

Insanity curable : mental disorders and nervous affections of recent origin or long standing : their cause are now successfully treated by a new especial method / by George Moseley.

Contributors

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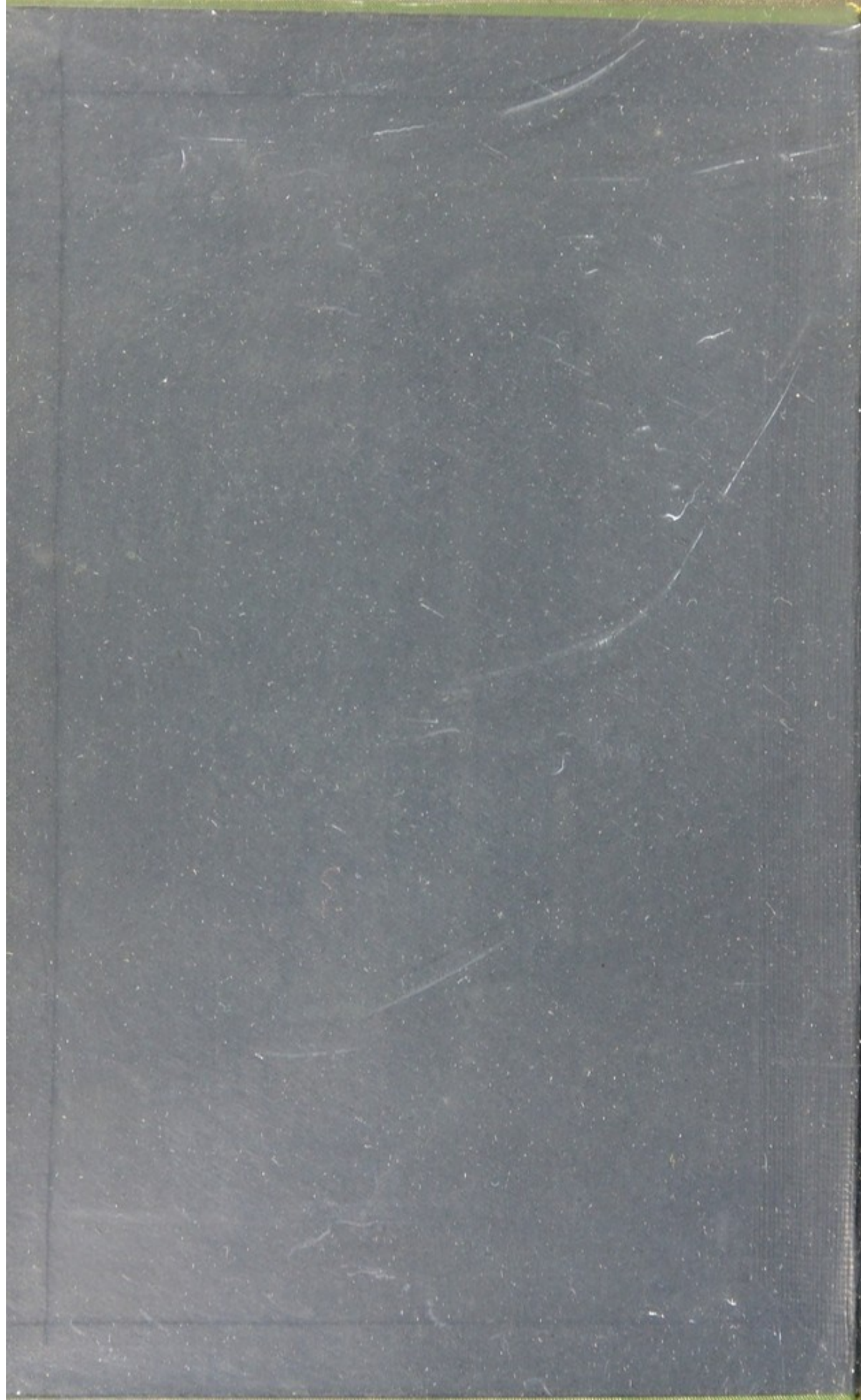


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MENTAL DISORDERS
AND
NERVOUS AFFECTIONS

GEORGE MOSELEY

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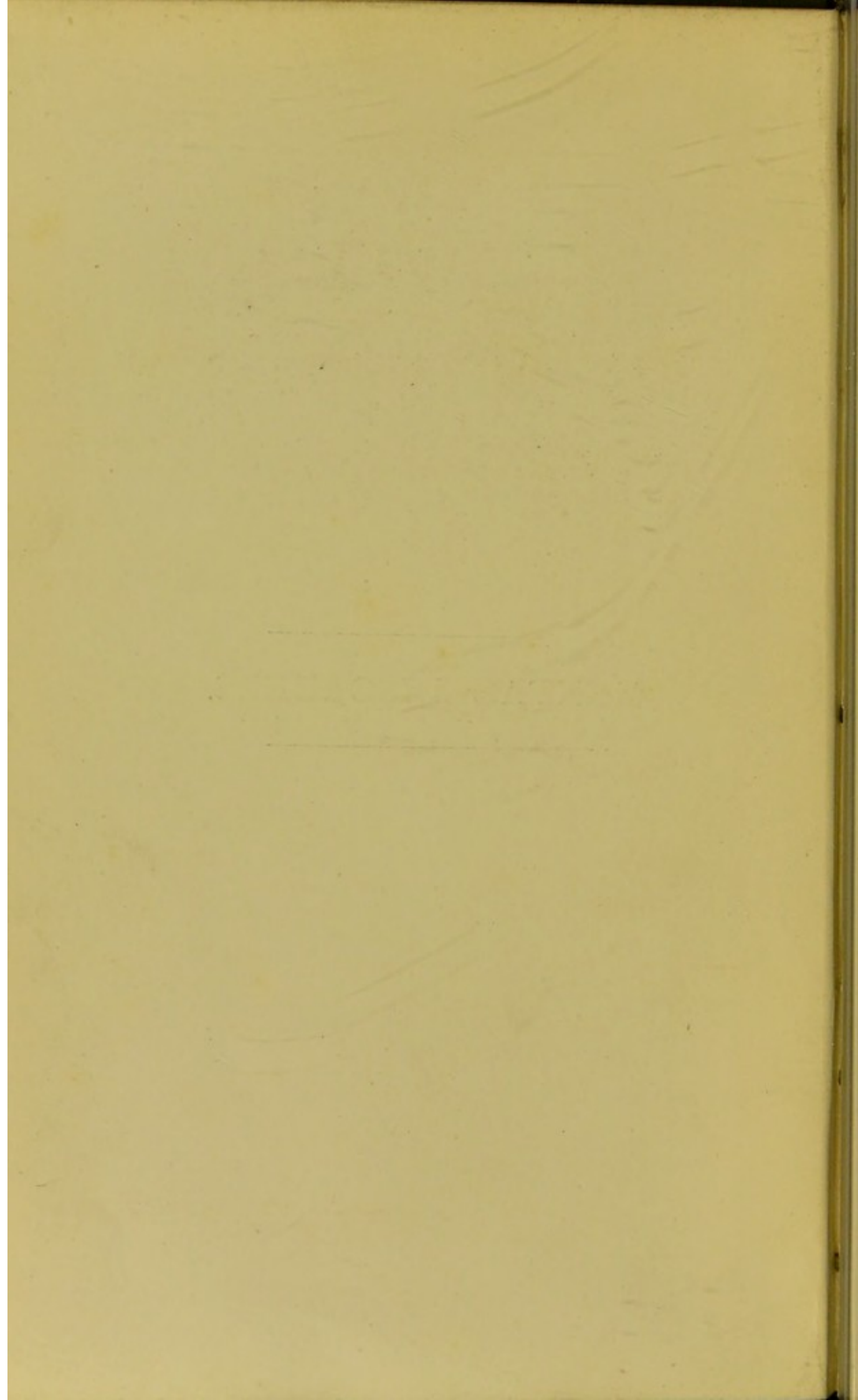
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MENTAL DISORDERS.



INSANITY CURABLE.

MENTAL DISORDERS

AND

NERVOUS AFFECTIONS

OF RECENT ORIGIN OR LONG STANDING ;

THEIR CAUSE

ARE NOW

SUCCESSFULLY TREATED

BY A NEW ESPECIAL METHOD.

BY

GEORGE MOSELEY,

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND ; LICENTIATE OF THE SOCIETY
OF APOTHECARIES ; MEMBER OF THE SANITARY INSTITUTE OF GREAT BRITAIN ;
LATE ACTING SURGEON, ROYAL ARTILLERY BARRACKS, SHORNCLIFFE ;
ETC., ETC., ETC.

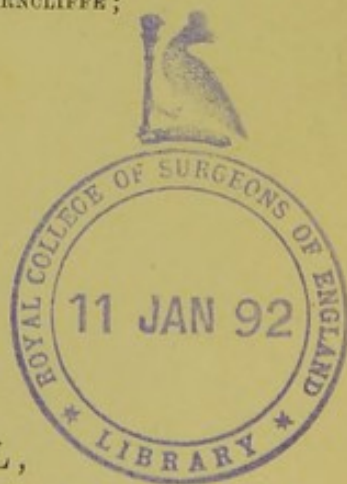


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INTRODUCTION.

