

mental type, and the indulgence in drink intensifies the evil. The idea is spreading that "the alcoholic is an abnormal type."

3. Heredity is the most important factor in the production of insanity. It is claimed by competent observers that this accounts for fifty per cent. of all the causes.

In dealing with the prevention of insanity we must bear in mind the influence of syphilis and other infections; the evils of drugs and alcohol; and the weight of heredity. In this country, because of a loose system of the inspection of immigrants, the load of defectives is rapidly increasing. Stress of living, want of employment, overwork, poverty, child labor are tending to the production of mental disease.

In the prevention a few considerations must be borne in mind:

1. The medical profession must study mental diseases and become familiar with their various forms. It must be conceded that the average medical student leaves college with too limited a knowledge of insanity. Our asylums should become post-graduate centres for the study of mental affections. In connection with the asylums there should be a dispensary to which persons might come for advice, such as those who have been at some former time committed, borderland cases, and the relatives of the insane. Useful information regarding prevention could in this way be spread. Members of the asylum staffs might give talks on the prevention of insanity in schools, churches and clubs. It should be made clear that insanity is a disease. The modern humane method of treatment should be very clearly pointed out.

2. An opportunity ought to be given medical practitioners to obtain post-graduate instruction in these institutions. There is at present a vast amount of clinical material unused, to the loss of both the profession and the state. Medical meetings might be held in these hospitals for practitioners nearby. There should be a competent scientist in each institution, who could explain to the visiting doctors the true conditions. The good results would more than pay for the initial cost.

3. The distribution of leaflets and literature are means of spreading useful information. A good deal is now being done by the *Bulletin*, giving the work done in the asylums, and by the lectures and literature furnished by the Board of Health.

4. Attention should be paid to the families from which patients come, with the view of detecting any tendencies, and preventing other cases.

5. The formation of societies for the study of mental diseases should be encouraged. These have done much good in other countries.

6. Every defective child should receive proper care. In this way some cases may be cured; and, where this is impossible, the child could