

# SUPPLEMENT

IOLA REGISTER.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 24, 1894.

## MUTILATION

By the Wholesale Practiced at the Asylum.

Eleven of the Unfortunate Children Victims of the Knife.

The Populist Idea of "Reform" Fully Developed. Castration a Great Saving of Expense for Attendants.

### NAMES AND FULL PARTICULARS.

Names and Addresses of the Boys Castrated at the Asylum for Idiots and Imbecile Youth, as Near as Can be Procured:

BERTRAM MILLIGAN, Smith County.  
ALBERT EATON, Wichita.  
WILL READING, Great Bend.  
JOHN COLLINS, Eureka.  
SAM DOLAN, Paola.  
CHAS. AULTMAN, Ottawa.  
ARTHUR STEELE, Mound Valley.  
CHAS. BILLINGS.

And Four Others, Whose Names can not be Procured Through Refusal of the Superintendent to Furnish Same.

From the Winfield Daily Courier, Aug. 21.

The charitable institutions of our state are the most sacred public trusts. There is not a person who reads this article but who may have some friend or relative so unfortunate as to become insane or blind or be afflicted with other of the numberless terrible ailments to which humanity is subject. The more enlightened a people the more care is exercised in looking after the proper treatment of these unfortunate. The peculiar maladies with which they are afflicted make it practically impossible for them to be cared for at home; hence enlightened nations and states make provisions for their care in central institutions where large expenditures of money are made to provide for their comfort and treatment. The state of Kansas has spent many millions of dollars in providing one of the grandest systems of charitable institutions that any state owns or possesses. They are a monument to the enlightenment and advanced ideas of our people and Kansans have been accustomed to point with pride to these charities, inaugurated with the birth of the state and carried forward by succeeding administrations, until they stand at the head of such institutions in the country. Under the fostering care of the republican party special attention was given to this great work. The very best and most competent superintendents were secured, the most advanced methods of treatment sought out and put in practice and every citizen of the state, without regard to party or condition, felt satisfied that should he or his family or friends become afflicted, his state had provided a retreat where every care and attention that the great heart of a splendid people could provide would be furnished for their care and sustenance.

These institutions are in no sense political. A democrat is a subject to sudden afflictions of insanity as a republican or a populist. Any family in this state may have the heavy hand of providence laid upon them and a child born to them afflicted with such disease. In such cases

the state has provided for the care and education of such children in the institution located at this city known as the Asylum for Idiots and Imbecile Youth. In this asylum are confined about a hundred inmates, which come from all over the state. The institution is well located and in the neighborhood of \$200,000 have been expended in the erection of the buildings and their furnishing. The inmates range from the ages of ten years to twenty-four. Many of the girls are bright and their feeble mindedness is only exhibited at times.

Every northern state has one of these Imbecile and Idiotic Asylums and probably as much care and attention have been given to the education of these unfortunate children as to any other branch of public charities. Physicians skilled in the treatment of such disorders are placed in charge of these asylums. Annual conventions of the superintendents of all such institutions are held and methods are discussed for promoting the health and education of the inmates by the most humane and successful means.