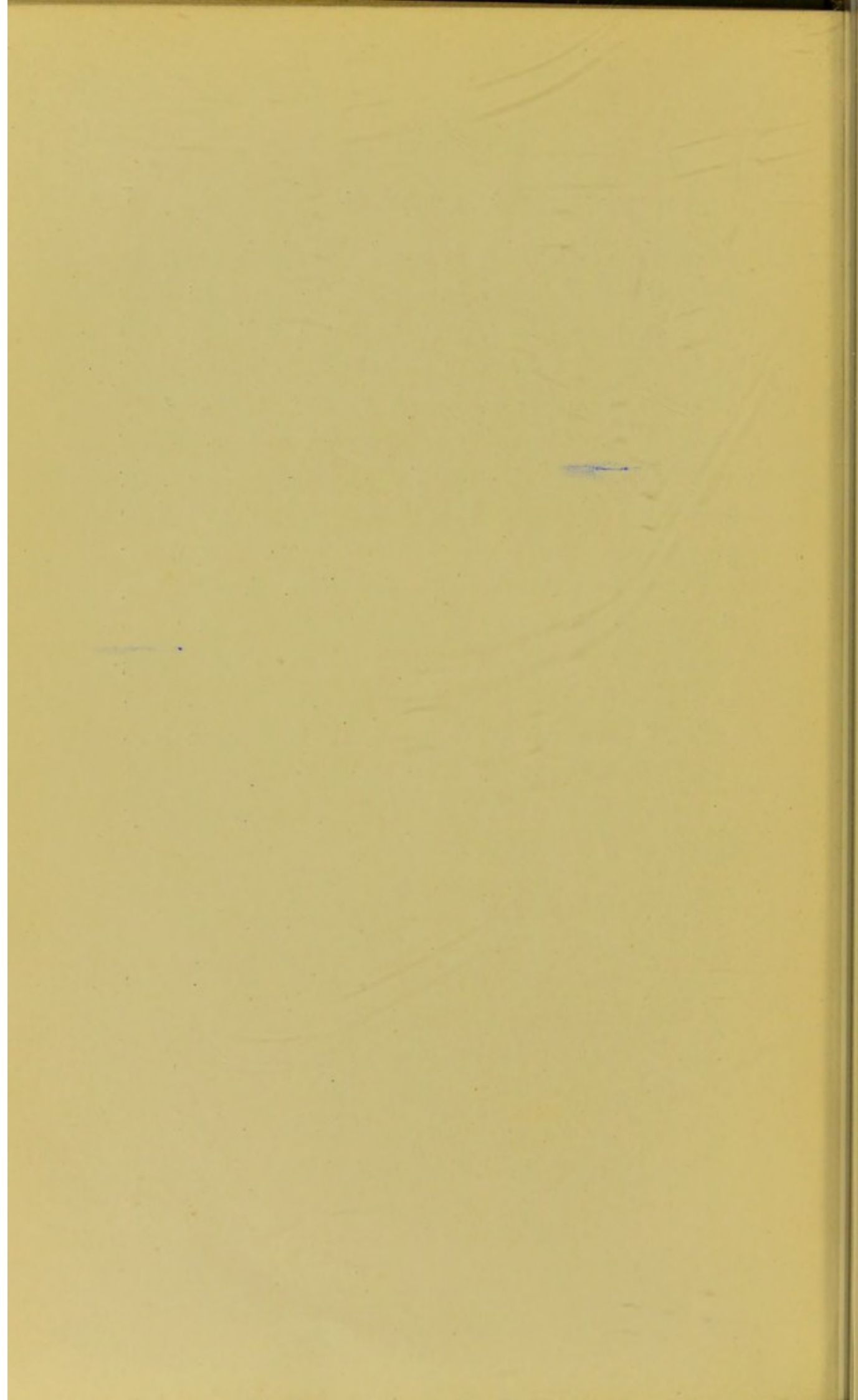
THE following pages will be read with interest by all those for whom the question of the *curability of Insanity* is one of deep, personal concern. They are written with the object of explaining some of the ways in which this terrible disease has its rise and progress in the human body ; and of drawing attention to certain methods of treatment that have for their object, not only the alleviation, but the *absolute cure* of the malady. Being designed for the perusal of non-medical persons, there will be found in it a studied absence of such technical terms and expressions as are not usually understood by the general reader.

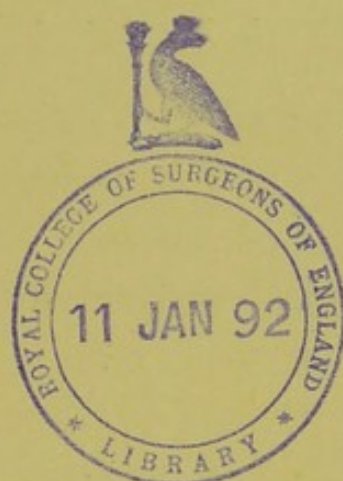
It has long been my belief that a great deal more may be accomplished in the successful treatment of

insanity in its varied forms, than is usually even attempted. In the following pages my desire has been to study brevity without sacrificing any detail that is essential for the comprehension of the subject. When it is seen that this disease has not the *indelible character* too often identified with it, it will more readily be understood that it is one that comes well within the scope of the physician who undertakes not only the study, but also the *cure* or *alleviation* of disease in all its forms. In reference to the curative treatment of the insane, how little, even in these days of progress, is attempted of a thoroughly rational and truly scientific character! Undoubtedly, the present feeling of the profession with regard to actual treatment in such cases, is that not much more can be done for the unfortunate sufferer, than the securing of healthful surroundings and proper guardianship. The intimate relationship that is known to exist, between the state of the brain and the mode in which the various bodily functions are performed, seems to be almost ignored by those of our profession who are responsible for the treatment of the insane. In cases of mental derangement, there are frequently to be observed certain symptoms that have their origin in *failure of function in some one or more of the Blood-making or Blood-purifying organs of the body*. Having such

phenomena in view, it is found that absolute cure or decided benefit arises from such measures as have for their immediate effect, the rapid oxidation and purification of the blood; and the elevation of those processes that are concerned in the excretion of waste, deleterious matters from the system. After much labour and the study of mental disease during a number of years, I now successfully put into practice some *special and peculiar methods of treatment* that have this desired end in view. The listless, do-nothing treatment of insanity, known as "The Expectant," is only mentioned to be condemned; it is, indeed, expectant—but of the utter ruin of the patient! On the other hand, the treatment here advocated, consisting of active measures duly tempered to the needs of each individual case, is reasonably expectant of his cure or alleviation.

LONDON, *November*, 1886.





MENTAL DISORDERS.

BEFORE we can hope to arrive at any true ideas on the subject of Mental Disease, more particularly as regards its mode of origin in the system, it will be necessary to disabuse our minds of a certain tendency of thought—unfortunately, sanctioned by the long usage of centuries. I allude to the almost universal belief that Insanity is a disease of an altogether *mysterious character*; and not under the influence of the ordinary laws that govern the human body in its various functions—that it is a disease of the “Spiritual Essence” or “Abstract Principle of Mind.” When it is seen that the unfortunate sufferer from mental alienation is, apparently, transformed from a decent member of society into a being of an entirely opposite character, who is equally obdurate to, gentle

persuasion or attempts at more active coercion—it is, in such circumstances, easy to understand the idea of “Possession by an Evil Spirit.” Certain phases of popular religious belief undoubtedly appear to give some countenance to that very erroneous notion. Whatever may be our views on the all-important subject of religion, we must, in the study of insanity, take a healthy materialistic view of the phenomena of impaired mind-function.

Those who are in the habit of dreaming have frequent personal experience of what madness really is. In dreams, the imagination and fancy run riot; they are uncontrolled by the reasoning faculties—those brain-centres concerned in the imagination being still awake and active, while other centres, from which proceed the reasoning operations of the mind, are asleep. In insanity, the condition of things is very similar; certain brain-centres being over-active while others are in a condition of *suspended function*. There is then no flight of fancy too absurd for belief; the emotional and imaginative faculties are morbidly active, while those that deal with comparison and teach us the fitness of things, are morbidly inactive. In “sleep-walking” we see a still closer resemblance to actual insanity. During sleep, however, the mind-phenomena are due to healthy, natural causes. In

insane conditions, the mind-phenomena are the outcome of *certain diseased processes that will, hereafter, be pointed out.*

In what follows, an attempt will be made to show that Insanity, or impairment of mind-function, is, in most cases, but the outward and visible sign of a departure from the healthy standard in the blood-making organs; and that the brain is here an instance of a part thrown into bad working order by *remediable* causes. When the stomach is disturbed, the effects are well-known; and we call it "indigestion," or failure of the function of digestion. Having recognised the diseased condition, we do not expect good digestion of food to go on, while the diseased condition continues. Let us take a similar view of the brain when it is seriously disturbed, by one or more of the many causes of disturbance to which it is ever liable. Let us take as sound and rational a view of its morbid action, as we do in the case of irritation of the stomach or any other organ. Dr. Sankey thus writes:—"When we speak of mental disease or disorder of the mind; terms which are legitimate because they represent a general opinion—it is not that we would intimate that mind can be separated from body; but that the body is diseased and gives rise to alteration of this function called mental

or mind." So thought Shakespeare when he wrote :—

“ Infirmity of mind

Doth make me neglect my office ;

We are not ourselves when Nature, being oppressed,

Commands the mind to suffer with the body !”

