

The discussion which followed the reading of this paper took a very wide range, covering the whole field of moral insanity; it was commenced by Verga, who spoke as follows:

Moral insanity has commanded my attention during the three years that have elapsed since the Congress at Voghera. I have felt bound to this duty not only by my position as a member of the committee which was charged with the consideration of this subject, but also by its very great importance; it may be said to be a sociological rather than a psychological subject, because of the influence it may have on the state of society. The little, indeed the very little, fruit that I have gathered, I would very gladly have given to the gentleman who assumed the position of reporting, had he been here. I shall now, begging to be excused for my dullness of hearing, state, perhaps imperfectly, what would have been told by another.

In the first place I think we ought to insist on the distinguishing of reasoning mania from moral insanity. The former is a genus, the latter is a species. All the subjects of moral insanity are reasoning persons, but all the reasoning insane are not the subjects of moral insanity. The latter have a particular ingredient; they have the perversion of instincts, the tendency to badness, and that delirium of actions which Brierre de Boismont has so called.

Moral insanity is usually native, or congenital. It seems to me that this is the idea held by our able colleague, Dr. Grilli. It is the idea which led me to place moral insanity immediately under the *phrenasthenias*, as if it were a bridge of passage from the congenital insanity to the acquired. Dr. Semal expressed very nearly the same idea in the Congress of Auversan. Professor Paul Moreau (de Tours), in his memoir, entitled "*l'Homicide commis par les enfants*," has mentioned a moral insanity evident in children; and not long ago I myself sent a splendid sample of it to the asylum of Mombello. Dr. Gonzales very well knows of whom I speak.