The state of Kansas established its Asylum for Idiots and Imbecile Youth in the year 1881. It was first located at Lawrence and maintained there until 1886 when, by an act of the legislature, it was removed to Winfield and large appropriations made for the erection of the buildings and their furnishing. During the first three years of its location here it was under the superintendence of Dr. H. M. Green, a scholarly gentleman of great attainments and much enthusiasm in the work. The institution was well kept under his management and gave satisfaction to the parents of the children and to the citizens of the state of all parties. But Dr. Green was relieved as superintendent. We understand the Board of Charities then in charge relieved Dr. Green because it was his custom to give weekly hops or dances at the Asylum for the benefit of the inmates, the brighter of whom were much cheered and enlivened by the music and their faculties stimulated thereby. Dr. Green's theory was that the stimulation of their physical condition would result in strengthening their mental faculties. The Board, however, thought differently. They reasoned that these institutions were supported by the whole people of the state and that a large number of the people believed that dancing was immoral, that it tended to destroy the spiritual inclination of those who indulged in it, and the Board, feeling its responsibility as representing all the people of the state, suspended Dr. Green and placed the institution in charge of Dr. Wiles, of this city, who continued as its superintendent for a period of four years and a half. Dr. Wiles is a gentleman of the very highest character, the most kindly and human disposition and one whose heart was in the work. Under his care the health and comfort of the inmates were protected in every way. Dr. Wiles attended every annual convention of the superintendents of like institutions, adopted the newest and best methods of providing for the care of his charges and when he resigned at the instance of the populist Board of Charities he carried with him the love and respect of every inmate capable of evolving such a sentiment, and the respect and confidence of the parents of the children, as well as the people of the whole state. During all the years of his location at this city under republican administration no breath of scandal was ever attached to it in any way and no charge of inhuman treatment was ever made.

We give this prelude in order that the people may be thoroughly informed as to all the conditions and surroundings of the institution. A year and a half ago Dr. C. K. Wiles was retired and Dr. F. Hoyt Pilcher, of New Salem, this county, was appointed superintendent of this institution by the populist board of state charities. Dr. Pilcher had been a practicing physician at the country hamlet of New Salem for several years. He had nothing, either personally or professionally to recommend him to such a position. He was a populist politician of some note, having been a democrat and joining the movement in its early stages. He is a man of very large physique, strong and robust and powerful in constitution, but of sluggish brain power, and regarded by physicians as only ordinary in his profession. He is excessively profane in his conversation and addicted to the use of liquor, was, we understand still is, intemperate in his habits. All of these facts were within the reach of the board which appointed him and while these things might not disqualify him for the ordinary avocations of life, yet it certainly makes him most unworthy to fill a position of such high trust and responsibility as that involved in the care of these poor, helpless, idiotic children.

But the board either overlooked the matter of his habits, or knowing them, thought such traits did disqualify him for their purposes. He was appointed, and immediately after his appointment, began to discharge the trained nurses in charge of the inmates, many of whom had been in charge of classes in the institution from its inception, were thoroughly qualified and familiar, not only with the personal peculiarities of the children, but with the most improved methods of caring for their health, comfort, and morals. These teachers were women and therefore not politicians, and could not have been removed for political reasons. But they were removed and others without experience in such work put in their places. This was the first official evidence of the incompetency of Dr. Pilcher.

Soon rumors began to float about relative to his treatment of some of the female inmates. Several young girls ranging in ages from seventeen to twenty-one made complaint to their teachers and female employes of the institution that Dr. Pilcher had taken them into his room and there taken liberties with their persons. These rumors became so prevalent that the COURIER felt it necessary to obtain statements of the parties to whom these girls complained. Such statements were taken and the whole matter was printed in the COURIER about eight months ago. In this publication, Mrs. Murray, a populist woman, who had been employed by Dr. Pilcher in some capacity about the institution, testified that two of the girls, one by the name of Alice and another by the name of Nora, came to her crying and informed her that Dr. Pilcher had taken them into his private office, and locked the door and then taken liberties with their persons. These stories were further substantiated by Miss Johnson, who was a teacher in the school, and to whom these two girls made similar complaints. Dr. Pilcher claimed that the stories told by Alice and Nora were untrue and that at these imbecile girls were likely to tell any story which they might think of, whether founded on truth or not; but the fact remains that at no time before in the history of this institution—(of which these girls had been inmates for many years)—had any of them made a like complaint against the superintendent or anyone connected with the management. If they possessed this disposition under Dr. Pilcher they certainly possessed it under former superintendents, hence Dr. Pilcher's defense falls to the ground.