The brain of the healthy adult weighs about three pounds. It is the most delicate and complex organ of which it is possible to conceive. Besides the different portions of its substance that are capable of distinction by the naked eye, there are structures so excessively minute, that the most powerful microscope can do little more than, as it were, skim over the surface. Astronomers tell us there is good reason to believe, that there are stars in the firmament which it is beyond the power of the most powerful telescope to bring into the field of vision. In the region of the Infinitely Little, we may say, with equal truth, that the most powerful microscopes will never fathom the mysterious intricacies of *the minute structure of the brain*. “ One molecule of nerve element is probably more complex in construction than the entire solar system !” (*Dr. Maudsley.*)

I will not here attempt anything like a scientific description of the *chemical composition* of the brain. Suffice it to say, briefly, that it consists of Albuminous and Fatty Matters ; and certain salts,

especially the Phosphates—Phosphorus in combination being a very essential element in the composition of brain-tissue. Brain-tissue also contains a very large proportion of water—the more highly endowed portion known as the “Grey matter” contains as much as eighty-six per cent.

This wonderful mechanism is retained in good working-order, only by a *constant, well-regulated supply of healthy blood*. The brain, like any other part, depends upon this vital fluid for its nourishment ; and draws from it the materials for its constant repair and maintenance. There is also good reason to believe that every action of the mind, of whatever kind, is essentially dependent upon the force generated by chemical interchanges between the blood and the delicate cells of the brain-tissue. “We cannot entertain a doubt that every change in our sensations and ideas, must be accompanied with some corresponding change in the organic matter of the body.” (*Sir Humphrey Davy*.) Bearing these facts in mind, we may readily suppose that a relatively large supply of blood is absolutely necessary to the brain—and, as a matter of fact, we do find that about one-fifth more blood, is, at any given time, sent to the brain than to any other part of the body having the same actual weight. All the phenomena

of mind—every thought—every train of reasoning—every exercise of the moral as well as the intellectual faculties—all are dependent for their manifestation, upon the interchanges between the cells of the brain-substance and the blood that circulates within it, at any given moment. In short, the actions of the mind spring no more from the brain *alone* than they do from the blood alone—they arise from reciprocal action between the blood and the brain. The blood gives up something to the cells, in that particular region where the mental process is occurring—and the cells, in their turn, yield up some particles of matter to the blood. By these movements between the atoms of matter, force is generated which results in intellectual or moral activity, of one kind or another. *The dependence of the moral faculties upon the condition of the brain* is well illustrated in a case related in Dr. Wigan's work on the "Duality of the Mind." It is a remarkable instance of *moral perversion* in a youth—the result of a blow on the head from a ruler. After due consideration it was decided to open the skull by "trephining." The success of the measure, in relieving the internal brain-pressure, was complete; and the youth was restored to his former self—his depravity and unmanageableness giving way to characteristic docility and tractableness. As an example of the effect of

vitiating blood alone in altering the entire bent of the moral nature, I may mention the following from "Hammond's Treatise on Insanity:"—"Drs. Bucknill and Tuke refer to the case of a lady, whose character had always been distinguished for conscientiousness, whose religious education had been of the sombre kind, and who after an attack of small-pox, attended with congestion of the brain, recovered with the natural bent of her disposition greatly altered."

Healthy intellectual activity is dependent upon two essential conditions—*a well-regulated supply of suitable blood; and a natural, healthy state of the brain itself.* The blood may be deficient in quality in two principal ways:—(1) It may contain certain of its essential ingredients in too small proportion, such as Iron or Oxygen—while others, such as Carbon may be in excess of the healthy standard. (2) It may contain various impurities, arising from partial failure of function in some of the great purifying organs of the body, such as the liver, the skin, or the kidneys. When such badly prepared and imperfectly purified blood circulates in the brain, the *delicate nervous structure* seeks in vain for nutritive material, of proper quality and quantity. The brain-substance is in consequence badly nourished. In such conditions the functions of the brain are badly performed; and,

according to the intensity of the blood-disease, and the inherited susceptibility of the brain, there will be some form of mental disease, or impairment of mind-function—ranging from simple moodiness, or irritability of temper, up to the violent outbreaks of acute delirious mania. The diseased physical condition here forms the *predisposing cause*; while the *exciting cause* to which the outbreak is *apparently* due, is frequently supplied by some trouble, loss or disappointment, that would, however, be well-borne by a healthy, undisturbed brain.

As common examples of this want of harmony between the composition of the blood and the requirements of the brain-cells, may be mentioned the well-known effects of so-called “Biliousness”—due to retention in the blood of certain materials which, in healthy conditions, are *excreted* by the liver. The melancholy; irritability of temper; moodiness; and inaptitude for work of every kind, are only too well-known, as results of this condition, in the personal experience of most of us. The delirium of fevers, and the phenomena of alcoholic intoxication are also common examples of the same condition—the morbid brain-action being due to the circulation of *poisonous matters* in the blood. “A vitiated blood quickly affects the function of the supreme cerebral

centres. Alcohol yields the simplest instance in illustration of the disturbing effects on mind of a foreign matter introduced into the blood from without—here, where each phase of an artificially produced insanity is passed through successively in a brief space of time, we have the abstract and brief chronicle of the history of insanity.” (*Dr. Maudsley.*) In these instances the brain quickly resumes its healthy action, so soon as the particular poisons are eliminated from the blood—they differ, however, in no essential quality from those more intense and more permanent conditions that pertain to insanity. For the right understanding of the subject, the great point to be kept in view is—that insanity in its origin, has more to do with the *fluid* than with the *solid* matter of the body; is more dependent upon the composition of the blood than upon the actual state of the brain-structures. The view here expressed derives much support from this fact—that nervous diseases of all kinds are, in *very cold* as well as *very hot* climates, much more uncommon than in a climate like our own. In a very hot climate, the necessarily excessive action of the skin undoubtedly tends to keep the blood pure—while in the extreme of cold, constant combustion is necessary for keeping up the bodily heat; and in this process of active combustion, the blood-impurities are burnt up before reaching a dangerous degree of accumulation.

There is, in health, an extremely fine adjustment between the chemical composition of the blood and the needs of the body. Every separate structure and organ finds in the blood the materials for its constant repair and maintenance. The blood is also the channel by which the effete products of tissue-change are carried, before being cast out of the body. So fine is this adjustment between the blood and the tissues, that the most minute particles of certain poisonous substances are sufficient, when introduced into the current, not only to embarrass, but altogether to put an end to the vital processes. In insanity we have an instance, not of total stoppage, but *serious embarrassment* of these vital processes—from poisons, not introduced from without, but bred within the body itself.

We must now consider in detail *some of the ways in which the blood is vitiated, and rendered unfit to nourish healthy brain-tissue*, and to sustain healthy brain-function. The principal organs concerned in the manufacture of blood from the food-materials, are the stomach and liver. I will not here attempt a description of the various intricate processes, by which the food we eat is transformed into healthy blood. If the primary process of digestion in the stomach be imperfectly performed, the blood will suffer in a corresponding

degree. If the liver be at fault, the secondary process of blood-formation that goes on in this organ will be imperfectly accomplished ; and the blood will accordingly suffer in purity. "It is well-known that disturbances of the digestion produce a depressing effect on the system. Now, the *early stage of ordinary insanity* very closely resembles such a condition. In nearly every case well marked symptoms of impaired digestion are present, and are the first to appear—such as capricious appetite, loaded tongue, flatulence, anxious feeling located at the præcordia, constipation, &c., all of which point to an error in the process of *blood-making*." (*Dr. Sankey*.) But supposing no fault to exist in the blood-making organs, it must be remembered that *the vital fluid may be contaminated by the presence of various animal substances*, resulting from the actual wearing away of the tissues of the body in its daily work. In health these substances find an outlet from the body by way of the kidneys, the skin, the lungs, the liver, and the intestinal canal. Every day several pounds of nutriment in various shapes is taken into the body, to supply the place of an equivalent amount of used-up material. If one or more of these purifying organs fail to eliminate the waste products, they must be retained in the blood-current, and there prove a fruitful source of every kind of disease—and, notably, of some form of *failure in brain-function*.

