

also entertained by this branch of the profession), that in a vast number of instances mental (so called) affections are dependent upon physical derangement of various organs of the body. So intimately connected, indeed, are all the organs of the body, through the various sympathies existing between the organic, nervous, and vascular systems, that serious disease seldom exists in either, without the functions of one or more of the others being remarkably disturbed. In fact, there is no class of disease which it must be admitted requires greater physiological knowledge, or a more sagacious recognition of healthy and morbid conditions, than affections of the brain.

But a few years since it was the generally received opinion, that little or nothing could be done for the recovery of the insane; but later experience and investigation have incontestably shown that insanity, in the great majority of cases, has been found to succumb, as much as any other malady, to efficient medical and moral treatment.

THE NECESSITY OF DULY REGARDING THE FIRST SYMPTOMS OF INSANITY,

is a point that cannot be too forcibly urged, for it frequently happens the skill of the medical adviser of a Retreat is delayed, until the disease has made such progress, that the most efficient or vigorous means for its subjugation may be baffled.

Of those patients who enter a properly conducted Asylum soon after the commencement of the malady, *nine out of ten recover*, and success is always correspondent with the interval between the attack and the period when remedial treatment commences. The old axioms, "*principiis obsta*," "*recens curationem non habet difficilem*," relative to the treatment of all maladies, are peculiarly applicable to diseases of the brain: these facts should induce the relatives or friends of the insane to lose no time in placing them under proper advice and surveillance.

MORAL TREATMENT,

which may be termed the "physic of the mind," is now generally admitted to be a most important part of the management of the Insane, as a means of inducing habits of self-control, and in restoring a healthy tone of the nervous system. Although we believe that insanity is usually dependent upon bodily disease, yet the best medical treatment will avail but little, unless judicious moral means are simultaneously adopted. The first and great object is

THE SEPARATION OF THE INSANE.

All English, French, and German physicians who have devoted themselves to the study of mental diseases, are unanimous as to the necessity

of the separation of the Insane as a means of cure. It is only by doing so that old associations can be broken, and new sensations impressed upon the mind. Experience has demonstrated that a separation of this kind is almost invariably followed by a remission of the complaint. Among the friends or relatives, the nervous patient sees only misery, vexation, and enemies: the exciting causes are continually present and active; everything around him contributes to confirm the erroneous judgments which influence his conduct; whilst, on the other hand, the presence of strangers generally suspends the delirium of the insane, and aids the influence of new impressions, which is always useful.

M. Pinel, the benevolent and humane originator of the "non-restraint" system, and the greatest authority in modern times, says, in his admirable work on Insanity—"Separation is the foundation of all rational treatment of mental diseases." M. Georget, the talented author of one of the best treatises ever published on the management of the Insane, observes that "separation is in almost every case the most essential condition, and one of the first measures to be adopted in the treatment of the insane." "Lunatics," he remarks, "ought to be separated from the objects which have excited their disease, or which foster or aggravate it; from relatives or servants whom they dislike, whom they pretend to command, and to whom they will never submit; from busybodies, who only irritate them by useless arguments or misplaced ridicule; they ought to be separated from society, and placed in an appropriate habitation, to ensure both the safety of the public and their own preservation. Their friends are always repugnant to put this plan into execution. A mother, a wife, or a husband, can with difficulty believe that the object dearest in the world to either of them, can be better placed in the hands of strangers than under the influence of those who are eager to devote the most affectionate cares; they fear that in asylums the sight of the patients will have a bad effect, and aggravate the disease; that constraint, severity, and all kinds of ill-treatment will be employed to manage the patient; and that, if once cured, he will preserve a horrible impression of his abode, and resentment against his relations who have consented to his confinement. The last considerations induce rich families to place their deranged relatives in a private house destined to receive a single lunatic. Besides that these private establishments are very expensive, they rarely answer the end proposed: either some relation chooses to remain near the invalid, or the latter soon perceives that everything by which he is surrounded is destined for his service; in either case the objects of separa-

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