We have been informed by a member of the State Board of Charities who made a partial investigation of these charges that the Board found that Dr. Pilcher had made what he called "an examination" of the girls; that his statement was that the former superintendent was not above suspicion, and that, on taking charge of the institution, he wanted to satisfy himself that none of the inmates had been "tampered with" hence made this "examination." If it is true that Dr. Pilcher did make such an admission to the State Board and they still left him in charge, then indeed has this institution been sunk to the lowest level of political uses and the men comprising that Board as culpable as Doctor Pilcher.

This paper had hoped that the publication of these former indiscretions would incline Dr. Pilcher to conservatism and care in the treatment of the inmates, whether he possessed the natural qualifications or not. We presumed that he possessed sufficient of that discretion with which individuals are usually endowed, to convince him that the people of Kansas would not stand any tampering with the health or morals of the inmates of its charitable institutions. But recent developments indicate that we were wrong and that Dr. Pilcher, instead of reforming his methods, has since committed one of the greatest outrages known to mankind, or ever before practiced in this or any other charitable institution.

In the succeeding interviews is developed the fact that Dr. Pilcher has committed the most atrocious mutilations upon eleven of the inmates of the Asylum. A mutilation which is regarded in law and public conscience as the most horrible that can befall a human being; a mutilation which, while it has been discussed in public prints, and in law and medical journals for years, as the most effective remedy for criminal practices, no legislature has yet been so inhuman as to enact it into a law; still this man, appointed by the populist administration as superintendent of these poor, helpless children, has visited upon eleven of them this most atrocious and terrible treatment.

This article is not written for political effect. This institution is not a political institution. It belongs to all the people. It is for the unfortunate of every party, and every man, woman and child in the state is interested personally in its proper conduct and in the character of its administration. These publications are made in the interest of the people of the whole state and of public decency, and not in the interest of any political party. If, when the former charges were made, the present populist administration had sought to do justice to the people and removed the superintendent upon the clearly criminating evidence then presented, we would not now have to publish this matter.

As a prelude to the interviews contained we publish a letter written by Dr. Pilcher to the Advocate, the populist state organ. Rumors had reached Topeka of the mutilation of the inmates of this institution which rumors were published in the Topeka State Journal of recent date. The letter given below was written by Dr. Pilcher in answer to this publication. It was accompanied by letters from Drs. Emerson and Pickens, reputable physicians of this city, stating that they had assisted in a number of these "surgical operations" and that, according to their opinion, these operations were necessary and were properly and skillfully made. It will be observed in Dr. Pilcher's letters that he acknowledged that "operations" were made. This was the first definite information we had had respecting the matter. Rumors have been heard for three months that such operations were being committed at the asylum but they were so improbable and incredible that hardly any one believed them, but upon the publication of these rumors Dr. Pilcher publishes this letter in which he acknowledges they were made. To say we were astonished upon reading his letter, is putting it mildly. We immediately began an investigation of the matter, have interviewed the former superintendent and have sought in every way to ascertain and present to the public the exact facts in relation thereto without bias and without a desire to do other than let the people of this state, regardless of party, have all the evidence and form their own conclusions. Pilcher's letter to the Advocate was as follows, omitting a portion, which is not pertinent to the matter:

WINFIELD, KAN., July 29, 1894.  
I notice statements in certain republican papers relative to the conduct of the asylum for idiotic and imbecile youth at Winfield, Kansas, and regarding the treatment of certain of the inmates, and certain surgical operations that have been performed upon some of the inmates and the statements made in regard to such operations as being appalling, cruel and unfit for publication,

and making charges against my management of that institution and the treatment of the inmates. I have to say that all such charges are absolutely and unqualifiedly false in every particular. The surgical operations, which are the ones referred to, were performed by myself and three reputable physicians and surgeons to-wit: Dr. George Emerson, of Winfield, Kan., Dr. F. M. Pickens, of Winfield, Kan., and Dr. Cooper, of Derby, Kan.; and each of the operations were performed after consultation with these physicians, and after due examination of each patient, and after it was advised to be necessary on account of the diseases and maladies with which they were afflicted, and that such operations were skillfully performed and were in the opinion of the physicians making the same necessary and proper.

