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## THE INSANE IN CANADA.

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BY

T. J. W. BURGESS, M.D., Montreal.

Gentlemen:—

My first duty is to reiterate my thanks to you for having called me to this chair, a distinction I can attribute only to the fact, that in honoring me you sought to honour, not me alone, but the Canadian members of the Association. "No man is born without ambitious worldly desires," says Carlyle, and surely there could not be a more laudable ambition than to become the President of this the oldest of American Medical Associations, a position of which Dr. John S. Butler said, on his elevation thereto, in 1870, "In my opinion, to be elected President of this Association, is the highest honour of the profession." Rarely, however, does gratified ambition bring peace of mind, and I, alas, have been no exception to the general rule. The thought of occupying a position that had been held by such intellectual giants as Woodward, Bell, Ray, Kirkbride, Butler and Earle, all members of the "glorious original thirteen," beside many other illustrious men, abashed me—made me fully conscious of my inability to fill it properly. Nor did the sense of my demerit lessen as the days rolled by. On the contrary, the long list of presidents, whose names are familiar to us because of their attainments in psychological medicine, loomed continually before my eyes, added to which the task of to-day's address haunted me like an ever-lengthening shadow. I had but one thought to reconcile me to the greatness your generosity had thrust upon me. It was that the kindness which prompted you to elect me as your president would be extended so far as to induce you to overlook my shortcomings, and that if, in the matter of the address, I could not like my predecessors in office clothe my thoughts in "Choice word and measured phrase, above the reach of ordinary men," you would at least take the kindly will for the imperfect deed.