

ESSAYS  
ON  
THE MEANS  
OF  
AVOIDING  
HABITUAL SICKLINESS,  
AND  
PREMATURE MORTALITY.

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ESSAY TENTH.

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Vol. III.

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Printed by MILLS, St. Augustine's, Bristol.

OF IMAGINATION ALL COMPACT.



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ESSAY  
OF SOME OF  
THE DISORDERS,  
COMMONLY CALLED  
NERVOUS.

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PART II.  
CONTAINING  
OBSERVATIONS  
ON  
INSANITY.

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*Insanity more thought of in England than  
elsewhere, and why.*

THE difficulties, belonging to the subject of the present Essay, are understood far beyond the limits of the medical profession; and it must be confessed that the ill success of those, by whom it has heretofore been treated, is enough to damp the spirit of every new enquirer. Nevertheless, considerations may be stated,

which may well incite to further endeavours. There is reason to believe, that the writer, who should be happy enough to unfold some of its intricacies, would inspire a great interest among his countrymen, and that, by a proper application of his principles, he might render them a most essential service.

Foreigners, who pay attention to the turn of thought which predominates in England, are struck by the frequency of our recurrence to the idea of lunacy, and by the stress we lay upon it as the last of human calamities. Some who have published observations upon our national peculiarities, drawing, I fancy, too general an inference from particular examples, describe it as one of our customs to carry young people to Bedlam; in hopes that the sight of the objects immured within the walls of that hospital, may create a horror of the excesses that tend to reduce our nature to so humiliating a condition.

Besides the belief that insanity is a more common affliction here than in other countries, there are some remarkable circumstances in our literature which have an evident tendency to fix the imagination, at the time when it is most open to impressions, upon mental derangement. SHAKESPEARE, a name that always recalls to his intelligent readers the first of



poets, and the most penetrating of observers, has succeeded, by his happy use of madness as machinery, in carrying terror and compassion to a height, which they cannot perhaps be made to reach by any other means. In his lighter pieces, those who from their denomination of *fools*, must be supposed originally destitute of an average portion of understanding, are made the perpetual vehicles of remarks, whose shrewdness puts to shame the acumen of men, the most remote from folly. But it is his desponding-mad Ophelia, his raving-mad Lear, his jealous-mad Othello, his melancholy Jacques, his crafty-mad Hamlet, that awe and attach on the first exhibition, and bind the heart in a never-ceasing spell. It is in these characters, where the equilibrium of the faculties is destroyed, that he displays the force of his imagination along with that of his reason. Nor would it have been possible for people in their sober senses to have *let out* so much fancy and so much philosophy together, without seeming unnatural—even if any mortal except the delineator of these characters could have combined so much in his secret meditations.\*

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\* “There is one circumstance altogether peculiar to Shakespeare—the singular fanciful cast of philosophy, in which he is so fond of losing himself. What distinguishes him beyond all the poets of any country previous to the



We need therefore, know nothing further, than the powerful dominion which Shakespeare exercises over our national feelings. We should have a right to conclude from this fact alone, that no subject would more deeply engage our thoughts than the one which he has addressed in this manner to our feelings. But he has been seconded with an ability beyond all reasonable expectation. Isabella, Alicia, and Clementina still display their terrible graces

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formation of the national taste, is the depth and riches of his moral and political reflections. He does not always introduce these, when alone they are free from censure in dramatic writings—*i. e.* when they coincide with the progress of the action, suit the character of the speakers, and are explicable from their situation. He seems at times to come forward in *propria personâ*, and to propound his own insight into affairs and his knowledge of mankind under borrowed names. But this philosophy of his has always something richly fancied and enthusiastic, and connects best with strange and grotesque images. The more his imagination is exalted, the more profoundly he thinks and with the better success does he philosophize. No wonder therefore he assigns to his *dramatis personæ* an overstrained fancy, a character inclined to enthusiasm, a singular way of seeing things—no wonder he is so fond of placing them in the twilight between sanity and insanity—half beside themselves, half in their right wits. In displaying this peculiar state of mind of his heroes, he is at liberty to let loose the reins of his own imagination, and to utter, without reserve, all his own excentric genius suggests.”——*Garve's Essays*, ii. 441.

with effect: and there are authors of later fictions, who would not have ventured forward with their lunatics or would not have succeeded with them so well, had not Shakespeare done for this class of characters what Homer did for the heroes of the Trojan war—put them in possession of the good-will of the public.

### *MORE OBVIOUS APPEARANCES.*

In order to make an advance towards the knowledge of causes, I propose to present a concise view of the more usual phænomena of insanity, and then to endeavour to trace the chief particulars, by which it is distinguished from the sound state of intellect.

An uninformed observer, who should pass a considerable number of lunatics in review, would be struck no less by the difference between one of these unfortunate persons and another, than by the difference between them all and those, who are in full possession of themselves. At the time the disorder most strongly manifested itself, he would find a part storming with a degree of fury unknown in ordinary life, and the rest wrapped up in tenfold gloom. This observation appears to have given rise to the earliest, and what is still the usual, distribution of insanity into two species, though it was soon



found impossible to adhere to it rigidly. Of these two species, one has obtained the name of MANIA, the other of MELANCHOLIA; the denomination, in the latter case, being taken from the predominance of a certain imaginary *black bile* in the constitution, but the idea of the class from the silence or dejection of the party affected.

The melancholy-mad will sometimes continue for days and weeks looking stedfastly at the same spot or with their eyes closed, without taking notice of any thing, or making any reply to questions. Nor can they often be stirred from the place or prevailed upon to take sustenance without direct force. They would be supposed by a looker-on, not acquainted with cases so much in the extreme, to be the most torpid and insensible of all mortals. And indeed I have sometimes found this opinion to be so deeply rooted in the minds of the friends of melancholic patients that the fullest force of evidence to the contrary could not shake it.

It is true the usual stimuli frequently produce none of their usual effects. The melancholy man will frequently bear the extremity of heat and of cold without complaining at least, if not without suffering. A four-fold dose of medicine is commonly enough observed to fail alto-



gether in its effect upon him. He will look stedfastly in the face of the unclouded sun. He has a far greater chance of escaping any prevailing epidemic complaint; contagion, or the seasons having often less power to induce a change in the movements of his system.

But at other times appearances the most opposite to this seeming insensibility are to be observed. The patient trembles, shudders and starts without any obvious reason. His tears burst forth without any adequate exciting cause. His sleep is almost never composed; he often shews a degree of wildness as he is falling asleep; suddenly awakes disturbed; is haunted with the most terrific dreams; partakes with the rest of the nervous in the inconvenience of finding himself more harrassed in the morning than at bed-time.

When not totally absorbed, he complains of the whole train of uneasinesses, that are general where the sensibility is in excess, and which have been copiously described under the article, hypochondriasis. He is subject to twitchings or startings of the muscles, to obstinate contractions of the sphincters of the bladder and rectum, to spasms in the organs of deglutition. The head suffers from dreadful partial pains, particularly the hinder part; and it is sometimes a burning, sometimes cold, sometimes pressure

or distension. There are pains, oppressions, anxieties also referred to the chest, heart, stomach and bowels, which have exactly the hypochondriacal character.

