

Altogether too much mystery and confusion has been thrown around the subject of insanity. The whole affair comes down to be one of a poor brain or a deranged one. The form of insanity will be determined by the way in which the brain is diseased, or the part of it that is affected. The degree of mental failure will give us idiocy, imbecility, or dementia; while the form may be simple feeble-mindedness, delusional insanity with much power of reasoning, or profound depression as in some forms of dementia præcox.

All forms of insanity should be treated as clinical manifestations of a defective, diseased or perverted brain, when we generally accept this simple way of approaching insanity, much of the difficulty hitherto experienced in its study will disappear. Many of the causes of insanity are now well known to be preventable. The old view that it was an affliction for some wickedness has been abandoned. The doctrine of *Flagellum Dei pro peccatis mundi* is now a thing of the past. In the same way that many of the causes of Bright's disease, or liver disease are preventable, so also, many of the causes of a poor or perverted state of the mind are within our control. It is here that the views of Dr. Southard are of special value.

We are glad to note that the lecturer gave no countenance to the belief in maternal impressions. As there is no nerve tissue in the foetal cord there could be no "impression." All that takes place is one of nourishment through the vessels connecting the placenta and the foetus. In this way only can the mother "impress" the child. But the child may start its intrauterine life with faulty germ cells or sperm cells, and it is here that heredity plays its rôle. The best nourishment a healthy mother can give her unborn child may fail when it is expended on imperfect sperm or germ cells. But this is not a question of maternal "impression."

We congratulate Dr. Southard on the very sane view he took of his subject. Such lectures will do much to bring the subject of mental derangements *ab nubibus ad terram*.

To show how the public is now waking up to the importance of this question, we quote the following resolutions moved and carried at the recent meeting of the Anglican Church Synod, held in Toronto:

"That this Synod of the Church of England in Toronto, while recording its sincere satisfaction with the steps already taken by the Provincial Government looking towards the care of the feeble-minded, and especially expressing its satisfaction at the appointment of a commissioner to examine the whole problem throughout the province and to report accordingly, hereby reaffirms the resolution passed at a previous session of the Synod, to the effect that the known existence of large