Before any such operations were performed, in order to determine whether the same was necessary or advisable, I called these doctors in consultation, and such operations were performed only after careful examination of the condition of each inmate, and when it was decided that it was necessary and proper for the skillful treatment, health and preservation of life of the inmates, that such operations be performed. I invite the fullest examination into everything that was done, and refer anybody that desires to inquire to the above-named gentlemen, who are eminent in their profession and thoroughly understand the reasons for my course in this respect.

The scurrilous and infamous articles which I have seen in the papers regarding myself have been published for no other purpose than political effect, and also with intent to defame me, and are made without any investigation or application to myself or any other person informed as to the facts concerning the management of this institution, and I brand them now and here as malicious, republican, political lies.

I do not make this explanation upon the theory that any sensible person will be misled by anything that has been said in the papers, but I do it that the people of Kansas may understand the character of campaign work now carried on by a lot of republican so-called morally inclined, and educational newspapers.

F. HOYT PILCHER, M. D., Superintendent, Idiots and Imbecile Asylum.

Dr. George Emerson, of this city, is one of the physicians who assisted Dr. Pilcher in performing the operations. He is a skilled surgeon and understood by his profession, to be one of the leading physicians and surgeons of the state. A reporter called upon Dr. Emerson and the following interview ensued:

Q. Doctor, I see by a letter signed by you and published in the Topeka Advocate, that you assisted Dr. Pilcher in the castration of a number of boys at the Imbecile Asylum.

A. Yes, I assisted Dr. Pilcher on several occasions.

Q. Doctor, how many boys in this institute have been castrated?

A. Eleven.

Q. Can you give their names?

A. No, I don't know their names. In fact, their names were never given to me.

Q. How did you come to assist in performing these operations?

A. Dr. Pilcher asked me to assist. I was given to understand that the matter had been talked over with the Governor, the State Board of Charities and the Attorney General, but paid little attention to it myself. Simply assisted in the operations; saw that they were properly done with as little pain and inconvenience to the patient as possible.

Q. Did any of the patients die of the effects of the operations?

A. No. They all recovered and are doing well. I understand one of the patients has since died from dysentery, but that was in no way connected with the operation and occurred after he was completely well.

Q. When was the first operation performed and under what circumstances?

A. The first operation was performed in March or April, 1894. The boy's father and family physician were present. I believe the father and the physician came from Oklahoma City, where they resided.

Dr. Pilcher, it seems, had written to him stating an operation was necessary to prevent certain practices to which the boy was addicted and asked the father to come up and bring a physician. He did so and the physician occurred with Dr. Pilcher in the opinion that the operation was necessary to prevent the practices. I was called in to assist in the operation and it was made by the family physician in the presence of the boy's father. The boy was about twenty-one years old.

Q. What was the result of the operation?

A. The boy improved—was soon well and the operation seemed to improve his general health. He afterwards left the institution and went to work on a farm and worked there quite a while but the farmer's people finally learning he had been an inmate of the asylum became alarmed and discharged him and he having no place to go, came back to the institution and, I understand, is now there.

Q. Were these operations necessary to preserve the lives of the patients?

A. No.

Q. Was the general health of the boys operated upon any worse than usual at the time of the operations?

A. No, I think not. The physical effects of the practices they were indulging in were injurious to their general health and the stopping of such practices by surgical operations must certainly result in an improved state of general health and also of the mind if such were possible.

Q. Have you anything further to say relative to this matter, Doctor?

A. Nothing at all. I was simply called in to assist in certain operations that had been agreed upon, and, in a professional capacity did so. I supposed the proper officials had looked into the matter, considered the operations necessary and as a surgeon, it was my duty

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to see that they were performed in a careful and proper manner, which I did.