So far, we have considered morbid changes in the quality of the blood. We now have to take into consideration causes of brain disturbance connected with *irregularities in the force of the blood-current, and in the amount of blood contained in the vessels of the brain*—errors of blood-distribution. It is here necessary to draw attention to the fact that there are two systems of nerves in the human body—the Cerebro-spinal; and the Sympathetic. It is the sympathetic system that regulates and controls the process of digestion. We have already seen that each separate structure in the human body draws from the blood the special materials for its own peculiar growth and maintenance. This intricate process of *natural selection* of materials from the blood is controlled by the fibres of the sympathetic system, that everywhere run along the blood-vessels to their ultimate ramifications in the tissues. A very important office performed by the branches of the Sympathetic, is that of narrowing or widening the minute branches of the arterial system—thus diminishing or increasing the flow of blood in any particular part. A common example of this controlling power may be seen in the phenomenon of “blushing,” which is directly due to the widening of the minute arterial channels in the skin of the face.

In estimating the physical causes of insanity, too

little prominence has hitherto been given to *the influence of the sympathetic system of nerves*, in inducing and perpetuating disturbances of the brain. It is interesting to note that lower down in the scale of life are creatures that have no brain and spinal cord, but yet fulfil all the purposes of their creation by the aid of the sympathetic system alone. Now, in cases of chronic derangement of one or more of the internal organs—the stomach and liver more especially—it sooner or later invariably follows that *some of the ganglia* of the sympathetic system that are found connected with every organ in the body, lapse into a state of chronic irritability with consequent impairment of their peculiar nervous function. This is more likely to happen when the original malady has been greatly aggravated by medicinal remedies of a violent, irritating description—such as drastic purgatives ; mineral alteratives ; and powerful vegetable bitters—together with an injudicious dietary. This irritable condition is more likely to be observed in *the stomach* than any other organ. The common practice of treating various forms of indigestion by strong medicines—acids or alkalies—and frequently purgations of the whole intestinal tract, is as reprehensible as it is thoroughly unscientific. If, at the same time, the daily dietary of the dyspeptic be not kept within the limits of the functional ability of the diseased organs, we have in operation a train of powerful causes

that must end, either in *chronic congestion and irritation in some portion of the sympathetic nervous system*, or in *incurable organic disease*. The notion of its being possible to *whip up* a debilitated organ to any degree of healthy activity, is absolutely at variance with the dictates of common sense. I dwell much upon these points, because they are of importance in the explanation of some of the most common causes of irregularities in the blood-circulation within the brain. In a debilitated organ, such as the much-injured stomach we have just considered, there are causes at work injuriously affecting the blood-supply *to the brain*—as regards both quality and quantity.

We have already seen how such a condition injures the quality of the blood, and, consequently, of the brain-tissue in which it circulates. I now come to the explanation of the manner in which *such morbid conditions in the nervous structure of the stomach, affect the amount and force of the blood-current in the brain itself*. No single organ can suffer without affecting to an appreciable extent, all the other bodily organs and structures. This ordinary degree of sympathy is, in the case of the brain and stomach, very much intensified—for the sympathy between them is of the very closest description. The brain very powerfully influences the operations of the stomach ;

and the stomach, in like manner, those of the brain. Under the influence of strong mental emotion, or from the mental effect of some very painful or disgusting sight, it is not uncommon to have the contents of the stomach forcibly ejected, in the act of vomiting. It is universally acknowledged that there is no more fruitful cause of stomach derangement than excessive worry or mental agitation. Persistent vomiting is also a well-known symptom of *pressure upon the brain-substance* from some morbid growth within the skull, or of other diseased brain-states—it is known as “cerebral vomiting.” When there is a congested, irritable condition of the sympathetic ganglia, or masses of nervous matter, that exist in the region of the stomach, there is, by virtue of the intimate sympathy between it and the brain, a great tendency towards the transference of this irritability upwards, along the sympathetic fibres, to the brain itself. This has the effect of contracting or widening the smaller arteries in the brain—and thus diminishing or accelerating the flow of blood, in an irregular and purposeless manner. A condition, as to the amount of blood and force of the current in the brain, is thus induced which is not in accord with the needs of the part—*the healthy balance of the circulation in the brain is disturbed*. The functions of the brain being dependent upon the amount of blood and the force of the current within it, at any given time,

we may summarise the brain conditions caused by varying degrees of blood-pressure, in the following manner :—“(1) Very languid circulation—corresponding with melancholia and inanition. (2) Healthy but increased circulation—corresponding with healthy mental acts. (3) Excessive supply of blood—corresponding with furious mania and excitement.” In dyspeptic states it is no uncommon thing to notice an unusual redness of one cheek, or ear, or the tip of the nose, appearing soon after a meal. This passing condition is due to the same cause, and is the exact representation of that which we have described as taking place *in the brain itself* in other more serious conditions of stomach incompetence. All the painful mental symptoms of hypochondriasis; the varied phenomena of so-called “exhaustion of the brain and spinal cord;” the irritability, restlessness, and weariness of life that we hear so much about in the present day—all are, in great part, due to brain sympathy with a debilitated stomach—a stomach that has, by injudicious treatment, been hurried on, from a condition of simple mucous congestion, into one of *nervous irritability and exhaustion*. What is here said of the stomach, as to the morbid train of cause and effect in producing brain disturbance, applies to similar diseased states in other organs, but not in an equal degree.

We have seen how *poverty of blood* is induced by failure in one or more of the primary nutritive organs—how *blood-contamination* arises from failure in one or more of the excretory or purifying organs and structures—and how serious *irregularities of the blood-circulation* are produced in the brain, by *transferred irritation* from distant parts of the sympathetic nervous system. Where this combination of adverse circumstances is in operation for any length of time, the brain ultimately becomes seriously weakened—falling into a state of mal-nutrition and irritability. The brain being thus lowered from the standard of health, all the processes of life in the human body are carried on at a disadvantage ; for the influence of the brain extends, both in health and disease, to every fibre of the whole being. *A vicious circle* of morbid influence is thus set up which, if unrestrained by judicious interference, hurries on the subject of it to some form of serious bodily or mental disease. Especially is the latter result to be feared, when to these influences are added the evil effect of mental worry and anxiety, springing from the thousand and one causes in daily operation around us. We must also bear in mind that the brain of a person predisposed to insanity is of a more or less unstable kind, and but ill-adapted to bear up against adverse conditions of long duration. As a rule, the more highly the emotional

nature, as distinguished from the reasoning powers is developed, the greater is the liability to some form of insanity. He who can best suppress *undue emotion*—can keep his *own feelings* well under control—will have the stronger mind, and be unlikely to go astray. There seems to be good evidence that *inherited instability of brain and nerves* is, as the race progresses in civilisation, rather increasing than diminishing among us.

Although the morbid conditions of the blood and sympathetic nervous system already described are most important factors in the causation of insanity, it must not be supposed that where they are in operation insanity will of necessity follow. We may, however, safely say that whenever these diseased conditions are allowed to go on *unchecked by suitable remedies*, their pernicious influence will be progressive; and the progress will be towards serious disease in some particular organ or part. In any given case, the *particular part* in which the diseased action will concentrate in force, must depend upon the hereditary tendencies of the individual. “When the whole house shakes, the worst-built room will suffer most!” The causes which, in one person, produce insanity may, in another, lead to acute or chronic disease in some different organ. It is not uncommon to see this

inherited weakness of constitution taking a different form in members of the same family—one will suffer from some form of insanity ; another from some anomalous nervous disease, or epilepsy ; another will be “consumptive ;” while a fourth will suffer from chronic skin-disease, and probably be the strongest member of the family. There is on record an interesting case of a family of four brothers, three of whom became insane, while the fourth suffered from chronic kidney-disease, *his brain remaining unaffected*. The diseased action may fall upon the kidneys or liver ; upon the lungs or the heart, or the skin, mucous membranes, and other structures may be the seat of some diseased process of a more or less energetic character. In short, whenever we hear of serious cases of liver-disease, lung-disease, heart-disease, and so on, we are sure that in every case there must have been a pre-existing state of the bodily health presenting symptoms of a vague and indefinable character, but clearly indicating the operation of causes which will, at length, *fix upon some particular part*—and thus give the malady a “local habitation and a name.” Among the highly civilised races, the prevailing type of brain is particularly liable to become affected by such diseased influences ; it therefore frequently affords the *local habitation—and the name is* INSANITY.

Seeing that serious mental and bodily diseases do not generally spring upon us unawares, but, as it were, cast their shadows before them, it will be satisfactory to enumerate some of the more common symptoms of that bodily condition which is the harbinger of the more intractable diseases—and of insanity in particular. *Of the symptoms, both physical and mental, that point to the approach of serious functional disease of the brain*, a brief recital must suffice. There may be pain at the top of the head of an intermittent character, but sometimes lasting for days ; transient sensations of giddiness or “swimming in the head,” sometimes induced by sudden change of posture ; a sense of fulness within the skull, as if it contained air or water under pressure ; and sudden rushes of blood to the head, accompanied by flushing of the face. Another peculiar symptom is that of a painful sense of constriction or tightness across the bridge of the nose. There are frequently specks before the eyes, and various disturbances of the vision ; ringing, blowing, whistling and other noises in the ears ; various peculiar sensations in the tongue, together with a feeling as if a stiff wire were inserted into the substance of it ; a more or less constant presence in the nose of a sort of leathery or metallic smell ; a sensation of choking or impending suffocation, accompanied by much mental distress ; a feeling of *utter and complete prostration* of

all the bodily powers, almost as if the processes of life were coming to a stand-still, and marked by great feebleness of the voice—this symptom of unutterable weariness frequently occurs in the morning, and may pass away completely before the end of the day. Various sensations in the legs and arms may be complained of, such as pricking or darting pains; violent itching of the skin; and, notably, a peculiar twitching or trembling of the superficial fibres of certain muscles—this may be seen as well as felt, may take place in any part of the body, and is very symptomatic of *nervous exhaustion*. There is often a sense of pain and weariness in the part known as “the small of the back”—this may amount to the sharp pain of a neuralgic character. The appetite is capricious and there is frequently a burning or boring sensation at the *pit of the stomach*—this region being the seat of an immense variety of sensations of a disagreeable or painful kind, and to it patients will instinctively point, as the seat of their malady. These *stomach-sensations* undoubtedly do arise from irritation in the ganglia of the sympathetic nervous system, that are scattered about the region of that organ.