This analogy holds, in a most remarkable manner, of the natural functions. When the disorder has not risen to that pitch of violence, which concentrates the patient entirely within himself, the appetite shall be preternaturally voracious; and with an appetite no way immoderate, there shall exist heart-burn and a load at the stomach, with unsavoury, sour or rancid eructations. An obstinate sluggishness of the bowels attends melancholia as well as hypochondriasis; and the most drastic purgatives are at least as often unavailing.—There is an equal degree of hardness and distension of the body, with very troublesome flatulence. The skin is habitually dry; but in both complaints, a cold, clammy perspiration will burst forth by fits, particularly about the head, neck and breast; and other small irregularities of the secretory organs, as of the salivary glands and kidneys, will take place equally in one and the other.

The mutability, so remarkable in nervous complaints, and which has been described in the former part of this Essay, occurs no less in melancholy. It changes into epilepsy, catalepsy, into partial palsy and apoplexy. When



it has continued for any considerable length of time, the state of the system is seen to undergo a compleat change. An atrophy, more or less compleat, supervenes. Obstinate jaundice, and often what from the depth of the bile, is termed the *black* jaundice, dropsies, cutaneous eruptions of the foulest species, infest the melancholic, particularly when intemperance in the use of intoxicating beverages has concurred in the formation of the complaint.

The dissections of the bodies of those who have died melancholic have frequently shewn a sensible disorganization in various interior parts. The alterations that respect the brain and its enclosing membranes and bones are found to agree very nearly with those already described under the article epilepsy. There is often a preternatural thickness of certain parts of the skull; and not unfrequently other parts are reduced to such a degree of thinness as to be nearly transparent. But this latter alteration seems to depend in most cases upon the unhealthy state of the parts below, which enlarging and pressing upon the bone, carry the process of *absorption* to so great a height, that more bony matter is removed than the feeding arteries supply. Interior excrescencies of some of the bones, composing the skull, have been detected as in epilepsy, as also caries, ulcera-



tion or what is frequently called *rotteness*, in speaking of the teeth.

The softer parts are observed to have undergone full as extraordinary changes. The membranes shall many times have concreted in consequence of a process, better known to anatomists since the researches of the late Mr. HUNTER. They coalesce not merely with one another, but with the brain and skull. The fine soft membranes that lie next the brain acquire a coarse texture and are inflamed. Ossifications or diseased formation of bony masses are discovered in the outer membrane, which is naturally thicker and coarser. This is particularly the case in one of its processes, which passes between the two hemispheres of the brain and is called *falciform* from its similitude to a scythe. Collections of watery liquid, effusions of blood and over-fulness of the blood-vessels are common occurrences.

This work of destruction is often distinctly seen to extend to the brain itself. Various are the relations of the examiners of the bodies of the melancholic dead concerning the hardness, dryness, and less specific gravity of this important organ. But in a much greater number of observations do we read of its changing to the opposite condition. It is there described as pultaceous, almost liquid, and yields to the

slightest pressure. Hardnesses, known by the name of *schirrous* steatons, and abscesses have been noticed. The interior of the brain has been found to contain hydalids. The cerebellum or little brain has equally lost its healthy constitution. It has contained hard tumours as also abscesses, and has been reduced to the same happy mass.

It is true that these alterations in the head have not always been found. But it should be considered that the dissecting knife, though it be the instrument to which we owe our superiority over the antients in deducing inward lesions from external signs and from particular sensations, and which therefore may be considered as the glass that shews the state of the viscera through the otherwise opaque walls of skin and flesh, can be by no means adequate to lay open *all* the effects of unhealthy processes. There may be changes of parts a great deal too subtle to shew themselves upon the sides of a fresh cut. We should not therefore permit ourselves to reason negatively from dissections, which are often cursorily and ignorantly made.—Possibly chemical analysis may, one day, add to our acquaintance with the alterations of the living substance as much as the best *morbid* anatomist knows beyond one, who has never seen a dead body opened. And



if means of ascertaining such effects as now escape us, should in future be discovered, those recondite effects will probably be much more universal in patients, who have suffered from a given disorder, than the grosser ones heretofore recorded, because they will lie so much nearer to the healthy condition. The stage of disorganization which our anatomy detects is probably one that many invalids never reach. It is remarkable that the scalp is affected, being looser in the mad.

As we shall find insanity consequent upon practices, that injure the stomach, and its train of auxiliary or subordinate viscera, it is satisfactory to find the appearances after death, in numerous instances confirming the opinion that these practices are its cause. Almost all the contents of the abdomen have been detected in a diseased condition—the liver for example, enlarged, or hardened; or studded with tubercles, and adhering to the contiguous parts—the gall-bladder full of concretions—the mesentery, omentum, and other parts no less deviating from their condition in health. It is related that the interior changes have sometimes corresponded to the sort of insanity; the ovaria having been indurated, when the mind had roved upon the sexual intercourse.

The mental part of melancholy is generally



considered as consisting in having the attention fixed upon a single object, and forming erroneous judgments concerning that. Thus it is remarked that the mathematician VIETA, who devoted three days and three nights uninterruptedly to an algebraic calculation, was not melancholic, because there was nothing wrong in his judgment upon the matter before him. But had he imagined the signs he used to be characters of fire, he must infallibly have been reckoned mad.

The origin of melancholy is often not easy to recognize. But when the mind adheres to one subject almost exclusively, when passion is connected with this set of ideas, and when there is at the same time great loss of sleep, the approach of the disorder may be suspected. If frequent false perceptions occur, if the behaviour undergoes a striking change, if there be an unusual degree of intractability on the one hand, or of gentleness or demonstrations of friendship on the other, if the understanding start rapidly from some matter in discussion to another quite different, and if the memory fail, and frequent absences succeed, the first stage of the complaint may be considered as having taken place.

They often distinguish MANIA from MELANCHOLIA by an universal, or at least a more

general erroneusness of judgment in the former, and by the violence of the movements, connected with these errors. Where the commencement of mania is distinct, the patient is apt to be habitually sleepless, incapable of business, averse to amusements, depressed, solitary and wrapt up in his own thoughts. Among the frequent precursors of mania, may be enumerated violent giddiness, headache, deceptions of the senses, tremblings, shiverings, twitchings of the flesh, convulsive startings, especially on falling into a dose. Great irregularity of the pulse, palpitation of the heart, oppression of the chest come on at times. Those who have too much chance of afflicting their friends with the idea of insanity infesting the family, will often undertake distant journeys at a moment's warning; engage without hesitation in the largest and most hazardous enterprises; yield continually with more and more reluctance to argument or remonstrance; turn an equally deaf ear to the claim of a child, the entreaties of a consort, and the authority of a parent.

When confest insanity has commenced, the countenance assumes a wild, staring, frightful expression. It has been said of a celebrated public character that the most bungling drawer of a caricature never yet exhibited him so that



he could not be recognized. The same may be said of maniacal lunatics in their accessions, and at times also of those that are only being worked up to madness. So clearly does tension, prominence and fire distinguish the eyes of madmen from those of persons in their sober mind—

Ardent oculi : (says an ancient dramatic writer)  
fune opus est.

The doubt which a certain kind of behaviour often excites in common life, *whether a particular person be drunk or mad*, is justified by attentive observation of lunatics. The disease operates like spirituous liquors, insomuch that those, who are unacquainted with the symptoms of approaching mania, ascribe them to excess in drinking.

When appearances like these have gone on to shew themselves for a longer or shorter time, the frantic paroxysms commence with more or less notice. From his usual excessive and animated loquacity the patient will pass into discourse, entirely wild, incoherent and irrational. He will become agitated, assume a lofty demeanour, exhibit an aspect full of fury, express a deadly aversion or an outrageous predilection for particular persons, utter the most

unprovoked threats against them, or call down the most unmerited blessings, shout, curse, pray, chaunt, laugh almost in a breath, betray feelings of the utmost lasciviousness, neglect cleanliness altogether, and exert a surprising degree of muscular power.

