

tion, the mere oblivion and childishness, enable us to say that such a person is unable to take care of himself or his affairs, and never will be able.

Coming now to the matter of treatment, I would say first of all, that without exception alienists agree and statistics prove that early removal from the scenes and surroundings which were present during the onset of the attack is essentially the primary step in the treatment of insanity, either fully developed or incipient, where circumstances will at all permit of such a change. If you pick up the report of any institution for the care of the insane nowadays you will observe a table dealing with the results of the year, which will read about as follows:

“Percentage of recoveries on admissions, anywhere from 25 to 45. Of those recovered about 50 per cent. were admitted during the first month of the attack, and fully 75 per cent. were admitted within the first three months, whereas those who were kept at home up to a year and more showed no recovery, or, at best, a very insignificant percentage.”

Insanity in this respect is just like any other disorder, if neglected it will deepen and grow more confirmed and the prospect of recovery will pass with the days until none is left in a very short time. Therefore, prompt action is indicated.

I do not think that the neglect of treatment in the early stages is often due to tentative action on the part of the physician, but is more due to the ignorant concealment of the case upon the part of the family, acting under the wretchedly false sentiment of the day, that to have a case of insanity in the family is a terrible disgrace. The friends in these cases do not wish wilfully to throw away the patient's prospects of recovery, quite the reverse, I feel sure; but they expect that in some mysterious way nature will rise equal to the occasion and bring about a return to the normal, and so she will, if possible; but they give her no chance, and so matters go on until some overt action brings the unfortunate within the clutch of the law and then the whole thing is ventilated before the public and much sorrow and hardship results to all concerned. Such cases very frequently settle down into hopeless dementia after reaching the asylum at last.

Some of you may not agree with this plan of early removal, holding that where at all possible an attempt should be made to treat the patient at home first with a view to preventing the unfortunate odium being attached to him, which seems to be the unavoidable result even in this enlightened age where a man has been once certificated insane. Certainly this seems a very laudable object to be achieved, but the results are not encouraging, as shown by statistics.