

time lessen the ranks of the chronic cases which vegetate from year to year on the downward grade to hopeless dementia? Our hope lies in applying the best therapeutic treatment to newly-admitted cases. I do not presume to speak with the wisdom of a Solon upon a subject which many of you are more capable of discussing than myself, but in my mind there should be a large receiving hospital specially equipped with every psychopathic contrivance for the treatment of new cases. This equipment should include hydro and electro therapy, massage, physical drill, rest treatment, forced feeding, mental recreation, etc. It should also contain a laboratory for making the various blood tests, urinalysis, and also tests of the stomach and other digestive secretions. But not less important than all, it should have a well trained staff of physicians and nurses. The keynote to treatment should be a differentiated specialism suited to each case. In that way we shall have hospital treatment in fact, as well as in name.

Large discriminatory power should be given to superintendents permitting patients to enter voluntarily. A large class of neurotics go about from one sanitarium to another seeking relief which they cannot find. The ordinary physician prescribes travel, change of air and scene for these cases, but unless a proper selection of cases is made, they often return more jaded and worn than when they started. The rest treatment is more often indicated, and with proper medication and under hygienic conditions, is attended with better results than in travelling to and fro over the earth amid the bustle and excitement of modern life.

In Scotland, Dr. Clouston, of Morningside, is at the head of an agitation for the treatment of incipient and transient cases in an insane ward of a general hospital. Sir William Gowers is advocating another movement for individual care in private homes. The background of both movements is an effort to escape certification, and the stigma which attaches to incarceration in a public asylum. It will be interesting to watch the growth of this agitation in the Old Land, for I am sure it will find little support on this side of the Atlantic. To begin with, it is an attempt to protect the individual against a foolish, morbid prejudice, and at the same time place a further ban on the public institution whose function is to treat every form of mental alienation.

The treatment of any form of mental disorder in a general hospital is doomed to failure unless in charge of a mental expert and a staff of nurses trained to the work. We all know how panic-stricken and helpless the general hospital physician and his nurses are in the presence of a case of insanity, and how loudly they clamor for the removal of the case to the asylum.