Certain mental feelings of a very distressing kind are characteristic of decided progress in the direction of insanity. They are :—Indefinable apprehension of

coming evil ; feeling of incompetence for the duties of life, and especially for responsibility in any shape ; increasing irritability of temper, with a disposition to make mountains out of mole-hills, by magnifying the little trials of daily existence ; sudden change of character ; fears that actual temptations to *suicide* may occur and perhaps prove irresistible ; a totally indescribable feeling of horror and alarm, beginning with a rush of blood to the head, and ending with violent palpitation of the heart ; perversion of the *sexual instinct*, with a constant, irresistible inclination to dwell upon such subjects, a dread of the approach of incompetence and a general distrust of self where sexual matters are concerned. Horror of water or of large open spaces is sometimes observed, together with unnatural love of solitude ; feelings of abject self-depreciation and distrust, *and a general disgust and weariness of life*. On first lying down to sleep, the mental sensations are often very distressing, and the sleep is unrefreshing and broken by painful dreams. If many nights be passed without sleep, or with very little sleep, the condition is grave and cries aloud for the most judicious treatment, if the patient is to be saved from the *actual outbreak of insanity*. The various perversions of thought and feeling here detailed betoken an approach to the *boundary line* that divides sanity from insanity, and they show that the brain is

becoming seriously involved in the morbid processes at work in the body.

“The *grey* matter of the brain is the outer layer of that organ, and the physical agent of the mind. In nervous indigestion, morbid sympathy is propagated to it, and morbid nutrition induced in it, and the mind thus has an unfit organ to work withal. The consequence is a series of mental feeblenesses and contradictions that form a large portion of the misery of the dyspeptic. The impatience, irascibility, caprice, anxiety about trifles, and about self, suspicions, groundless fears, and similar marks of morbidly vivid mental action, are things for which the patient deserves pity, for he knows their existence and feels the torment of their mastery over him. That dominion may increase until *moral or intellectual insanity* is established—a result of frequent occurrence when, misled by the clean tongue of nervous dyspepsia, to which insanity of this kind belongs, the practitioner has only *debility* in his head, and prescribes stimulation as a remedy. Such cases people the lunatic asylum.”
(*Dr. Gully*—“On Chronic Disease.”)

It is not to be supposed that all the foregoing symptoms are likely to occur in combination in any one individual; nor is it certain that where any of

them do occur, insanity must of necessity follow. Individually and collectively, however, they are suggestive of that peculiar condition of the blood and sympathetic nervous system, *primarily*, and of the brain, *secondarily*, that so often precedes the onset of that perverted mental state called INSANITY.

In one respect, *the brain is at a serious disadvantage* compared with the other vital organs. When any other organ, owing to some diseased condition, is unable to perform its usual functions, the burden of its work will be taken up by some compensatory organ or organs. When the lungs are diseased, the balance of function is retained by the skin and kidneys taking up an extra amount of work—in the same way, the skin and kidneys act as compensatory organs to each other. There is, however, no organ nor structure that can, by excessive functional activity, make up for any deficiencies in the brain. The brain has no compensatory organs. Both in health and disease, it must bear its own burden—the work has to be done, and it alone can do it! It is only by the renovating, reconstructing power of *sleep* over the brain that we live on from day to day. More especially when the brain is irritable and the bodily health below par, is the beneficial influence of sleep needed, for its soothing effect on the nerve cells of the exhausted brain.

Seeing that the brain has to do its work single-handed, and that only during sound sleep does its incessant activity subside, it is not difficult to understand that where want of sound, refreshing sleep is a prominent symptom, there the brain-irritation is *progressive* ; and that some form of brain-disturbance will assuredly follow.

In the consideration of the actual state of the brain in insanity, it is necessary to distinguish two kinds of disease in any organ. These are generally recognised by the terms "functional" and "organic"—although not now considered scientifically accurate, they will serve our purpose better than any other terms. In *functional* disease, the morbid process has not yet produced any structural changes of a lasting character—such as unnatural hardness, enlargement, or contraction of tissue. In *organic* disease, on the other hand, the morbid processes have produced important changes in the actual substance of the organ, of a more or less coarse description and characterised by permanence. Functional disease is *curable*. Organic disease is *incurable*. My belief, shared by many recognised authorities on the subject, is that in most cases of insanity—even those that have gone on for years—the condition of the brain is still one of functional disease only ; and that the morbid processes have not

produced permanent alterations in the actual structure of the brain. "The brain suffers less from primary disease than any other organ in the body ; it is true it sympathises with all, and frequently becomes secondarily affected. True insanity, from actual primary disease of the brain itself, is perhaps the most rare disease to which mankind is subject." I base my support of the views here expressed on evidence obtained from the examination of the brains of those who have died insane ; and also on the evidence afforded by the numerous instances of cases of mental disease being *completely cured after many years' duration*—sometimes in a remarkably sudden and unlooked-for manner. Nature is often very cruel, but she can be kind, and will frequently respond to our endeavours by bringing back to a natural, healthy state, functionally disturbed organs and tissues.

In the examination of the brains of those who have died insane, we only rarely meet with organic changes, namely—coarse changes that are visible to the naked eye, or perceptible by the sense of touch. Indeed, we are—even where the insanity was life-long—usually struck with the comparatively trivial alterations from the normal that are observable to the naked eye. Very frequently the brain of one who during life was continually insane, will, apparently, differ in no respect

from the brain of a sane individual. This is exactly what we should expect to find ; it is in perfect accord with the theory, that insanity is a disease more of *the blood* than of the brain itself. The *sudden* nature of many recorded instances of cure in cases of long-enduring insanity, conclusively proves that the symptoms could not have been due to serious alterations in the structure of the brain—so rapid a change in the solid matter of the body, in any part, could not occur during life. The following case affords a *remarkable instance of rapid recovery* from long-enduring insanity :—A poor man married at the age of nineteen. Through his wife's unfaithfulness he became insane, and continued so for nearly thirty years. His mother, at length, wishing to have him under her care, obtained the necessary consent, and he was removed to her cottage. There he lived for a year or two, when, in a fit of depression, he endeavoured to commit suicide by cutting his throat. There was *great loss of blood* ; but after much care and anxiety, not only was the life saved, but strange to relate—he also regained his reason ! The true explanation of this extraordinary case is not far to seek. During the long years of his insanity, the brain, although perverted in its action, remained only *functionally* diseased ; and was therefore ready to reassert itself when the favourable moment arrived. This happy change in the mental condition can,

undoubtedly, be traced to the *violent alterative effect* on the general mass of blood, caused by the act that abstracted so much of it as to place his life in peril. We may reasonably suppose that the *new blood* formed during the progress of recovery was of a healthy character—fit to nourish healthy brain-tissue, and to sustain healthy brain-action. It is probable that at any period during the thirty years of his insanity, the same change to healthy action might have been brought about by suitable curative measures—directed to the *purification of the general mass of the blood*, and to the quickening of those vital processes that make for health. Rapid recovery from insanity has been known to follow the amputation of a limb, in cases of injury or disease, or a severe surgical operation of some other kind. Restoration of the mental faculties has followed on recovery from some violent fever, such as Typhoid, Small-pox or Scarlet fever. In short, any circumstances that produce a *powerful alterative effect on the blood*, would appear to be favourable to the cure of insanity. In our efforts to cure mental disease, we must not rest content with merely defensive measures ; if these efforts are to be crowned with success, vigorous methods of attack must also enter largely into our plan of action.

Before considering the details of the proper treat-

ment of insane conditions, *some very suggestive facts* connected with the disease will help us to recognise the true basis on which the successful curative treatment should rest. When a galvanic battery has been some time in use, the current will be found to grow more and more feeble, as the exciting fluid in the cells loses its strength—until, at length, not even the feeblest current can be obtained from it. If we now pour away the old, vitiated fluid, and re-charge the cells with a fresh, active solution, a powerful galvanic current will be again set up; and the machine will again be active—that is supposing the solid parts to remain intact. The fault was in the *fluid*, not the *solid* elements that compose it. The analogy with the exhausted brain of insanity is here complete. In one case, the fresh acid solution will again set up electrical action; in the other case, new and healthy blood will re-establish in the nerve-cells of the brain, the actions necessary to every form of healthy brain-function.

