

decision as to the relation between the chronicity of female cases and their rate of curability. Nothing, however, can be less reliable than the statements on this head, furnished in a large proportion of the certificates of insanity sent in with the patients. Of the general fact, however, of longer duration of insanity, before admission, in females than in males, I have no doubt. It is a most serious consideration, alike to the friends of the insane and to the public which has to support for life, all those who do not recover; and it is as obviously the duty of the latter to *provide* early treatment, as it is the interest of both that it be early *availed* of. Indeed it cannot be questioned that the best interests of humanity would be promoted, not merely by providing the means of early treatment, but by enforcing on the friends of the insane recourse to it. No fact in connection with insanity has been more certainly established than the relation between recovery and early submission to asylum treatment. About 75 per cent. of all recoveries are found to take place in patients whose insanity has not, before admission, exceeded three months; whilst not more than 10 per cent. of all recoveries are furnished by those whose insanity had exceeded one year before admission. It is, however, by no means to be asserted that all who are brought under treatment within three months from the invasion of insanity recover, as, from a perusal of some loosely written asylum reports, we might be led to believe. Every intelligent asylum physician knows that this is not the fact, and every discreet and candid one will admonish the friends of the insane against depending on it. We may admit, within the first week from manifestation of insanity, patients as certainly incurable as others whose malady has been of years' duration. This holds true, especially in cases of general paralysis, and in a very large proportion, if not all, of those affected with tubercular or scrofulous disease. It is in the *post-mortem* theatre that we most clearly learn the long underlying causes of incurability of insanity.

The investigation of the causes of insanity seems to be a subject of general interest. Like many other enquiries, however, into obscure matters, it is always more sanguinely proceeded with, by those who have some cherished foregone conclusions to ratify, than by those who desire merely to arrive at truth; and it is invariably found that those who know least of the subject, believe most implicitly in the correctness of their own views, and are infinitely more dogmatical than those who have had a large field of observation, and have for years assiduously worked in it. The candid confession of all asylum physicians of long and large experience, would most probably be that they know much less on the question of the causes of insanity than they once believed they did. In a large