

THE CORK DISTRICT LUNATIC
ASYLUM BOARD
AND THEIR LATE ARCHITECT.

WE annex below a letter read at the last meeting of the board of governors of the above institution. It tells its own tale very simply and clearly. We had hoped, when we last adverted to this unhappy dispute, that the asylum board, for its own credit's sake, would have taken the good advice given by one of its own body, and settle at once the modest claims of Mr. Atkins. There is no good to be obtained by protracting the dispute longer and annoying the architect, but much harm will be the result. If the case should go into the law courts, we are much astray, indeed, in our opinion, if Mr. Atkins' claims are not fully sustained, and the board mulcted in costs. All this trouble and expense can be avoided by giving to Caesar what belongs to Caesar. We have given the subject some thought, and we are clearly of opinion that Mr. Atkins has been very unfairly treated. Even in the payment of his fair demands simple justice would not be accorded to him, for he has already been injured by this protracted dispute, which, to say the least, is not creditable to a body of Irish gentlemen dealing with an architect and a gentleman :—

39 South Mall, Cork, December 1st, 1875.

GENTLEMEN,—I am in receipt of your communication of the 24th ult., enclosing report on my account. With regard to the statement in it that I had implied that the House Committee had arrogated to themselves the functions of the board, I am not aware how I have done so, and certainly I never intended to convey any idea of the kind. I beg again most distinctly to deny that I ever asked for money not legally and rightly due to me, and I cannot but feel indignant at such statements as have been made in the report. During the last five years I have received two sums—one of £64 in September, 1874, for miscellaneous works, and the other £259 ls. 9d., on account of the new infirmary, including the balance of £36 15s; 3d. due to me on the portion built. A reference to the following figures will, I think, make the matter quite plain, and show without any doubt that a sum of £60 3s. 8d. is still due to me out of the infirmary extension :—

Balance due on portion of the infirmary - -	£36 15 3
Commission on infirmary, £5,061 at 5 per cent. -	£253 0 0
Commission on omitted works, £1,187 at 2½ per cent. - - - -	29 10 2
	<hr/> 282 10 2
	£319 5 5
Received on account - -	259 1 9
	<hr/>
Balance - - - -	£60 3 8

The balance on the account I have received is verified in a letter received by me from the secretary of the Commissioners of Control, a copy of which I herewith enclose. With reference to the statement that the board did not employ me to superintend the proposed new works, I beg to say that no idea was ever conveyed to me that a different arrangement was to be made from that always existing between the board and myself. On the contrary, at the December board of 1874 it was proposed by a member of the board that I and Mr. Edwards should conjointly superintend the works, and on an objection being raised to paying a double commission of 10 per cent., it was agreed that I should do so alone. It was also proposed that I should take out the quantities without extra fees. Surely it was never intended that 2½ per cent. for plans only should also cover the cost of quantities, for which alone measurers charge 1¼ per cent. At the same board it was also decided that the house committee should be associated with me in the arrangement of any disputes which might arise with the contractor during the progress of the work., thereby proving beyond any doubt that the board considered me the superintending architect. And, as an additional proof, I may mention that the sum of £70 lls. 6d. was deducted from my miscellaneous account on the sole grounds that I was engaged on the proposed new works, the amount of my commission, £600, being mentioned. Were it not for this, I would never have assented to the reduction of my account.—I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM ATKINS.