

malities, susceptibility to certain diseases, and defects of development are transmissible, mental and moral defects being only acquired. Crime and criminality are acquired, the result of environment and parental unfitness. Mutilation of the criminal is characterized as inefficient and absurd as a preventive of crime. Ethically and morally it is unjustifiable. Lack of self-control and of fixed purpose are the causes of crime, and they can be obviated by discipline. The probation system, parole, and reformatories are the best remedies.—*Medical Record*, February 11, 1911."

The foregoing is the official synopsis of Dr. Nammack's article as sent out by the *Medical Record*. From some of its teachings we wish to dissent.

With regard to the sterilization of criminals it is of the utmost advantage that they be deprived of the power to procreate, though not of the power for sexual connection. The evil in the criminal will die with him.

With regard to the transmission of the criminal brain, we differ from Dr. Nammack. We do hold that a low grade of brain with criminal tendencies may be transmitted. We think that every medical practitioner can satisfy himself on this point from his own observation. "Like father, like son," was not spoken for naught. We think it is wrong to state that mental and moral defects are "only acquired."

When Dr. Nammack states that "lack of self-control and of fixed purpose are the causes of crime, and they can be obviated by discipline," we must protest. It is a matter of experience that no possible amount of discipline will prevent some from becoming criminals. They are criminals by birth.

It is quite true that a man of bad mental and moral proclivities may marry a woman of much higher grade. There is the possibility of improvement by her share in the heredity of their children, but there is also the terrible possibility that his influence on the offspring may seriously impair them. Why should such chances be taken?

We hold that the state should do all in its power to prevent criminals, the weak-minded, those with insane tendencies, the epileptic, etc., from marrying. In other words, sow as few bad weeds as possible in the human wheat field.

THE ONTARIO MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

This association meets this year in Niagara Falls, on May 30, 31, and June 1.

In another portion of this issue we publish the advance programme.