

to self-destruction answered with the much abused, but easily written, "No." Some description of the man as he was, in response to information sought as to habits of life, may bring out knowledge of inestimable worth, especially if it be shown there is now a departure from the normal in such matters as his affections, appetites, religion, temper and tastes.

Then there is the point as to heredity, about which such lies are told as must make the father of them hilarious. The friends cannot be trusted on this score. The doctor should quietly enquire from other sources as well, concerning the taint in the blood, and not only note insanity in the family, but also eccentricity, nervousness, and consanguinity in parents. Then, if you want the truth, as Clouston says, multiply what you get by two. It is well, also, to delve deeply to get at the cause of the trouble. The patient's friends seem to be rarely cognizant of it, for there is nothing about which the asylum physician is oftener asked by them, and he is the last one to come to, not having known the patient's life till he has crossed the hospital threshold. It may not be far to seek, however, if any hereditary blight exist, for very little will unbalance the predisposed. Do not snatch at effect for cause, as is too often done, to the injury of character. Masturbation and immoderate indulgence are more frequently the consequence of a diseased brain than physicians state.

One word more, and I have done. The general practitioner can do an incalculable amount of good for the cause of the insane if he gives proper counsel as to how the patient should be removed from home. I can't put it better than is done by Dr. Burgess in the advice he gives to those who seek admission for some friend to the hospital at Verdun:—

"In bringing a patient to the hospital, use force if necessary, but never deception, as it lessens the chances of cure by making him look upon the institution with dislike, and those in charge of it as alone responsible for his being kept there. Tell the patient frankly that physician and friends consider him *sick*, and that it is proposed to take him to a *hospital*, where his chances of being cured are of the best, and whence he will be taken out again as soon as well."