It may seem singular that some maniacs in the very rage of the fit shew nothing of what is called *delusion of the senses*, but very distinctly recognize objects and persons, but judge concerning them in the most erroneous manner.

The degrees of ability to recollect what has passed during an accession seem very different on different occasions. Some can recal every particular. Others are able to repeat what has been said to them, but they are apt to repeat it with false accompaniments and under circumstances different from the reality, believing themselves, for instance, to have been in quite another place and with other people. They frequently forget the coinings of their own phrenzy, but remember the sort of treatment they have undergone. Still more than partial forgetfulness occurs. They will be conscious of things having passed through their mind, but can, by no effort, call back any of the things themselves. Sometimes even this consciousness does not exist, but all their agitation passes away without leaving a trace behind.



It is, we see, therefore very much with maniacs as with those that dream. The whole picture with its finest shadings remains impressed,—or only the outlines of some of the figures are preserved,—or else the whole is obliterated; nor would it be known but for indubitable effects, that manifest themselves to the bystanders, that any striking images, or any at all, had presented themselves to the fancy. Indeed, during intervals of reason and after recovery, those who may be supposed best able to give an account of their own feelings, compare their phrenzy fits to dreams. And they agree with those who have been occupied by any interesting exhibition, in being surprised at the length of time that has elapsed since their attention was drawn to themselves. In describing the state of their intellect, they speak of an uncontrollable hurry and whirl of ideas, by the rapidity of which every endeavour to fix upon any one subject of thought in particular has been rendered abortive.

It has been often remarked that phrenetic insanity is aggravated or supervenes in the morning; as if sleep had the effect of aggravating this like other nervous complaints. A female patient, concerning whom I have the most exact information, was for a considerable time only nervous, that is, tremu-

lous, weak, and too quickly sensible, and then she was always the better for her breakfast. But a feverish complaint having been succeeded by insanity, she was regularly for months worse after breakfast than before; and it seemed to make little difference of what the meal consisted, or whether it was cold or warm. It was enough that the stomach was any way moderately distended for the excitement to be brought on.—This *general* aggravation of the symptoms in the morning, is denied by other observers of the most extensive opportunities; and it is affirmed that the evening and great part of the night, are the seasons of most violence with incipient lunatics. Perhaps the want of sleep during the night preceding, or its variations as to tranquillity or disturbance, may make a difference; to which, if lunatics could more frequently be studied singly by those, who had already seen them much in mass and were well acquainted with all the facts that books supply, other causes of individual variations might in all likelihood be added.

In one observation the different reporters appear generally to coincide; and this is of considerable importance, when combined with the frequency of palpable disorganiza-



tion in the head. The symptoms are aggravated by the horizontal position. The feelings of raving lunatics would appear to impel them to seek alleviation by keeping themselves as erect as possible. For when fastened, they are observed to sit, scarcely ever to recline. Unless indeed it should be said that the calm, recumbent state is incompatible with so much mental agitation. And we must, I believe, suppose that few persons, suddenly stimulated into anger as they were lying along, would continue to repose in the same easy manner.

It is one of the most constant consequences of derangement to impair the memory. Cases are related, in which though the diseased loquacity continued, the patient came at last to be unable to finish any one sentence; and this destruction of the associating quality often proceeds to idiotism, in which the mutterings shall be almost continual, but utterly without sense, as scarce presenting three words belonging to any one subject. Persons of good education, on being long confined, lose the power of spelling their own language, and write, like the untaught, from the sound of the words. But it is difficult to know how far this depends upon the disease, since it is not ascertained in

what time want of practice in reading and writing will reduce those in a sane state to a similar degree of ignorance. Lunacy appears considerably to lessen the chance of life. Death is no uncommon consequence of violent fits, when phrenzy is succeeded by languor. Here the powers seem to be destroyed by over-exertion. The disorders above enumerated, as following upon insanity, are often fatal. But although in two sets of persons, of which one should be deranged, but otherwise similarly circumstanced, it is probable that, after a certain period, there would be more survivors among the sane; single instances of longevity are noticed in madhouses. In Bethlem Hospital, a person not long since died at 78 years of age, after being more than thirty years on the incurable establishment. This was a remarkably placid madman. Maniacs themselves sometimes live to a good old age, and shew all the signs of a good habit of body, though scarcely when very furious (*Chiarugi della Pazzia in genere e in specie*). No lunatic, I think, occurs in the lists of those who have been most distinguished among mankind for length of years.

In our own country, as far as enquiry has hitherto determined, females are more sub-



ject to mental alienation. It is well known that this, like epilepsy and other nervous disorders, are very frequent consequences of the exercise of the functions peculiar to the female constitution. They are particularly apt to attend pregnancy and child-birth. But in return a greater number of lunatic women recover, and especially of those who have suffered from these causes.—Abroad, the case is believed to be reversed. The writer last quoted, who in four years had the opportunity of seeing eleven hundred and fifty seven lunatics in the hospitals of St. Dorothea and St. Bonifacio at Florence, states the proportion of deranged males as exceeding that of females by one-fifth.

It can hardly be doubted that a particular complexion, or rather the sort of constitution connected with it, disposes to insanity — Mr. HASLAM of Bethlem Hospital, to whom we owe interesting observations on this disease, and from whom we may one day expect still ampler information, relates that of 265 patients, only 60 had a fair skin, with light, brown, or red hair. All the rest were dark. The same fact appears to extend to other countries. Dr. PINEL remarks that those lunatics, who are most difficult to confine in a hospital, who are most remarkable for tur-

bulence, and most subject to sudden explosions, almost all bear the following external characters. They have bolder and stronger features, sparkling eyes, an adust and often yellow complexion, hair of a jetty black, sometimes crisp; strong bones, but no fat; powerful but slender muscles—a strong and hard pulse.

Some observers have found the spring most productive of alienation of mind. Others think that the seasons are all alike: but the influence of heat and cold has too distinctly appeared in various instances, to be any further questionable. In long sea-voyages, where the transition is sometimes quicker and more considerable than in the same climate, passing into colder latitudes has very regularly produced a calm, and into warmer ones all the violence of frantic accessions.

Insanity is indubitably connected with certain periods of life—a fact which, I think, will be found of considerable use in illustrating its nature and causes. Mr. HASLAM gives the following table from Bethlem Hospital.