Although the brain is so highly organised, and consequently liable to *functional* disturbances, facts prove that no other organ in the body possesses such power of resistance to those permanent alterations in structure, known as *organic changes*. In cases of *death from starvation*, while the heart loses 44 per

cent. of its weight, and the liver as much as 52 per cent. of its weight, the Brain and Nervous System are found to lose only 2 per cent. of their weight. That is to say—the brain possesses an unmatched power of resistance to diseased influences at work in the body, of so powerful a character as to diminish the weight of other organs by more than one half. After death from starvation, it is also found that the brain contains considerably more blood than any other part of the body. These facts prove the immense vitality of the brain, even in the most adverse conditions; and they afford very valuable evidence in support of the view that most cases of insanity are examples of merely functional derangement—in a part, highly organised and extremely sensitive, but possessing, at the same time, *an unequalled power of resistance to permanently injurious influences.*

The following case is another illustration of the brain's marvellous power of resisting injurious influences, of a different character from the preceding:—A sailor fell from the mast. For three years after this occurrence he lived what may be called “an automatic life;” there was during the whole period, no evidence of actual consciousness of being. He fortunately fell into the hands of a celebrated surgeon who performed the operation of

“Trephining”—the bony tables of the skull being opened in the usual manner. By this procedure, he was completely cured, *regaining consciousness and the full action of the mental faculties*. Of the long period of unconsciousness, he afterwards remembered absolutely nothing—the three years had left a complete blank on the tablets of memory. This is a good instance of the readiness of an embarrassed brain to reassert its healthy functions, on the removal of causes of *direct pressure* on its substance—a case, with regard to the chances of recovery, apparently of the most hopeless description.

Cases of recovery after the disorder has lasted many years, although exceptional, are not wanting. Dr. Buttolph records the case of a female who recovered after being insane eighteen years, and a male after six years. In the Report of the Devon Asylum (1850) is mentioned the recovery of a female patient who had been maniacal for twenty years. Rush relates the case of a farmer who recovered after being insane eighteen years. Recently we have seen a patient in Bethlem Hospital recover after fifteen years of profound melancholia. When Dr. Williams used to ask him to play billiards he refused. One day, the marker being away, Dr. Williams pressed him to help as a kindness. He consented, and this seemed to be the turning point

in his recovery. Of sudden recoveries a good example occurred in a puerperal case we saw not long since at Bethlem. The woman said one day after her dinner that she felt she had recovered her reason, and so it proved; nor had she any relapse. Her expression was, "I feel changed and am now quite well." (*Drs. Bucknill and Tuke.*)

In certain forms of insanity there are *lucid intervals*—a condition of sanity alternating with insanity. In these cases it is only reasonable to look upon *the blood* as the cause of such frequently recurring outbreaks. There are many instances of insanity in Gouty and Rheumatic subjects, where the mental disease is distinctly due to the suppression of the customary fit of gout or rheumatism. Such cases have been cured by revulsive measures to the limbs and surface of the body—such as the application of mustard, turpentine, &c.—with the effect of bringing on the desired attack of gout or rheumatism in parts at a distance from the brain. In similar cases, mental outbreaks have alternated with the ordinary gouty or rheumatic attack—according to the choice, on the part of the specific blood-poison, of the limbs or the brain, as the field for its morbid energies. This interchangeableness between mental and certain forms of bodily disease, is not confined to gout and rheumatism. Among

diseases not infrequently associated with insanity, Phthisis and Heart-disease may be mentioned—together with Kidney-disease, Ague, Erysipelas, Asthma, and Syphilis. “In short, any cause which operates hurtfully upon the general health may have insanity for its result and outcome.” Indeed, we may go so far as to say that, in any disease due to a *specific poison* in the blood and evidenced by certain bodily symptoms, if this specific poison is in an active state and the ordinary bodily symptoms are not manifested—then there is great likelihood that the brain will become affected. This applies in both acute and chronic disease. The delirium of those fevers accompanied with an eruption on the skin, is always more intense when, from any cause, the eruption is suppressed—and great improvement in the mental symptoms is often coincident with the appearance of the rash, spontaneously or as the result of suitable remedies. We have a striking example of insanity arising from *blood contamination*, in that extraordinary disease known as “Pellagra,” due to a *peculiar blood-poison* that originates in impure maize—the maize being affected with a parasitic growth. In Pellagra there are both mental and bodily symptoms; the mental symptoms often predominate. The Asylums at Vienna and Verona sometimes contain large numbers of patients thus afflicted.

We have here merely glanced at a few points in a very large and interesting field of study connected with the physical causes of insanity. At the risk of being accused of needless repetition, I would again call attention to this point—that the study of mental disease, in an impartial spirit, will lead us more and more to look upon *the blood as the true seat of the disease!* Our measures for its relief must be shaped accordingly. In a disease that assumes so many different forms, and of which the course and termination is always so uncertain, it would be unscientific to lay down any laws of causation from which there is no deviation. The view of its causation here advocated applies to the very large majority of cases of insanity of every description; and not to insanity alone, but also to an immense range of nervous diseases with symptoms referred to the brain and spinal cord—including Epilepsy, Chorea, Catalepsy, some forms of Hysteria, Hypochondriasis, many forms of Paralysis, and the earlier stages of Locomotor Ataxia. Dr. Maudsley adopts the following classification:—The common cause may produce disorders of *sensation* giving rise to various forms of Neuralgia; of *motion* resulting in Epilepsy and other spasmodic diseases; of *thought and feeling* causing mental derangements; of *nutrition* leading to Diabetes, Phthisis, Cancer, &c. The treatment based upon these theories is applied

successfully to that ever-increasing class of diseases, at present comprehended under the term *Nervous Exhaustion*. "The brain is at the present day over-taxed; the muscular system not sufficiently so. Insanity is on the increase, active inflammation on the decrease. It is therefore of the greatest importance to all who suffer from indigestion and obscure nervous complaints, and who have any great mental strain, to beware, and while there is yet time, to resort to remedies, and have the blood purified."

Treatment.—Having indicated the way in which the mental faculties become perverted, from morbid influences at work in other parts of the body, it is now my more pleasant duty to point out some of the indications for the *successful curative-treatment* of insanity. We may classify the measures of treatment in the following manner :—(1) Measures designed to raise the vital tone in the substance of the brain itself, and so to place it in the best possible position for resisting the pernicious effect of an impure, ill-regulated blood supply. (2) Measures having the immediate object of suppressing diseased action in those organs of the body that give evidence of diminished or perverted activity. The blood-making, as well as blood-purifying organs must be induced to take on healthy instead of diseased action. (3) Measures of a very special kind, adapted

to promote the transference, from the internal parts to the skin, of congestion and irritation in the masses of nervous matter that form the ganglia of the Sympathetic System—particularly those that correspond in situation to the “pit of the stomach.”

I advocate the most *complete freedom of choice in the use of remedial agents*, holding myself free to use remedies of every kind, entirely without reference to what is commonly called “Orthodox opinion.” Narrowness and prejudice have not, by any means, died out in our profession, and there is still much truth in the charge brought against us by Adam Smith, the author of “Wealth of Nations,” in the following words:—“The great success of quacks in England has been altogether owing to the real quackery of the regular physicians.” If we would repudiate this charge, we must be very catholic in our selection of remedies for the cure of disease. It should be matter of perfect indifference to us, that certain methods of treatment have become identical with so-called “quacks.” In the cause of suffering humanity, we must be entirely free to utilise all the agencies that nature and art may place at our disposal.

I will here content myself with a simple enumeration of *those remedies that I find to be most*

successful in mental diseases. I will not, moreover, burden the reader with any detailed descriptions of cases successfully treated by these methods. I shall, herein, be more general than particular. I lay great stress upon the value of *applications to the skin of the head.* By a specially constructed apparatus I direct a powerful stream of water to the head alone. The strength of the douche is graduated according to the necessities of the case ; and the temperature of the water varies in like manner, between icy coldness and a considerable degree of heat. In some cases, while the douching of the head is in progress, I find it necessary at the same time to apply either very hot or very cold water to the legs and feet. Another method of treatment that frequently proves of great benefit is that of producing, by artificial means, a *copious eruption of spots or pimples* on the head and other parts of the body. I use a variety of agents for this purpose—among them being the method of producing an artificial skin-eruption invented by a German irregular practitioner, named Baunscheidt (“Baunscheidism”). This is very complete and satisfactory in the attainment of the desired result. This plan of rousing the depressed brain to healthy action, by producing powerful effects upon the nerves of sensation in the scalp, is of great value. The best time for carrying it out, is when the general bodily health has been improved by other

measures successfully directed to the blood-making and blood-purifying functions. In connection with these particular measures, I cannot speak too highly of the value of the Turkish Bath, when used with great judgment and with the different modifications that each separate case will demand—here routine treatment is entirely out of place. Of no remedial measure can it be said with greater truth that *the effect will be good or bad according to the manner of its administration*—the individual case must be taken on its own merits, and treated accordingly. When thus employed, the Turkish Bath is a most powerful curative agent in mental and nervous disorders. It goes without saying, that long experience and the nicest discrimination are needful in duly apportioning the strength of the various applications in any given case. As further examples of methods for rousing the depressed brain to action through the nerves of the skin, may be mentioned the application of water of varying degrees of temperature to distant parts of the surface of the body, in the form of sprays, douches, sitz-baths, and many other similar processes—together with mustard and other heat-producing applications to the skin-surface in various regions.

