

before observed, such increase will proceed by a geometrical ratio (although such ratio may not greatly exceed unity), that the extent to which the disease is inherited is enormous and very alarming, and that other diseases act and react on one another in the production of insanity." * * * * *

"Does it not appear, then, that we are bound to consider steps for the excision of this canker, and that those races which delay making the endeavour must fall behind in the struggle for life? Let us hope for the good of the world that the Teutonic races will take the lead in the attempt." * * * * *

"The ultimate restrictions, then, to liberty of marriage would be (besides those already in force, less the absurd laws against marriage with a deceased wife's sister or husband's brother)—(1.) Divorce on the appearance of certain diseases; (2.) the passing of a medical examination for this same class of diseases; and (3.) the production of an untainted pedigree. The medical examination might in some respects be modelled on that in force in Germany for military service, when a man is not ultimately rejected until he has been refused in three successive years. Could such legislation come into force, coupled with some such scheme as that proposed by Mr. Galton, not only might 'a cubit be added to our stature,' but the capacity for happiness in the world might be largely augmented, by the destruction of that most potent cause of unhappiness, ill health; several years might be added to human life, our ability for work and mental power immensely increased, and the coming race might end by becoming as much superior to ourselves in mind and body as the racehorse is superior in form to a shaggy pony." * * * * *

"Does not this serve as an answer to those objectors who would say, 'We shall never submit to having our marriage laws more restricted?' For when one can point out so great a diversity of restrictions, many of which are no longer maintained for any good reason, it is surely absurd to say that nothing new will be endured, even though it may be founded on the best of reasons. Our state of civilization has so diminished the force of natural selection that we cannot much longer afford to neglect some process of artificial selection to replace the method which nature has been carrying on from the beginning, and that nation which has first the courage to adopt some such plan, must undoubtedly gain on others in the vigour of its members in mind and body."

Dr. Gregory on Madness.

The following letter, written by Dr. James G. Gregory (the third), the celebrated Professor of Practice of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, and the author of "Philosophical and Literary Essays," has been forwarded to

me by my relative, Mrs. Balfour, having been found by her amongst the papers of her grandfather, the late Principal Baird, of the University of Edinburgh. It is evidently a reply to queries addressed to the Professor by the Principal, and is interesting as supplying Gregory's definitions of some terms, as to the exact meaning of which we are still disputing.

J. CRICHTON BROWNE, M.D.

Edin., Monday, 2nd Dec., 1816.

DEAR SIR,

I am very sorry that I have kept so long your paper (your Schedule of Queries) and the printed (very shocking) report about mad people.

Your Queries appear to me very judicious and complete. Nothing of any consequence occurs to me that I could wish to add to them.

It is not easy to describe briefly, or define in few words, what is meant either by *ideotism* or by *madness*.

A person whose *memory* and *judgment* are so weak and imperfect as to be unfit for the common business and duties of life is deemed an ideot.

A person who adopts and believes (not from false information, but spontaneously and without any *rational* or *plausible* ground of belief) *erroneous notions*, and gives way to *violent emotion* or *passion*, without any adequate moral cause, and whose looks and demeanour are particular, and wild, different from those of people who are in their senses, and from what his were when he was well, is held to be mad.

But either madness or ideotism may come on very gradually. Madness often does so. I have seen ideotism do so along with or after paralytic or epileptic affections. I have seen very furious madness supervene, sometimes suddenly, sometimes gradually, on such ideotism. Violent madness often passes into perfect hopeless ideotism. In short, sound sense, great talents or genius, downright madness and perfect ideotism may pass into one another, either quickly or by insensible degrees.

When a person has *erroneous notions* on *one subject only* or even on a *very few particular subjects*, but has *just notions* on other subjects (like Don Quixote on "Knight Errantry," or "Simon Brown about his soul being miraculously taken away from him," &c., &c.), it is called in our *slang* language Melancholia; when a person has *erroneous notions*, very generally on many or all subjects; when his thoughts are not connected in the usual manner (by their natural or habitual relations), but are desultory and rapid, so that he has not the natural command of them, we call such a disorder Mania. This much more frequently than Melancholia is connected with violent passion and ferocity.

Yours most truly,
J. GREGORY.