Between the age of	Admitted.	Cured.	Not cured.
10 & 20	113	78	35
20 — 30	488	100	288
30 — 40	527	180	347
40 — 50	362	87	275
50 — 60	143	25	118
60 — 70	31	4	27



In other countries it would appear that the same law obtains. Dr. PINEL states the ages of the lunatics received during eleven successive years into the Bicêtre at Paris, as follows :

	Between 15 & 20.	20 & 30.	40 & 50.	50 & 60.	60 & 70.
In 1784	5	33	31	11	6
1785	4	39	49	14	3
1786	4	31	40	15	5
1787	12	39	41	17	7
1788	9	43	53	18	7
1789	6	38	39	14	2
1790	6	28	34	9	7
1791	9	26	32	7	3
1792	6	26	33	12	3
1793	1	13	13	4	2
1794	3	23	15	9	6

On enquiring from persons who have had the care of lunatics, what kind of persons they were accustomed to receive in the greatest proportion, I have been informed that it consisted of members of the clerical profession, but could scarce obtain any distinct opinion concerning others, except devotees. Dr. PINEL, on examining the registers of the Bicêtre, says that he found inscribed “ a great many monks and priests, “ as also a great many country people, who “ had been driven beside themselves by “ horrid pictures of futurity;—several artists, “ as sculptors, painters, and musicians;— “ some versifiers, in extacies with their own

“ productions;—a pretty considerable number of advocates and attorneys;—but there does not appear the name of a single person, accustomed to the habitual exercise of his intellectual faculties;—not one naturalist, or natural philosopher of ability;—not a chemist or geometrician.”—It has been remarked as singular at the Charité at Berlin, that several chaplains became insane in succession. But this seems to be imputed to their situation as chaplains, though the spectacle of madness does not appear to have affected the other officers of the house, or attendants upon the insane, in the same manner.

*On the Validity of the DISTINCTION between MELANCHOLIA and MANIA.*

Such are the most obvious and striking facts respecting insanity. There is not one of them for which several competent vouchers may not be quoted; and as to the most important, there is a general agreement. He who would explain what sort of an affection insanity is, and how it is formed, must attend to these particulars; and by comparing them with the explanation, the reader will be in some measure enabled to judge how far it may answer his just expectations.



Modern nosologists have so entirely departed from the original principle of distinction, by which melancholy madness was characterized according to the appearances of what is vulgarly called *melancholy* in sane people, that they now give us no other criterion than the partial nature of the insanity. "Insanity" says Dr. CULLEN, "consists in such false conceptions of the relations of things, as lead to irrational emotions or actions. Melancholy is partial insanity without indigestion—Mania is universal insanity." According to this account, the partition between the two is thin indeed. It is a mere difference in degree. It sounds much the same as splitting small-pox into *partial* and *universal*, because sometimes there happens to be only one pustule or pustules but upon one limb; while at others, the eruption is diffused over the whole body. Such a system of subdivision is contrary to that, which is followed with regard to all other disorders, and indeed contrary to what manifest propriety suggests. Nearly all disorders exhibit the same variety of gradations without being marked, for this reason, as specifically different. It is making the plant from an acorn dropped upon a rocky soil, not an oak, because it does not rise to

the height, or spread to the extent, usual to the king of the forest. It answers no purpose in prognostication or practice. Accordingly, it is pitiful to see what attempts are made to maintain the distinction by writers, who have not the courage to reject it. Thus the experienced CHIARUGI says, that “mania  
“ properly signifies raving madness. The  
“ maniac is like a tyger or a lion, and in  
“ this respect mania may be considered as  
“ a state opposite to true melancholia.” Nevertheless the intermixture and alteration of symptoms oblige him to create a species of raving melancholia: and he adds, “that  
“ there are alienations of mind, attended  
“ with a fixed hatred towards some single  
“ object, to which, at a later period, sallies  
“ of rage associate themselves, returning on  
“ certain occasions. Now to determine  
“ whether this affection deserves the name  
“ of mania or of raving melancholy, the  
“ behaviour of the parties must be watched.  
“ If they be truly maniacal, they will not  
“ for ever continue immoveable in respect  
“ to the object of their hatred, but at times  
“ transfer it to other objects, which shall be  
“ exhibited to them by their excited fancy  
“ in a very lively manner, but indistinctly  
“ and in irregular connection with the series



“ of their actual sensations.” So if a lunatic abhor but a single person only, he is to be set down under one head; and if he chance to take it into his head to be affronted with another, continuing otherwise just the same, he is to be removed to a different disorder. Delicate lines indeed! and which must escape not only the eyes of other people, but at times those of him who drew them! As if hatred and suspicion did not, almost in all cases of derangement, diverge from their first object, or might not at least by the smallest provocation be derived to others.—Again, the same author allows that there are maniacs, who will listen to the remonstrances of their friends, and become tranquil in consequence. That is, there is an universal insanity which is partially rational.—Again, he tells us, that “ though fury may not be always present, “ yet the disposition to it is always to be “ observed.” It is singular that a physician who had had so many hundreds of the insane under his eye, did not remember in perusing this passage, how often the disposition to fury is to be observed in the melancholic, that is, in those who strictly brood over one idea, and how apt they are to burst from their meditations and offer violence to those, who

injudiciously disturb them? A writer, the most remarkable of all for the multiplicity of his divisions, confesses at last, that "all these species of insanity may be variously combined, and frequently interchange, one with another. It may be proper farther to remark that the same patient sometimes goes through several kinds of insanity—which may be reckoned in such cases as so many degrees or stages, during the course of the same illness." (*Arnold on Insanity*, I. 316.) The respectable testimony of Mr. HASLAM is still more express respecting the nullity of the common distribution. "As the terms *mania* and *melancholia*," says he, "are in general use, and serve to distinguish the forms, under which insanity is exhibited, there can be no objection to retain them. But I would strongly oppose their being considered as opposite diseases. In both, the association of ideas is equally incorrect and they appear to differ only, from the different passions which accompany them. On dissection, the state of the brain does not shew any appearances, peculiar to melancholy; nor is the treatment which I have observed most successful, different from that which is employed in mania." "We every day," says the



same observer, "see the most furious maniacs suddenly sink into a profound melancholy; and the most depressed and miserable objects become violent and raving. We have patients in Bethlem Hospital, whose lives are divided between furious and melancholic paroxysms, and who, under both states, retain the same set of ideas." Let me add one more confirmation. I was very lately favoured with the perusal of a manuscript, which if it could ever appear before the public, would go far to demonstrate that this and that form of insanity are only supposed to be so limited to individuals, because cases are seldom observed long together with close attention. A medical gentleman, who had for years superintended a lunatic asylum was obliged, on account of indisposition of his own, to retire from his professional pursuits. During this secession, he lived under the same roof with an insane patient, and kept a journal for many months, in which regular entries were made morning and evening. The practitioner visited the patient daily, and sometimes repeatedly on the same day. He had almost hourly reports concerning her. The diary exhibits the utmost conceivable range of symptoms, and the author expressly assured me, that this one case

shewed him every material appearance which he had observed in all the patients that had ever been under his care.

The true relation of Melancholia to Mania may, I apprehend be stated with the utmost simplicity; or if we reject these names, the true relation of the two general forms, (the *penseroso*, and sometimes the *allegro*, oftener the *furibondo*) under which insanity manifests itself; namely, abstraction and agitation. There are certain children, in whom correction or reproof is almost sure to bring on a fit of sullenness; and who, after receiving the one or the other, will stand for a considerable time as fixed as if they were only images of animated creatures. But a very trifling occasion will provoke an ebullition of the passion that is raging within. If a smaller boy happen to pass within arm's length, though without giving more offence than the wolf in the fable received from the lamb's drinking lower down the stream, the young melancholic will immediately invent some cause for quarrelling, and play off a maniacal paroxysm in miniature at the expence of his over-matched playfellow. Thus it is, I think, exactly that melancholic absorptions generate maniacal extravagancies. The storm goes on to drive for a while, and that



sometimes not a short while. But in innumerable cases, the apparently dead calm, though in reality it be a season of deep retired, despondent, and sometimes pleasurable feeling returns, to be, in like manner, succeeded by the hurricane in its season.—*Torpid* melancholy! *torpid* grief! they may as well apply the epithet to the boisterous state of passion or insanity, and speak of *torpid* anger or *torpid* phrenzy. As long as it continues to be either grief or melancholy, there must be an internal agitation far beyond the average warmth of sane and complacent mortals, and this internal agitation will generally display itself to the experienced eye in some species of muscular action, as we shall see below. It is true that melancholy often ends in vacant, purring idiocy; and so does mania as well. I have already stated it to be followed by speedily fatal exhaustion.\* The succession

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\* It may be proper to give one example. “An Austrian prisoner remained 2 months in a state of constant agitation; crying or singing without remission, and tearing to pieces every thing, upon which he could lay his hands. He grew calm in the night between the 3rd and 4th of brumaire, year 3. In the morning he appeared reasonable, but in an extreme state of debility. He took food, and walked several turns in the courts. In the evening,

is analogous to what takes place in inflammatory disorders; the extreme of languor to the extreme of energy.