Before the brain can be roused to healthier action, it may be necessary to carry out a plan of treatment

directed more particularly to *soothing the excessive irritation* there present ; the treatment then undergoes modification in accordance with the needs of the case, and the following or similar curative processes find favour :—Prolonged warm baths, plain or medicated—the *Size Bath* is here a most valuable agent ; wet-sheet packing ; various processes designed to bring large supplies of blood to the extremities and parts distant from the brain ; and cold applications to the head, with or without special apparatus. It is not only a question of the particular remedy that is to be used, but also *when* and *how* to use it to the best advantage. We must, also, ever bear in mind that there is *not a Diseased Entity* called INSANITY to be violently cast out of the body, but that there is *a diseased state* to be changed.

Shakespeare puts the following into the mouth of Benvolio in “*Romeo and Juliet* :”—“*Tut man ! One fire burns out another’s burning. One pain is lessened by another’s anguish.*” This serves to introduce us to the consideration of a most important class of remedies in the treatment of mental disease, namely—*the counter-irritant or revulsive*. When we cure or relieve a rheumatic pain by the application of a mustard plaister to the skin, we do not actually draw the rheumatic poison out of the muscular tissue beneath ; but what

we really do effect, is the transference of the congested, irritative state, from the deeper parts to the surface—"One fire burns out another's burning!" When we cure a congested headache by bathing the feet in strong mustard and water, the same transference of irritation occurs, from the head to the feet; and it affords a good example of a true revulsive measure. It is related of Napoleon that he had a patch of chronic irritation on the skin of one leg. When unduly depressed, irritable, or out of sorts, he was in the habit of scratching this particular spot until the irritation there became excessive. He is said to have had great belief in the efficacy of this somewhat rude method of relieving *internal irritation*. In insanity *the occurrence of boils and violent skin-eruptions is almost invariably of good omen*; for it means that the internal irritative processes are in course of transference to the external envelope of the body—from a *vital* to a *non-vital* part. Here the revulsive method of cure occurs spontaneously. Insanity, epilepsy, asthma, or some other central-nervous outbreak has often followed the drying-up of an ulcer of large extent and long duration. Similar results have followed the sudden disappearance of a chronic skin-eruption, or the suppression of some particular discharge to which the system had become habituated. At the critical period in the life of women, this suppression is the cause of a great variety of symptoms due to central-

nervous irritation—it is frequently an anxious time for both mind and body.

In my treatment, at a suitable stage in the malady, I take my cue from Dame Nature, and so far imitate her operations as to produce a copious eruption or considerable irritation on the surface of the body—more particularly of the extremities. In this way the *balance of the circulation* is restored, and the brain is consequently relieved of its irritation—due, it may be, to direct over-pressure on its substance. The relief that follows this imitation of the unaided processes of nature is very marked and it is, moreover, likely to prove permanent. To compass the desired end, I sometimes adopt the method known among Hydropathists as “the Crisis”—a term, however, that does not truly express the condition that is induced. The process consists in the production of considerable irritation of the skin in various regions, by the constant application of heat and moisture to the part. The methods of treatment herein advocated ought not to be attempted to be carried out, except under the guidance or supervision of an experienced *specialist*.

Of Galvanism as a curative agent—applied, as it now is, in so many ways—I can speak very highly. It can be made to serve different ends according to the manner

of applying it. It may prove of great value in the reduction of brain-irritation, and excitement ; it may also be made the means of rousing the system in depressed conditions of the brain and nerves. In my experience, Galvanism is frequently of very great service in the treatment of mental and nervous disorders.

The value of the various methods here mentioned is not confined to cases of impairment of mind. In those cases where the central-nervous disturbance falls on the *spinal cord*, rather than the brain, they are of equal value. This class of cases will include spinal neuralgia ; certain forms of paralysis ; and a host of convulsive and other maladies, in which the patient presents, not brain but spinal cord symptoms.

It may be objected that the methods of treatment here advocated are needlessly heroic and violent. To this I would reply, that the urgency of the symptoms, and the very terrible nature of the maladies, fully justify the employment of active measures. Insanity, in its varied forms, is not to be cured by the smell of roses ! It is a diseased condition to be attacked with all the resources of the healing art. It must, however, be remembered that not one of the methods of cure here advocated is of such a nature as to be, in itself, a source of danger to the patient. Many of my patients

pay me frequent visits while the remedies are in full swing. Although insanity will not often yield to a *coup de main*—it will, in most cases, give way to patient persistence in well-chosen curative methods. The successful line of treatment will often be indicated by the evidence obtained from the study of the past history and present habits of the patient himself, together with the health-history of the family to which he belongs. What other diseases has he suffered from? Does he feel better in cold than in hot weather—or *vice versa*? Have the *long-lived* members of his family suffered from skin-disease, ulcers, or chronic discharges of any kind? Questions such as these must be answered.

The daily dietary is all important in the curative treatment of mental maladies. Seeing that in almost every case the stomach and liver are grievously at fault, we are bound to exercise the nicest discretion in the choice of food. The usual practice in this respect is faulty in the extreme; for in every manifestation of the disease—from a condition of lethargic melancholy up to the most furious maniacal outbreaks—the already embarrassed organs of digestion are expected, at each recurring meal, to deal with large quantities of food, of the most ill-assorted kind. This practice is especially to be condemned when the habits of the insane are

duly considered. In most cases the food, unless refused altogether, is *ravenously swallowed* immediately on entering the mouth. It undergoes no preparatory process of mastication; and the stomach is thereby loaded with crude masses of food-material. This practice of bolting food is a fruitful cause of disease, even in conditions where the stomach is not a failing organ—no stomach, however healthy, can long withstand the baneful effect of this habit. But what must be the effect upon the delicate sympathetic-nervous structures in the region of the stomach and liver, when these parts are unnaturally sensitive by reason of disease? There can be no doubt of the fact that *injudicious feeding* is responsible for the incurable character of the disease in very many cases of insanity. And such cases will retain their incurable stamp, so long as the over-burdened stomach is, several times a day, subjected to the powerful irritation of masses of hastily-swallowed food material, of a bulky, more or less tough and fibrous nature. This persistence in a vicious practice, on the part of so many who are responsible for the treatment of the insane, can only be explained by looking upon it as a survival from a darker period in the history of medicine, when mental disease was viewed as something entirely apart from the bodily processes in general. The need for excessive care in the dietary of the insane may be better

understood when it is considered that, even in healthy conditions, the sympathy between the brain and digestive organs is of the most intimate description. In diseased conditions—especially in insanity—this sympathy is so exquisitely keen that any irritation of the stomach or liver immediately travels upwards, *and establishes a continuity of diseased action in the nerve cells of the brain.*

When large supplies of nutriment are called for, the different materials should be chosen in accordance with the needs of the case, with an eye to *facility of digestion*—such as milk, certain kinds of vegetables, properly-cooked eggs, and those farinaceous foods that are rich in flesh-forming elements, of which lentil meal is one of the most valuable. On such articles of diet even a navvy in full work will thrive. They have the great merit of easy digestibility, even when swallowed with characteristic avidity. When animal food is deemed necessary, it must be administered in a very finely shredded form, or as chemically prepared solution of meat—the ordinary “Beef Tea” is a delusion and a snare. In some cases, it is necessary *to maintain the stomach in perfect rest* for many days, or even weeks, the patient being fed chiefly by rectal injections—enemata—of pre-digested food. This plan necessitates the frequent estimation of the body-weight;

and it must be remitted when the weight falls below a certain standard. I sometimes achieve great things in the soothing of the irritated stomach, by washing out the organ with hot water, by means of a suitable india-rubber apparatus. This ensures the stomach a period of complete rest of many hours' duration. Bad nights are frequently caused by the presence of acrid, irritating matters in the stomach—the remains of imperfect digestion of food. The indirect effects produced upon the brain by this measure are very striking and satisfactory. It will be seen that, for all practical purposes, I look upon the stomach—by virtue of its sympathetic-nervous connections—as an actual part of the brain itself. And this applies, in a minor degree, to all the other visceral organs when in certain conditions of irritability and impairment of function.

