

society, considered as a whole and of all the individual members of which it is composed. Such a definition contemplates the absence of drunkenness and squalor. Expel the subjects of these two states and you have a condition of society in which insanity could scarcely gain admission. But if we apply the term to the actual state of American or European society—to the whole of society of the so-called civilized nations, with their vices and want, then the case assumes a different aspect. And it must be admitted that the onward march of modern civilization, to an extent, does seem to condition, though perhaps not necessarily, these several phases of society. Whilst it is important not to lose sight of these two views of civilization—the ideal and the actual—we find ourselves compelled to deal with the latter, and to confess that our civilization is a cause of neurotic and psychological disease. But be it remembered that this arises from an abuse of civilization, and is only incident to it. Let us accept civilization, it is our highest wisdom to do so, with all its risks, and let us exert the best energies of our lives to denude it of its abuses and its ill-gotten incidents. We are in more danger of insanity than the untutored savage, it is true, and yet but few of us would be willing to exchange, accepting his Eden desert island, with its ripe fruit and gorgeous flowers, without toil and worry. A great deal could be said profitably upon the subject of prevention, but as we have already extended this paper beyond the intended limit, and perhaps taxed your patience we shall be obliged to abridge this portion "*Quem Jupiter vult perdere dementat prius.*" Viewing the fact that in all the countries around us more than one in every 500 of the population is a lunatic or an idiot, we may well seek to cast around us every guard that may shield from so direful a malady. It may be stated certainly that disease to an extent is preventable. It is well known that an inherited faulty formation of bone may be prevented, or greatly lessened, by proper attention to diet on the part of the mother during pregnancy, and the child during growing life. Other diseases may be warded off by habit and living, so that the tendency to them in the following generation may fade out or be much reduced. The more common forms of disease are easily preventable by having respect to the well understood laws of hygiene.

A friend of mine, in a figure of speech, discourses thus: "In the great contest of life, the

weaker go to the wall. In the struggle of life, there will be the survival of the fittest. We have seen, he says, in the spring season of the year the trees of an orchard white with unnumbered blossoms. Myriads upon myriads feed every passing breeze with delicious odors for a day, and then drop to the ground forever, and when the fruit is formed on the tree, only a very limited number ever attain to maturity and perfection, while the ground is strewn with the windfalls and the useless. Why one goes on to maturity and perfection while the other perishes so soon we may not say with certainty, but doubtless one has some slight degree of advantage in the starting of the voyage; it may be a moment or an hour of time, or a particle of nourishment, but, whatever it is, the consequence is apparent. So it is in the grand struggle of life. Myriads perish at the very start, and as the process of life goes on, one by one, always the weaker, by reason of some defect in organization, inherited or acquired, fall out by the way. Christianity has taught us to pick them up, and try to nurse them to strength for further battle. She has built hospitals, and these weaker ones drift into these refuges from the storm. So it has been, and so it will be in the future. The stronger in body and mind will rise above and triumph over the hardness and roughness of life, becoming stronger by the very effort. To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance of the possessions of life, but that abundance is drawn from him that hath not, and he falls out by the way, as the fruit falls ultimately from the tree." This is a beautiful and apt figure. Christianity has indeed among her many beneficent lessons taught us to pick up, and move into strength these weaker ones. And whilst you, gentlemen, in common with other Christian philanthropists, shall act well your part in this, it is your high privilege to advance further in the noble purpose of bettering mankind. You must, like the skilful gardener, examine carefully the tree and the soil for a solution of this dark problem, and you will find that the defect lies in one or other of these, or both; and when you shall have changed the soil and supplied suitable fertilizing elements to nourish healthy fruit, and when with pruning knife you have removed the shoots and defective limbs, then beyond a peradventure, or a may be, we shall see the wherefore and the why, and though there may be less blossoms and perfume to feed the passing breeze, there shall be a richer fruitage, which shall go on to maturity and perfection.