When, after a long absence, any one visits the companion of his boyish days in a state of melancholy derangement, and finds himself no more noticed than the last billet of wood which the servant laid upon the fire, it is difficult not to infer a total abolition, or at least, a great diminution of feeling. And I have, not unfrequently, been in the way of seeing such inferences instantly drawn and inexorably retained. Once or twice, I have known them corrected, either by a burst of feeling, issuing from the gloom of abstraction, like lightening from the bosom of a thunder-cloud; or by the spectator's observing quick motion of the lips and other mus-

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"on withdrawing into his cell, he said he felt chilly. He had, in consequence, an increase of blankets. In the round which the keeper made a few hours after, he found the man dead in his bed, preserving the same position as on lying down."—The weather was at freezing: and Dr. PINEL mentions another death the same night. He agrees with Mr. HASLAM in stating that lunatics enjoy no general privilege of insensibility to cold.—Some, however, resist its effects prodigiously (p. 31.)—The scarcity in France was dreadfully fatal in the Bicêtre, where the insane were put on a short allowance.



cular affections, associated with busy thought; or what is more decisive still, by the consequence, inevitably resulting from a whole history of ideal occurrences, which the patient, before his disease retires altogether into the interior, will sometimes relate with full belief. Now such coinings of the brain irrefragably imply action of that organ or whatever other may assist in the process. Many such processes, no doubt, are carried on with as high a *verve* or as true fervour as ever accompanied poetic fiction. Melancholia can even rekindle the embers of mental fire after all that age and residence in a court contribute to their extinction. There is now perhaps confined in the Bicêtre at Paris, there certainly was not long since, a person, once attached by his places to a prince, but whose wits perished with his fortune in the wreck of the revolution. His melancholy consists in supposing himself invested with irresistible power. On ordinary occasions, he perfectly preserves in the hospital his habits of politeness, and if contradicted, retires making a respectful bow, without heat or murmur—One day, however, when the keeper remonstrated to him on the filth that he left in his apartment, the lunatic broke out with the

utmost violence, and threatened the other with annihilation.

There is, I think, one grand mistake which we perpetually commit in judging of the moral nature of one another. It extends to the insane and the sane alike. We conclude respecting the existence or non-existence of sensibility, according as it speaks the same language, and keeps the same company with our own, or the reverse. Each makes his particular inclinations the standard for the world. Scarce a person who contemplates the use of wealth or authority in a superior, but makes himself amends for the disparity by complacently imagining how much better use he could make of the same means. So far all is fair.—But fairness also requires that we grant as well as take. A perverse vine may choose to throw its tendrils round a thorn, instead of its prescriptive classical support, the elm. But can we say the vine has no tendrils, because it uses them so unworthily? We may find occasions for pronouncing that sensibility is misplaced; but it is much seldomer lost or decayed than is commonly supposed. *Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also.* But if the treasure be in a wrong place, is there therefore no heart?



Dr. JOHNSON, somewhere in his Rambler, speaks of a mathematician, who when sudden intelligence was brought him that the flames were gathering round him, instead of catching the alarm, sedately replied, that *fire naturally tends to move in a circle*. The anecdote is said to be authentic, but the relater, from this one trait, labours to make out a whole character, of which the essence may be gathered from the appellation of GELIDUS. For my part, I do not see any reason for believing that this GELIDUS had less warmth of disposition than the most frightened of those who were in haste to carry their property, or their children, or themselves, out of the reach of the conflagration. The affections of the mathematician, it is true, were bent upon none of these first. But there are such things in the world as coefficients and abscisses. And by these were his affections pre-occupied. He ought to be qualified as mad if you please, but not, for any thing that appears, as cold.

To any man, who has had great interests to meditate, the apparent or real inattention of the melancholic (consistently with profound sensibility) to the objects noticed by others, ought not to seem a strange or a puzzling doctrine. At one time, while

reviewing particular ideas, we hear and see without manifesting to the bystander any tokens of our impressions. At another, we are lost in thought, and the clock strikes unnoticed. The sound cannot introduce itself among the links of the passing train. The melancholic is still more lost when the fit is on him, and he notices nothing; or else (as formerly exemplified in the case of a noctambulist), he draws every thing about him into the whirlpool of his sensations. If the minds of others may be in any measure compared to vanes, which take their direction from without, his mind is a machine, which by its rapid circumgyrations not only resists the common mover, but takes this, as it were, into tow, and forces it to become its minister.

The transition to outrageous action is nothing more difficult to comprehend.—What more natural than that feelings and ideas, strongly worked up together, should excite a corresponding energy of muscular exertion?—The following reflections may illustrate this, if it should be thought to want illustration.



*Whether Madness admit of an essential  
Character?*

There are a number of terms in language, which every man, at least till he is cross-examined, can define to his own satisfaction, but no one to the satisfaction of others. Such are *animal*, *vegetable*, and in a still more difficult degree, certain terms of moral import, as *wise*, *delicate*, *pious*, *virtuous*. They are first employed in relation to the habits of the individual, or of the community to which he belongs. Then, from a continually widening sphere of observation, they gain, by analogy, an import so extensive, that it becomes next to impossible to find a point of agreement among the objects, to which they are respectively attached. So their signification becomes almost a matter of mere feeling. To know the original meaning of each, generally affords some clue, and we can then perceive by what steps the understanding has proceeded. Thus *virtue* meant *valour*, or rather *manliness* \*, before it had its present seemingly so remote and placid signification. To excel in warlike

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\* *Virtus*, virtue—*vir*, a man.

achievements was at once the most difficult and useful accomplishment in a tribe of barbarians, every one ferocious and hardy, and all combating at times *ad internecionem* against other tribes. This therefore most became a man. In process of time, other qualities were felt as useful and difficult to acquire. So these were stamped as *virtuous* or *manly*.

MAD is one of those words, which mean almost every thing and nothing. At first it was, I imagine, applied to transports of rage; and when men were civilized enough to be capable of insanity, their insanity, I presume, must have been of the frantic sort, because, in the untutored, intense feelings seem regularly to carry a boisterous expression. But the frantic would, at times, fall into the opposite immoveable extreme. The conjunction of both states in the same individual might, I conceive, cause the term to be by degrees transferred to the second, where that alone appeared.

The difficulty of a definition of madness, which shall be generally accepted, is evident from another consideration. The insane have the same muscles with the sane. In both, they perform the same general office. Few need be told that in all men, discourse, look, and gesticulation, depend on fixed or alter-



nating muscular contractions\*. These alone are the outward tokens of the state within.

