

best obtained by changing our mental occupation, from time to time, so as not to weary our minds by always dwelling upon the one subject. I know of nothing more destructive to the brain-worker than always poring over the same work, never taking an hour of recreation, never condescending to the *wise folly* of a good hearty laugh. The best advice, I think, we can give to all labourers, whether their work be mental or physical, is to follow the advice of that philosophical individual, Mark Tapley, and be "jolly" under any circumstance.

I propose, gentlemen, this evening to give you a few general remarks on the treatment of the insane; and when I speak of the insane, I confine my remarks to those who having been sane, have from some cause or other lost their sanity and become insane, and here I would at once state, that, properly-speaking, we never *cure* these patients; they *recover* their sanity which they lost, and we aid in this recovery by prudent and well directed treatment, as we retard their recovery very frequently by unwarrantable interference and ill-directed treatment. No matter from what exciting cause a sane person loses his sanity, if he do not recover his sanity or die during the maniacal attack, he gradually descends into a state of imbecility, in which he dies, sometimes after a short, sometimes after a long period of time.

It is not necessary for me to inform the members of this society that there is no such thing as a specific for the cure of insanity. How could there be when there are so many direct and remote exciting causes to produce it? It may be due to some functional derangement, some reflex action, deranging the brain or its coverings; or it may be due to some direct irritation of the brain or its meninges, or to some lesion of the brain substance or its coverings; it may be due to an increased or diminished quantity of blood, it may be caused from thrombus, from aneurism, or congestion, it may be caused from abscess, from tumour, or from softening of the substance of the brain. Seeing then, gentlemen, that there are many remote and direct causes which produce insanity, how can there possibly be a specific for the cure of insanity? Yet, we find, every day, our medical literature and newspapers teeming with remedies for the cure of