, went up and down, gathering limb by limb still, as they could find them. We have not yet found them all, nor ever shall, till her Master's second coming. He shall bring together every joint and member, and shall mould them into an immortal feature of loveliness and perfection."

J. M. V.

P. S.: Papers of all creeds soever, in my native State of Georgia, and Alabama, and throughout the Christian and enlightened world, friendly to the cause of truth, justice and innocence, please copy, or commend to favorable notice, &c.

J. M. V.