Dr. F. M. Pickens has been a resident of Winfield for about 12 years. He is prominent in his profession and his statements are entitled to the fullest credence. Desiring to secure his statement the COURIER interviewed him as follows:

Q. Dr. Pickens, I understand you assisted Dr. Pilcher in the castration of several of the inmates of the idiotic and imbecile asylum?

A. Yes, sir; I did.

Q. Under what circumstances were these operations performed?

A. Dr. Pilcher called on me and told me that he had decided to castrate an inmate to suppress indulgence of certain practices, which in his opinion, were tending to injure the patient and asked me to assist in the operation. He told me that the state board of charities had been consulted in the matter and also the parents of the inmate. I, with Dr. Emerson assisted in performing a number of these operations.

Q. How many of the boys have been castrated?

A. About ten or eleven.

Q. Do you know their names?

A. No, sir; I did not learn of their names.

Q. When were these operations performed?

A. At different times since March or April last, when the first operation took place.

Q. Were these operations necessary to preserve the lives of the patients?

A. No. They were calculated to improve their general health and prevent these practices.

Dr. Pilcher called at the office of the COURIER this morning in response to a request and, upon being told that an interview, relative to this matter, was desired, replied: "Well I have nothing to say on the matter at all."

Q. Will you not give a statement of the facts?

A. No, sir; I will not be interviewed on the subject.

Q. Will you give the names of the boys operated upon?

A. No, sir; I won't do anything of the kind.

Q. Will you allow us to send a photographer out to the asylum and take a picture of the boys?

A. No.

Q. Is it not a fact that operations have been performed?

A. Yes, I am making arrangements now to have their pictures taken again to show the improvements made.

Q. Is it not a fact that Will Reading, John Collins, Sam Dulan, Curries Alton and Arthur Steele have been castrated?

A. I don't recollect now. I have nothing to say!

Q. How many in all have been operated upon?

A. I don't recollect.

Q. Is it not a fact that operations have taken place?

A. Some operations have taken place yes, sir, and with very satisfactory results.

Q. Isn't it true that eleven of the boys have been castrated?

A. No.

Q. Dr. Emerson so states?

A. Um, hum!

Dr. Pilcher: Well, was this what you called me up for?

A. Yes. We would like for you to give us the facts just as they are in this matter. There are reasons for everything.

Dr. Pilcher: Certainly are!

Q. Now then, won't you give us the names of the boys operated upon and all the facts? Dr. Emerson states that he understood the Governor, the State Board of Charities and the Attorney General had been consulted relative to these—

A. I haven't anything to say on the matter at all.

Q. Then you refuse to be interviewed at all?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Well, Doctor, I am sorry you have taken this position. I see in your article published in the Advocate that you invite "the fullest examination into everything that was done." We want to give you the benefit of every doubt in this matter, publish your statement and your reasons for castrating these boys and desire to be absolutely fair in its publication and to give nothing but the facts and let the public draw their own conclusions. Will you not give us a statement of your reasons for these operations and whether the parents and the state authorities were consulted in relation thereto?

A. No, sir; I will not be interviewed on this subject at all.

Q. All right, Doctor, but I am sorry you have taken this position. You are a public officer, this asylum is a public institution, the method of its conduct a public affair and the people have a right to know the facts in the case.

A. Yes, sir; that's all very true, but I will not be interviewed by you in this matter.

Q. And why not, Doctor? You would be allowed to—

A. Because I don't think I have to answer your questions!

Q. Well, won't you let me send a man out and take the pictures of the boys?

A. No, sir; I will not. I am going to have some pictures taken and will give you some.

Q. How soon can I get the pictures? By Monday or Tuesday?

A. No, sir; not that soon.

Here the interview ended by the withdrawal of Dr. Pilcher from the room.

Dr. C. K. Wiles was appointed superintendent of the Asylum for Idiots and Imbecile youth in Octo-