But the number of muscles, and the range of contraction in each, are such as to present combinations without end.—Let us attend to the countenance only. If we had a series of drawings, ascending by the closest gradations from the face of a sleeping infant (a being incapable of insanity), to that of the most furious inhabitant of Bedlam, who would undertake to point out the last among the sane, and the first among the insane? But if there be no hope of agreeing as to a simple object of sight, what chance can there be of compromise where the circumstances cannot be, in the same manner, subjected to

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\* The appearance of the eye, which is so striking in the maniacal state, is regulated by its muscles. Though hollow when the patient is calm, it will protrude on the commencement of the paroxysm. This arises from the rigidity of certain muscles to be seen on the back of the ball in any set of anatomical plates. The glistening is a similar operation. The dullness of the eye often arises from a sort of corrugation of the coats, though the furrows are not singly visible. But when all the moving fibres become tense, the coats are fully unfolded, and shine.—Sometimes the presence of the keeper of a madhouse shall overawe the raving patient, till his tongue and limbs become in a moment composed. But the eye will retain its characteristic expression.

steady contemplation? To what purpose does the nosologist talk of "*false conceptions of things*" and of "*irrational emotions or actions*", (*pathemata vel actiones præter rationem*)? I am not sure that he can explain to us what *false* is: I hold it as certain that he would be baffled by *rational*.

*Too much learning has made thee mad!* This is the perpetual motto of the vulgar. The more limited a man's range of information, the more readily does he attach the imputation of extravagance to any mode of conduct, varying from his own. Talking to one's self is sufficient to make one pass for insane, with those who have few or no *vivified* ideas. But one distinction will apply to these opinions, as generally as can be expected, where the circumstances, on which they are founded, are so fugitive and various, and where those, who form them, so capricious and undiscerning. They are applied to strong actions or to expressions of countenance that imply somewhat of consideration; never to mere imbecillity.

The fool of nature stands with stupid eyes  
And gaping mouth, that testify surprize.—

Such an one will scarce any where be pronounced mad. It is something beyond, not



short of, himself, that draws this sentence from the ignorant.—It is the perversion of faculties, not their privation.

The knowing do not extend the boundaries of insanity so unmercifully, but they have no exact criterion for distinguishing it. They too can only judge of others by themselves. When the mind is occupied, and the active powers employed for an end, which they cannot conceive as desirable or attainable, there the party seems no longer in his right wits. He may not yet have attained a degree of wildness, at which it shall be necessary to seclude him from society. But he is in a fair way to reach this point. He may not at present be dangerous to others, nor likely to walk over a precipice, or into a river. He is not yet so possessed with his delusion, but that he can strike a bargain, or attend to the items of a tradesman's bill, and ascertain its amount.

When there is no longer merely question about throwing out an imputation or cutting a joke, but depriving a person of his liberty, just the same uncertainty prevails. Those with whom it rests to decide, have nothing for it but to look into their own bosom, and on comparing the series of their own thoughts and actions with that in question, to strike

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the balance. If they find it considerable, they put it, of course, to the account of derangement. There are thousands who mix uncontrouled among the sane, and yet are subject to the most irrational feelings and actions from false conceptions. Such are the parents, whom we continually see wasting the inheritance of their offspring in an incessant round of wrong-headed projects for increasing it. Of the falseness of their conceptions, the injudicious adaptation of their means to the end proposed is a sufficient guarantee; and we have *prima facie* evidence of their irrationality. May it not be doubted whether any criterion can be established upon the phænomena, exhibited by a number of the most declared lunatics, which shall exempt the great NAPOLEONE BONAPARTE from the imputation of a tainted understanding? On the eminence where he sits, and on which it is well if we may not soon have to inscribe—

——— Tyrant power

Here sits enthroned in blood——

it must be evident to every spectator that he is in a state of inordinate agitation. Whether his conceptions are false or otherwise, cannot be determined before we know exactly what



they are. But if it may be presumed that he has in contemplation the happiness of the millions whom he governs and his own, their justness and the rationality of his conduct would appear very problematical. And if he *has* any other purpose in view, it would, I think, be the verdict of an enlightened jury *that he ought to be put out of harm's way*.—Similar reasonings may involve a character, lately too conspicuous in our own country, who in aspiring to rival the glory of a predecessor in the conduct of military enterprises,—in conceiving falsely of our own state and of that of the enemy, and in his perpetual vauntings, displayed all that permanence of delusion of sense, all that agitation and presumptuousness\* that characterize the maniac. If with DR. DARWIN, we make madness to arise from “excess of action of the sensorial power of volition,” we shall infallibly comprehend such cases as the preceding. But we shall be still equally at a loss for a line to divide the

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\* One of this man's boasts was *that he understood human nature*. Taking the pretence in a partial sense, it perhaps was well founded. He was acquainted, I believe, with all its disgraceful parts, with its corruptions, and its readiness to be gulled by mountebanks. He understood human nature, in short, just as a scavenger understands a magnificent city.

sound in mind in general from the unsound. For that term "excess" is as vague as the thing to be defined, and can only find an uncertain application, when the question arises on any particular case, according to the varying understanding and conscience of individuals. In conformity with what universally occurs on adverting to the subject of madness, Dr. DARWIN observes, "if every one, who possesses mistaken ideas or who puts false estimates on things, was liable to confinement, I know not who of my readers might not tremble at the sight of a madhouse." But in like manner, if actions, resulting from a will, intent upon an object beyond its value, or inordinately exerted, constitute insanity, there would be cause for just the same apprehension, as it might be difficult to find one mortal, who could pass for sane with others.

*Chief Particularities of the confessedly insane.*

Dismissing therefore all pretensions to establish an essential character, or to give a tenable definition of madness, and throwing it out for the consideration of the intelligent, *whether it be not necessary either to confine*



*insanity to one species, or to divide it into almost as many as there are cases*\*, I shall extract from the history of lunatics such circumstances as principally characterise their intellectual aberrations. Afterwards, I shall endeavour to fix upon the point at which they usually begin to go astray, and follow their wanderings till they are lost. Hence it will appear to a certain extent, how they might have been kept in the path of right reason.

We have seen that imbecillity is distinguished, according to the common apprehension of men, from insanity, and that, contrary to first appearances, torpor is inconsistent with insanity in any form. It may now be added that *the mind acts with unusual energy*. The only doubt is when the patient preserves an obstinate silence. But in a large proportion of cases, the ruling ideas break out or may be elicited by entreaty. Thus in one of the entertaining articles of Zoonomia, (Class iii. Order 1, Genus 2, or vol. 2, 8vo. ed. p. 54, &c.) “a most elegant lady is said

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\* I have looked over the species of insanity in many writers. They have appeared to me to be conceived in this spirit. Suppose the human appetite to be divided into the appetite for animal and vegetable food: and these again into the appetite for venison, veal, mutton—pease, beans, and so forth.

“ suddenly to have become melancholy, and  
 “ yet not to so great a degree but that she  
 “ could command herself to do the honours  
 “ of her table with grace and apparent ease.  
 “ After many days’ entreaty she at length  
 “ told the author that she thought her mar-  
 “ rying her husband had made him unhappy  
 “ (though it was a love-match on both sides)  
 “ and that this idea she could not efface from  
 “ her mind day or night.” Hundreds of  
 similar examples of deeply retired and in-  
 tense thought might be quoted. Now the  
 induction from the majority of instances  
 may be legitimately extended to the mino-  
 rity, where neither art nor authority can  
 draw forth a confession. It seems even fair  
 to suppose that the more unfathomable the  
 mind, the busier are the movements going  
 forward in its recesses.

