

The confirmation of the diagnosis by actual demonstration, at the time of operation, is also witnessed by our Superintendent, Dr. Bucke, and other medical men (often including the patient's family physician), and should be sufficient proof as to the genuineness of the presence of disease.

But this criticism, though heedlessly and wantonly made, sinks into comparative insignificance compared with the deliberate and outrageous charge that in the performance of these operations we are guilty of "wholesale mutilation of helpless lunatics." This rash accusation, emanating from no less an authority than a prominent Canadian alienist, is too serious to dismiss lightly. It passes the boundary of legitimate criticism. Only one interpretation can be placed on it, and that is, that in carrying on our surgical gynecology we are criminally maltreating our patients. To this charge there can be but one answer: "We are right in doing this class of surgery or we are wrong." If we are doing those things we ought not to do, the sooner we know it the better. We must stop or be suppressed. If we are right in making pelvic examinations in insane women and surgically removing gross disease, when it is conclusively demonstrated, then the position so autocratically adopted by our critics is unenviable. It places them before the profession in the light of non-progressionists. It publishes the fact that they are unable to appreciate a valuable method for the betterment of the health of their charges and the opening of a possible avenue for their future mental recovery. More serious still, it exposes a deliberate attempt to strangle a scientific advance upon the obsolete methods still so largely in vogue in many asylums of to-day.

We appeal to the broad-minded profession at large, whose consultants we are, as to whether we are right or wrong in this matter. We ask: Is it wrong to curette a uterus for endometritis or sub-involution? Is it detrimental to the health of a patient to repair a lacerated cervix or amputate a diseased one? Is it mutilation to extirpate tumors malignant and benign? Is it criminal to surgically unsex an insane woman when the unsexing is already done by the disease which we operate to cure? Is it unscientific to replace a dislocated or prolapsed uterus, and is it illogical to restore a torn perineum? That we are guilty of doing these things we do not deny. If this is to be termed mutilation of helpless lunatics, then the sooner gynecology becomes an extinct art the better. But if these operations are legitimate and proper when done by surgeons universally upon sane women, then why are they stigmatized as "mutilation" when done upon their insane sisters for precisely similar diseased conditions?