

of all well conducted Hospitals of these times; and the whole experience of society establishes my position.

Referring to the United States Census for 1840, we find the insane and idiot population of Maryland, recorded as 550, the entire number of citizens being 470,019. An interval of ten years has closed, and in 1850 we derive from the United States Census the following record:—Insane, 946, (it is not shown what proportion of these are a private charge,) total population 583,035; showing an increase, supposing the returns approximate to accuracy, of 406, a ratio far exceeding the increase of the whole population, and offering the most persuasive argument for early and effectual care of recent cases; but even this large increase we know, falls within the actual amount. The supposition, that this increase, so disproportionate, may be explained by the influx of emigrants, is unsubstantial. Of the 946 which are contained in the tables of the seventh census, 63 only are foreigners by birth. And, again, 104 only are free negroes, and 95 slaves, so that we have still in Maryland 683 Anglo Americans disqualified for all the offices of civil and social obligation, by reason of mental disease;—or a total of 746 whites. The statistics of all the States exhibit rapid and fearful increase of this terrible malady. The entire number in the United States, according to the census of 1840, was 17,457, to a population of 17,069,453.

The census of 1850 gives, in a total population of 25,267,498 an insane population of nearly 25,000. Not only is this great increase of insanity an alarming fact, but tracing the tabular statements, sent abroad annually, from all hospitals for the reception and treatment of insanity in the United States, we note year by year, the increase, if not predominance of insanity in the *youthful* classes of society. Medical men of sound minds and rare skill urge vainly on the dull care of society, that *prevention* is in its power to a vast extent, and of infinite worth before *cure*, or, alas, the hazard of no cure—but the timely warnings are unheeded, and individuals, as communities, rashly multiply exciting causes, and too late deplore the inevitable results consequent on transgression of the physical laws of health and life.

I offer two tables, the first borrowed from Dr. Stokes' last Report; that which follows is taken from the last Annual Report of the Western Hospital, at Staunton, Virginia, and prepared by Dr. Stribling. I only add, that the records of other institutions exhibit large numbers of patients comparatively youthful, or in the very prime of life.