How can it be possible to cure insanity, or any other disease, while we single out a portion of the human body, and locate all the diseased processes in it alone—falsely supposing the other parts of the body to be in a fairly healthy condition? I have heard it said of an insane patient, that his mind is, doubtless, very much affected, but that his digestion is wonderfully good—“he seems to be able to eat anything.” The idea is absurd beyond degree. No part of the human body

can be seriously out of order, without involving the *digestive processes* in the disturbance ; they are the first to sympathise with irregularities in other parts of the body. Even if insanity were generally due to primary brain disease—we know, however, that this is not the case—it would still be unreasonable to think lightly of the condition of the digestive organs. The erroneous practice of indiscriminately feeding the insane would be sensible enough, if the human stomach were a sort of coarse sponge, capable of absorbing every kind of pabulum that might be thrown into it. The question of food in the treatment of insanity is of the very greatest importance. The object should be, *to supply the maximum of real nourishment with a minimum of irritative effect on the organs of digestion*. We are all familiar with the distressing phenomenon known as “Nightmare”—it is due to brain sympathy with irritation in the overburdened stomach. The brain of an injudiciously fed subject of mental disease is, during every hour of the twenty-four, in a continual state of nightmare of varying degrees of intensity. If the dietary of the insane were properly studied, the percentage of cures among them would be much increased.

I must here state my opinion as to *the influence of the Asylum system* on the progress of the disease in

individual cases. It is now difficult to believe that little more than a century has passed since the inmates of Bethlem were exhibited to the public at a certain fixed charge for admission—and that the *treatment* consisted of flogging, and various ingenious tortures designed to tame these unhappy creatures into submission. In these days our large asylums are, in a sense, admirably managed; and they afford many advantages to the mentally afflicted. They have, however, many disadvantages—and these, possibly, outweigh the advantages. Foremost among the evils of the system is the effect of what may be called “a diseased mental atmosphere,” in retarding the cure of the malady. Once within the doors of an asylum, and one is strongly impressed with the all-pervading presence of this unhealthy mental atmosphere. Constant association with the insane has a marked effect even upon those who are not predisposed to insanity. In diseased conditions the brain is often strangely imitative—this alone would make it undesirable that so many of the mentally afflicted should be in constant communication with one another. In large asylums again, the patients are very much at the mercy of the attendants—and *the ideal asylum-attendant* is not to be had for love nor money. *The ideal asylum* would be one in which half the number of inmates were patients, and the remainder visitors

or companions—this is equally unattainable. It is in these respects that the smaller Asylums, Homes, or Retreats, as we may please to call them, have superior advantages. In my own case, if destined to suffer from mental disease, I should greatly prefer to be placed in a small establishment, under the immediate care of an educated man, and in intimate association with him and his family circle, than in a large asylum where the visits of an educated, sane person are “like angels’ visits—few and far between.”

In reference to the curability of insanity, it may be laid down as a general rule, that the longer the duration of the existing attack, the smaller is the chance of perfect recovery. But, having in view the gratifying effects of persistence in the use of suitable remedies, I can set *no limit* to the period beyond which cure may be considered hopeless. My belief is, that most cases of insanity of long duration are really curable, or capable of alleviation—but only by unremitting efforts on the part of the physician. Those who have once been inmates of an asylum, and who, from past experience, are able to recognise the symptoms that herald the approach of an attack, will appreciate the advantages of curative-treatment—they present a form of the disease that is *decidedly hopeful* as regards the chances of complete cure.

Mr. Ley, Medical Superintendent of the County Asylum at Prestwich, says :—"Everything depends upon the disease being undertaken early in its course. Insanity, in its early stages, is as curable a malady as any in the catalogue of human disorders." These words I can thoroughly endorse ; but I would qualify the assertion that the malady is curable by adding—"when the right remedies are used," If the treatment be faulty, *especially in the matter of diet*, it is certain that a naturally curable case may be hurried into the opposite condition. I would, also, extend the more hopeful view of the disease to cases of well-established insanity—always remembering that the longer the duration, the more will the patience and ingenuity of the physician be taxed in carrying out the appropriate remedies.

In a debate on the Lunacy Laws, in the House of Lords, in May, 1884, the father of the late Earl of Shaftesbury drew attention to the necessity for the *early treatment* of insanity. It is not a little remarkable that, less than two years afterwards, his son who succeeded to the title, should fall a victim to insanity—of a kind that is, in the early stages, so particularly amenable to proper treatment. It is well known that this unfortunate nobleman shot himself, on April 13th, 1886, while being driven down Regent Street in a cab.

In the evidence at the coroner's inquest, it came out that he had suffered from melancholy since the preceding January ; that a well-known specialist had been called in to advise on the treatment of the case ; that he had, of late, suffered from mental anxieties ; and that in spite of these symptoms, he had been in the daily habit of *taking his food well*. Now, in this last item of evidence lies the gist of the whole matter. One is tempted to say that if the unfortunate gentleman had not taken his food quite so well, the case might have terminated very differently ! Here was, apparently, a case for active treatment consisting, among other things, of rigorous dietary measures ; for in the melancholia of the well-to-do classes, the very foundation of the disease is in the perverted condition of the digestive organs—a condition of Nervous Dyspepsia. A slip of paper containing the following hastily written words was afterwards found in the cab :—"I am no good to any one. I can live no longer. Forgive me ! Bless you ! You are too good for me !" Here is a complete picture of the leading features in one of the most common forms of mental derangement—the intense feeling of self-depreciation ; and the utter weariness and disgust of life. Realising *the intimate connexion between brain and stomach ; and viewing insanity as a morbid brain-state induced by irritation in the sympathetic nerves, and by impure blood in the brain*

substance—realising all this, it is not unreasonable to think that curative measures based upon these views might have led to the recovery of the deceased noblemen. I here speak under due reserve ; and while confessing that all the facts are not before me, I am bound to say it does *appear* as though the case had been allowed to drift into a hopeless condition of suicidal mania—for want of active treatment directed to the real cause of the malady. It is quite true, however, that in many such cases, the caprices of the patient and the unreasonableness of his friends, do much to bar the way to recovery. I dwell much upon this most unfortunate case, because it is so very typical of a large and ever-increasing class of mental disturbance. There is the melancholia of Dives—due to brain-starvation in the midst of plenty ; and because of the plenty. And there is the melancholia of Lazarus—due to brain-starvation from actual want of the prime necessities of Life. Truly a remarkable instance of the meeting of extremes ! Having in view the difference in the physical causes, the rich man's melancholia and the poor man's melancholia will each demand a different method of treatment from the enlightened specialist in mental disease.

In reference to *the use of medicines of the sleep-producing or sedative type*, I do not think that they

ever exercise a favourable influence on the course of the malady. They certainly do not tend to shorten the duration of the attack ; and, when used indiscriminately, they have a most prejudicial effect. We hear much boasting about the virtues of the "non-restraint" system ; and we are asked to praise the admirable arrangements that allow to patients the free use of their limbs, while they are, at the same time, prevented from injuring themselves or other people. This boasting is, however, nothing but vain, while the administration of such powerful drugs as Opium, Morphia, Chloral, and the Bromides, with many others, is practised so extensively in almost all asylums. It really seems as though the *mechanical restraint* of the body had been superseded by the "*chemical restraint* of the nerve cells" of the diseased brain. These potent drugs lay, as it were, violent hands on the *individual cells* of the excited brain, and force them into unnatural quietude. It is certain that their indiscriminate use materially retards the recovery of the patient.

I think highly, however, of the value of certain simple infusions, such as that of Chamomile and other non-astringent bitters, for promoting the recovery of the debilitated digestive system. I supplement their use by that of the old-fashioned mixture of Bismuth

with Prussic Acid, suspended in mucilage. The bitter infusion I administer immediately after a meal, and the Bismuth mixture on an empty stomach, particularly just before retiring to rest. This simple treatment has, in my hands, been productive of much benefit in irritative conditions, by exercising a tonic, and, at the same time, a soothing effect upon the digestive machinery. The use of all kinds of medicinal remedies in the treatment of insanity is too wide a subject for discussion within the limits here at my disposal. I would content myself by adding, that it is far more easy to cause injury than benefit by their administration.

There is good evidence that something like one person in every 345 of the general population, is afflicted with some form of mental disease. This proportion is not likely to decrease as the human brain becomes, with succeeding generations, more and more complex in character. It would, indeed, form a gloomy prospect for the future of the human race, if the present listless, do-nothing plan of treating insanity were to remain unchanged! There is happily ground for believing that it will not be long before the treatment

of diseases marked by morbid brain-activity, will be put upon its true basis—and that insanity of all kinds will show an ever-increasing percentage of cures as the result of fresh developments in *rational, scientific curative-treatment*. In the preceding pages it has been my intention to show that this scourge of civilisation is, when attacked by methods based on right principles, infinitely more curable than it is generally believed to be. The future has, doubtless, in store for suffering humanity, great surprises in reference to the curability of many so-called “incurable, hopeless” maladies—such as Insanity of long duration, Epilepsy, and allied diseases, Cancer, Phthisis, Locomotor Ataxy, and other forms of Paralysis. Insanity of long duration has hitherto been one of the *opprobria medicinae*. Perhaps the reader will think that, in the direction here but imperfectly indicated, lie the remedies that will lift the disease out of this category, and place it upon the list of those that are hopeful, because they can be brought under the influence of well-chosen remedies. The writer himself adopts this view of its curability, not only as the result of abstract reasoning, but with the confidence inspired by constant experience ON THE LIVING SUBJECT.

