

recourse to asylum treatment may be assumed in every case to be a matter of social convenience. In recent cases the probability of recovery to a certain extent influences relatives ; but in far the greater number of instances the exigencies of the situation settle the point, and the patient is sent to the asylum because he cannot be conveniently kept at home." The motives which seem to be operative, other than those of convenience, are in some instances mistaken affection, or economy, or pride. A certain stigma is attached to the word insanity, although few there are without a bee in their bonnet, yet eccentricity or peculiarity of character does not invariably mark the mind diseased—or, at least, diseased to that extent as to incapacitate the individual from living and acting amongst his fellows, and enjoying all the privileges of citizenship.

We must believe that the brain, the organ of the mind, is liable to certain changes which are shown in a departure from the customary instincts and habits of the individual, and that any change of this nature demands instant attention and judicious treatment. Failing this the disease, for such it is, being in verity a material alteration, affecting the immaterial impulse, will in all likelihood progress, going on from bad to worse until a settled, and confirmed, and unalterable state of diseased structure remains, and the patient becomes hopelessly and permanently insane.

Dr. Arthur Mitchell, one of the Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland, published a "Contribution to the Statistics of Insanity" in the "Journal of Mental Science" for January, 1877. This is a most valuable paper and shows the actual curability of insanity as recognized in the public institutions of Scotland. Dr. Mitchell enjoys peculiar advantages and can base his observations on a large number of cases. In the introduction to his paper he says, "In this inquiry all the asylums of Scotland are regarded as one asylum, and the different institutions merely as different wards;" so that a patient leaving one institution and being admitted into another was regarded as passing from one ward to another. From his official position he was enabled to trace the history and course of each indi-