It very generally holds *that in insanity the ideas are vivified, or that they are exalted to the force of impressions.* This, if any one, is the cardinal point on which the whole affair turns. When a person continues to maintain that he has been an actor in scenes, which never took place, all the world agrees in putting him down as mad. It is a fact which perpetually occurs. Thus I knew an insane officer, who believed himself to have



been brought to a court-martial, though in the real history of his life there was not the least vestige of such a transaction. The insane are perpetually without cause imagining themselves infected with symptoms of the itch or of the venereal disease.

From a small germ of fact, there shoots out in a moment an extensive ramification and luxuriant foliage of imaginations, all equally distinct to the mind with the first perception. I have before me a very detailed account, by a medical insane patient, of the transactions of the three or four days, immediately preceding his confinement. He drew it up for the satisfaction of the superintendent of the lunatic asylum, into which he was received. It exhibits, in the most curiously minute manner, the workings of his fancy. The persons about him, aware of his state, keep a constant eye upon him. Of this, from the usual sagacity of invalids in the same situation, and, I suppose, from consciousness also, he becomes immediately sensible. Then, in the activity of his thoughts, he imputes motives of his own imagining to their conduct. With the help of this scaffolding, his castles run up into the air with meteor rapidity. On every countenance, he

reads avowals (legible to no one else) of the schemes he conceives formed against him, and combines friends and strangers into one grand conspiracy against his life. For example—the writer supposes poison had been administered to him, but that he had escaped death by taking sparingly of the liquid with which it was mixed. On one occasion, he holds the person whom he believes to have given it him fast by the wrist. He goes on to say—“ He sometimes affected to smile at  
“ me with pity for my unhappy state of  
“ mind. Then he would lean back on the  
“ couch, close his eyes, then open them a  
“ little, so that the eye could barely be seen  
“ through the lashes, and so as to prevent  
“ his being observed, as he thought. At  
“ those times, he would cast the most infernal looks at *me*, and afterwards round  
“ the room, for some weapon or other to  
“ finish what he had begun: The latter I  
“ could see not only from his looks and the  
“ hardness his muscles used to assume, but  
“ also from the posture he would put himself  
“ into—ready to jump, if he discovered  
“ what would answer his purpose.” In this style the account proceeds throughout, detailing the incidents with perfect accuracy, but forcing on each the strangest construc-



tion, and putting upon every countenance looks, the most favourable to this construction, but the most remote from the reality. The reader may find a similar example in ROUSSEAU'S ingeniously\* mad commentary upon Mr. HUME'S real or supposed expression: *Je tiens J. J. Rousseau. (Oeuvres compl. de Rousseau, par ordre des matières, tome xviii.)* \*

The imagination of the poets is content with personifying inanimate objects. That of lunatics frequently goes a great deal further, and strips them of their own personality. It would not be believed, were it not so perpetually experienced, that a human being could come to conceive himself made of butter; or that his legs were of straw; or that he was a barley-corn. The fact proves the force of imagination; and perhaps may be in some measure explained. An invalid of great brilliancy of parts once said to me, that but for a particular expectation, "*he would as soon be a nettle in a country church-yard.*" If his spirits had declined

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\* "*Les longs et funestes regards tant de fois lancés sur moi — un ton, dont il m'est impossible de donner l'idée, et qui correspond très-bien aux regards dont j'ai parlé.*" — Rousseau.

further, and the wish for this metamorphosis had recurred often, it might, at last, have been considered as realized. Such are the contemplations, which when seconded by external circumstances, end in melancholy. A devout person reads in scripture that *all flesh is grass*. The words strike him. He ruminates. He is doubtless flesh. But he has irrefragable authority for believing that flesh is grass. Therefore he is grass himself. What logic can be clearer! If he has gained this step, how easily may he go on to apply to his person all the qualities of grass. He may act upon it, that is, according to Dr. DARWIN, he may raise delirium into insanity, by standing out all night to receive the refreshing dews, and lurking all day in the cellar to avoid the parching sun. As the seasons revolve, he may employ literally a language much like that which WOLSEY uses metaphorically—

“I am fallen into the sere, the yellow leaf.”

Upon the preceding principle, we easily perceive why those human beings, that are merely the creatures of impression, as savages and children, are incapable of insanity. There must be combinations of ideas, and the habit of combining. Otherwise the



delusive conceptions, lately exemplified, could not branch out to any length, and therefore could not maintain a footing for any time in the mind. Miss H. D. about 7 years of age, arrived from the East Indies, speaking scarce any thing but *Moors*, and, I believe, unacquainted with the letters of the alphabet, but quick and intelligent. I was desired to see her one day, when she complained in broken English that *a man had got into her stomach*. Her friends told me that this had been her complaint from the moment she appeared indisposed. I asked her how she knew that there was a man in her stomach. She said she was sure there was, because she felt him thumping very hard. Had the child harboured a previous train of superstitious ideas, ready to connect with this supposition, she might have run mad. The learned JURIEU, who wrote a commentary on the revelations, contracted, to a degree of severity, the ailments incident to sedentary scholars. The pains in his stomach gave him the idea of a hard substance pressing against it. And what should he take into his head, but that the beast of blasphemy, with seven heads and ten horns, and ten crowns upon the horns, had made good a lodgment within him? The same happens to

a multitude of poor ignorant creatures, who hear of possession by devils; and when they feel an involuntary twitch, think it is the finger of the devil.

It seems to be generally understood (for there must be always a great deal conventional or arbitrary in the designation of a person as insane) that the duration of the delusion is an essential circumstance. Pending the bills, framed by two noted statesmen for placing a gag in the mouth of the English nation, I was desired to see a gentleman, whose discourse alarmed his family. He had been out in his carriage. A momentary qualm had come over him. On returning home, he spoke of having just seen persons, known to be at a distance, and mentioned occurrences as the news of the day, none of which could have happened. He appeared to read a paragraph out of the *Star*, announcing the appointment of the Duke of BEDFORD to the treasury, and of Mr. Fox to a secretaryship of State. He glanced over the debates, and when he came to the division at the end, pointed with his finger to the ministerial numbers as a small minority, though, as is well known, exactly the reverse was the case. But this was not a common blunder. He did not mistake one side for the other; but it



was, on both sides, a substitution of numbers quite different from those stated in the newspaper, upon which nevertheless his eyes were intensely fixed.—The patient, it should be observed, was a quiet character and a calm politician. He had no fever, pain or other ailment. He eat and drank precisely as before; and his insanity disappeared in a couple of days without ever returning.

