

**THE CURABILITY OF
INSANITY AND THE
INDIVIDUALIZED
TREATMENT OF THE INSANE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649337484

The Curability of insanity and the individualized treatment of the insane by John S. Butler

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOHN S. BUTLER

**THE CURABILITY OF
INSANITY AND THE
INDIVIDUALIZED
TREATMENT OF THE INSANE**

THE
CURABILITY OF INSANITY

AND THE

INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT OF THE INSANE

LANE LIBRARY

BY

JOHN S. BUTLER, M.D.

HARTFORD, CONN.

LATE PHYSICIAN AND SUPERINTENDENT OF THE CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL FOR THE
INSANE; MEMBER OF THE CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF HEALTH;
HONORARY MEMBER OF THE MEDICO-PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN



NEW YORK AND LONDON
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

The Knickerbocker Press

1887

D

YRARDI! 3NA!

COPYRIGHT BY
JOHN S. BUTLER
1887

Press of
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
New York

L602
B98
1887

INSANITY is a disease of the brain, including a departure from ordinary modes of thought and states of feeling in health.—*Dr. Ray.*

INSANITY is a calamity incident alike to tender sensibility, to grand enthusiasm, to sublime genius, and to intense exertion of the intellect.—*Sir James Macintosh.*

WHOEVER has brought himself to consider a disease of the brain as differing only in a degree from a disease of the lung, has robbed insanity of that mysterious horror which forms its chief malignity.—*Sir James Macintosh—Life of Robert Hall.*

THE physician, confident in the assurance that patient and careful observation of insanity, with the earnest desire to understand its nature, does fit him to express with authority the results of his experience, must not shrink from pronouncing his opinion sincerely and fearlessly, however unpopular it may be.—*Maudesley on Responsibility in Mental Disease.*

THE CURABILITY OF INSANITY AND THE
INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT OF
THE INSANE.

IN the comparisons of the provisions made for the insane in the United States, in 1844, with those of the present day, we find the best measure of progress to be in the larger recognition of their necessities, in remedial treatment, custodial provision, and acceptance of the power of prevention as applicable to insanity as to other physical diseases.

In October, 1844, thirteen gentlemen met in Philadelphia and organized the "Association of Medical Superintendents of Institutions for the Insane." Their object was, by a comparison of views and careful study, "to secure for the future a higher standard for hospitals, and a more liberal and enlightened treatment for all suffering from mental diseases." The causes which led to this result are stated in the Secretary's history of the Association. At that time, 1844, there were in the United States twenty-five lunatic hospitals of all classes, containing less than twenty-six hundred or twenty-seven hundred inmates. The largest number in a distinct hospital was two hundred and sixty-three, in that of Worcester, although there were three hundred and fifty in the Recep-

tacle on Blackwell's Island. According to the report of the Board of the State Charities in Pennsylvania, in September, 1883, there were in the United States one hundred and forty-seven lunatic asylums, containing fifty-one thousand eight hundred and seventeen patients; the total number of insane in the United States being estimated to be ninety-two thousand, or one in five hundred and forty-five of the population, the lowest rate of insanity being found in the more recently settled States. The Association at this time embraces all North American institutions, and now records one hundred and twenty-two active and retired members. Well may the excellent and most efficient Secretary say of the Association that, "Formed in the interest and for the promotion of the welfare of the insane, it has been steadily growing in numbers, in influence and power, until it covers with its protecting shield a large proportion of the insane throughout the length and breadth of the land." In the eventful history of the Association for the past forty years there has been, for the most part, a singular and cordial unanimity of action as to the best means of attaining the desired end—the highest good of the insane. The "Propositions" adopted by the Association show not only a large wisdom, but a foresight of the necessities of this comparatively new and unexplored field of philanthropy.

The unexpectedly large and continually increasing number demanding either hospital treatment, or simply hospital supervision and care, has naturally led to a diversity of opinion as to the number of patients that can be most profitably treated in one institution. That the causes of this diversity may be better understood, and my own

position more clearly defined, I may here quote some of these propositions, and my reasons for objecting, not only to the one accepted by a close vote, but to the others subsequently passed in accordance with it.

At the meeting in Philadelphia, in 1851, among other propositions, the following was unanimously adopted :

The highest number that can, with propriety, be treated in one building is 250, while 200 is a preferable maximum.¹

At the meeting in Washington, in 1866, the following propositions were adopted :

Insane persons considered incurable, and those supposed curable, should not be provided for in separate establishments.

* * * * *

The large States should be divided into geographical districts of such size that a hospital, situated at or near the centre of the district, shall be practically accessible to all people living within its boundaries, . . . and available for their benefit in cases of mental disorder.

All State, county, and city hospitals for the insane should receive all persons belonging to the vicinage designed to be accommodated by such hospitals, who are afflicted with insanity, whatever may be the form of the bodily disease accompanying the mental disorder.

The enlargement of any such specified institution may be properly carried, as required, to the extent of accommodating six hundred patients, embracing the usual proportion of curable and incurable in a particular community.

¹ The *International Record* for April, 1887, gives the number of inmates in each of eighty-eight of our lunatic hospitals. Of these eighty-eight hospitals only sixteen contain not more than 250 patients, —that "highest number" accepted by the Association in 1851; thirty-eight contain from 250 to 600; twenty-four from 600 to 1,000; and ten from 1,000 to 1,818.

The complaint of the continued over-crowding for admission seems unabated.