

has up to the present time been the case, to what are known as borderland cases of insanity. In many large hospitals, wards are set aside in which to place patients who have exhibited mental idiosyncrasies which seem to indicate that they are fit subjects for trained observation. While, however, all are agreed that wise foresight is being shown in watching borderland cases, the question at once arises, What is a borderland case? Meyer answers, "Any case that can be benefited by hospital treatment." This answer is scarcely sufficiently definite, and A. W. Ferris, writing also in the State Hospital's Bulletin, amplifies it as follows: "Any case in which symptoms of commencing mental trouble have been noticed, and which should have a psychiatrist's care. Within the area of the borderland we must include psychasthenia, with its impulsions, obsessions, doubts, phobias, anguish, agitation, delirium of touch; and for practical purposes, we must include all psychoses in their incipency; we must include psychopathic exaltation and psychopathic depression; constitutional inferiority; disorders in the train of thought, disorders of volition, of the emotions, of memory, of attention, and of personality, whenever such disorders are more than transient." This description is fairly comprehensive, and Ferris advises parents and teachers who detect in a child under their care any such symptoms, or an adult who suffers from the like, to consult a psychiatrist without loss of time.

In 1908, New York State amended the Insanity Law, and threw open her thirteen civil State hospitals for the reception, without commitment and on their own application, of patients whose minds are not so impaired as to render them incapable of forming a rational judgment. It is stated that since the change in the statute, comparatively few voluntary patients have taken advantage of the opportunity to enter the State hospitals, Ferris being of the opinion that the small number is due apparently to want of information or apathy of the general practitioner; to the idea persistent among the laity that real insanity is always marked by violence, and to the feeling that possibly recoverable cases of mental disorder should be kept at home, the hospital being regarded by some citizens as merely a receptacle for the desperate or hopeless cases. There is yet another reason which carries some weight with a large number of people, namely, the slur that is cast upon an individual and even upon his family and relations by the mere suspicion of insanity. This feeling may be due to ignorance or to a faulty comprehension of the matter, but it undoubtedly exists and must be reckoned with.—  
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