

becomes a serious consideration whether it is not a duty to restrain the habitual drunkard, not by pledges or temperance societies, not by Maine liquor laws, or heavy duty on liquor, but by regarding the habitual drunkard as mentally deranged, and condemning him for a time to isolation and care in an asylum specially devoted to his class. A Lunatic Asylum is needed for this section of the country. We regret to be *again* obliged to inform our Government that we are yet without such an institution, and *again* to reiterate the fact (which has been stated time after time for the last twenty years) that the condition of the lunatics in this district, in the cells of our common Gaol, would disgrace the natives of Timbuctoo. The treatment received by Dr. Howard, the medical superintendent at St. Johns, whose efficiency has been acknowledged by the inspectors in their last report, has been simply disgraceful, and we would not be at all surprised were that gentleman to relinquish his charge in disgust.

With regard to locality we cannot see the advisability of placing the institution at an unreasonable distance from our city. Montreal is the centre at which several railways converge, and in summer time is more accessible than any other place we know of from all parts of the surrounding country. There are here two medical schools unsurpassed by any in Canada. In an educational point therefore it is essential, at least expedient, to afford every facility, to those who in a few years must supply our places, to study disease in its various phases. Diseases of the mind, as of the body, are engaging the serious attention and study of the profession at the present day. Many cases of insanity which a few years ago would have been considered hopeless, are now well known to be amenable to treatment. The symptoms are found to yield rapidly and readily when appropriate means with promptitude are employed. What physician worthy of the name, would look supinely on and permit an acute attack of disease to proceed to the sure destruction of his patient, or run into the chronic form, without an attempt on his part to arrest its progress? This argument equally applies in diseases of the mind as of the body. Secondly, we hold it to be a duty of communities to provide the means for the safe conduct and appropriate treatment of disease, especially those affecting the mental condition of individuals. Here we have to deal with no ordinary form of disease; and unless the patient be, so to speak, isolated or removed to a suitable establishment, especially devoted to the care and treatment of these unfortunate cases, he will either die, or the disease become confirmed, the patient for ever after remaining in a hopeless state, with occasional exacerbations and remissions, a burthen to his friends or the community.