Exactly the same association, coalescence, or if you please, confounding of vivid ideas with impressions, arises from the same cause in fixed derangement. A lunatic, who was guarded at home, having by means of the servant got possession of a novel, set to read it with the utmost volubility, substituting the names of acquaintances for those of the author's characters, and dexterously interweaving foreign circumstances with the narrative.—Foreign feelings intruded as well as foreign ideas. For passages, not in the least pathetic, made this patient shed tears plentifully—a distinct indication of sensibility in excess. Just so do the other circumstances confirm the opinion that ideas crowd upon the mind more in this than in the sane state. These particulars add force to the positive testimony before referred to concerning the resemblance between an insane paroxysm and

a dream. Indeed I can imagine no difference in the state of mind except it be the short continuance of the delusion in one case.—In attending a patient in a fit of the gout, I found one morning that he had awakened with new inflammation in his feet. He told me that his sleep had been much disturbed, and that he had dreamed, among other things, of the apothecary's putting fetters on his legs. He resisted, while it was doing, but in vain. He then insisted, with a cocked pistol in his hand, upon the removal of the fetters; and shot the apothecary dead because he refused.—A female had felt deep and frequent chagrin, because her marriage had been unproductive of children. She became lunatic. Once, while under confinement, she made unusually violent resistance to an attempt to dress her, at the same time screaming and exhibiting a degree of terror unknown before. The catamenia had just begun to flow. They probably flowed with pain. At least, it clearly appeared that she believed herself at the moment in a parturient state. Her medical superintendant, who was accustomed to act as accoucheur, thinks she suffered full as much as if she had in reality had labour-pains!—In these two cases, we find exactly the same sort of superstructure,



raised by the imagination upon a painful feeling—the same spirit of resistance—*i. e.* the same efforts of volition precisely.

Considering this analogy, and the power of sleep to foster nervous complaints and to bring on their paroxysms, I have frequently endeavoured to learn, whether dreams are not sometimes continued without a break into insanity, and whether they do not increase the susceptibility to its exciting causes. My enquiries have seldom been satisfactorily answered.\* Dr. PINEL, however, in his

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\* The authority of observant persons, having the superintendence of lunatics must be great, but there are considerations, which limit it. To the excentric movements of these animated machines, they are constant witnesses, and must therefore be good judges of their range. But does it follow that they must be equally well acquainted with their interior structure? In a madhouse at least, they can hardly gain this knowledge. The machine was laid together and mounted before its introduction there. It is one thing to behold the Nile foam down its cataracts, and spread over the face of Egypt; another to possess the secret of its springs. And those who have been most familiar with adult madness have, I believe, often failed to study it in nascent state. In the heat and bustle of their own occupations, they sometimes consider the close study of the human mind, concerning which every man of education gets a few random notions, as an occupation too retired, and too much in the shade for them; nay, one finds them disclaiming metaphysics, or professing an intention of dis-

lately published collection of facts (which, though of a gross character, will perhaps retain their value longer than many attempts at a subtler investigation of the subject) has a passage pretty much in point. "It is," he says, "extatic visions during the night that often form the prelude to the fits of maniacal devotion. It is also sometimes by enchanting dreams and a supposed apparition of the beloved object that madness from love breaks out with fury, after longer or shorter intervals of reason and tranquillity."—(*sur la manie*, p. 18. Paris 1801.) For the reception of so sudden a passion as that of Romeo and Juliet for each other, the heart is, I suppose, most effectually opened by nocturnal visions or day dreams. The author

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patching this part of the subject as soon as possible. That is, they desire to forego the consideration of the essence of the thing, and to play idly about its accessories and accidents. The sane and insane mind are made up of the same stuff. A change in the hues and arrangement of their materials is the sole difference. Upon the knowledge of this change, it is probable that the power of preventing and correcting it greatly depend. The management of the insane, as far as one can judge from books, goes on too much in the gross; and without the insight to be obtained from the study I recommend, it is not easy to say how it can be more nicely adapted to the exigencies of individuals.



of Oberon and other poets, as also novelists, if their authority be worth any thing, may be quoted in favour of this doctrine.

I have met with a few instances, from which it appeared that dreams have a real influence in disposing to insanity. The following may serve as an example. A pregnant lady in the East Indies had a frightful dream, of which the day of judgment was the subject. Very soon after waking, while her nerves were still agitated by the nocturnal images, there came on one of the violent thunder-storms, usual in those climates. This recalled her scarcely dissipated delusion; and it continued for several hours. A miscarriage was the consequence; and her health received a rude shock, which it had not recovered many years afterwards when she became my patient, though she was never afterwards subject to any thing like insanity.

These facts would appear to admit of some useful application. Where we observe the constitutional tokens, above enumerated, with or without a family disposition to insanity, the hints thrown out in the former part of this essay, respecting the means of securing placid sleep, should be attended to and improved upon. A knowledge should be obtained of the nights, passed by persons for

whom there are such grounds of apprehension. Their state during the days, succeeding unpleasant dreams, should be noted. On the accession of any suspicious appearances, they should be put on an abstemious diet, carried to fresh scenes, have blood taken from the head, and diligently pursue such a course of medicine as their symptoms may seem to require. A plan that succeeds but now and then in confirmed insanity would be more certainly followed by the desired consequence, if carried into effect as it is coming on. It is of much importance therefore to be put into a method of recognizing it on its first approach.

I consider delirium as having just the same relation to insanity that dreams have, that is, as being undistinguishable while it lasts. Delirium seems too to have much the same varieties. It is sometimes fierce; sometimes gentle and communicative; at others, close and solely intent upon its passing pageants. An attempt has been lately made to distinguish delirium by the absence of voluntary exertion\*. But in

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\* “ The ideas in delirium consist of those excited by the  
 “ sensation of pleasure or pain that precedes, and the trains  
 “ of other ideas, associated with these; and not of those  
 “ excited by external irritations or by voluntary exertion.



attending to persons, affected with delusions of sense in febrile and common nervous affections, all gradations from rambling of the thoughts without exertion to intentional violence, may sometimes be observed, in the same patient, during the same attack, and in the course of the same day. And quiescent delirium passes through incomplete delirium (or that attended with weak voluntary efforts), by imperceptible shades up to full insanity, according to the definition in question.

The best account of a delirium, with which I am acquainted, is one given by a physician in his own case (*Moritz Erfahrungs-seelen-kunde*, I. 3. 44.) No medical attendant or philosophical spectator could so completely have delineated the various busy scenes represented before the mind. From the following short

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“ Hence the patients do not know the room which they  
 “ inhabit, or the people which surround them; nor have  
 “ they any voluntary exertion, *where the delirium is com-*  
 “ *pleat*: so that their efforts in walking about a room, or  
 “ rising from their bed are unsteady, and produced by their  
 “ catenations with the immediate affections of pleasure or  
 “ pain. By the above circumstances, delirium is distin-  
 “ guished from madness, in which the patients well know  
 “ the persons of their acquaintance, and the place where  
 “ they are; and perform all the voluntary actions with  
 “ steadiness and determination.” (*Zoonomia*, Vol. III.  
 8vo. ed. p. 495.

extract, it will appear that the varieties of steady determination of the will and passive delirious reverie succeeded each other so rapidly, and were so connected with the same disease, as not to leave any room for discriminating these affections as heterogeneous. And I fear no doctrine can stand on the slippery distinction between diseases of sensation, and diseases of volition.

The writer of the account, while ill of a low fever, had been removed into an apartment different from that in which he usually slept. The phantasy that persecuted him most was his inability to persuade himself that he was in his own house at all. The pain of this persuasion excited continual efforts and trains of thought. He seemed transported from street to street; and his imagination was active enough, to exhibit to him every moment, some different public place, in which his guards detained him on my bed. "I almost continually supplicated," says the author—and let the reader mark the steadiness of the wish, and the repetition of voluntary exertions of the voice—"I almost continually supplicated to be only carried to my house in *Holy-Ghost-Street*."—The persons about him, in endeavouring to pacify him without complying with his wishes, did but confirm the delusion under which he laboured.



Their cry was—*it shall be done in a few hours—or early to-morrow, as it is now night.* He lay pining in vain for the end of these few hours: and all the time his fancy created places, not the most agreeable, for his residence. Sometimes it pitched him between two walls, so close that he could not heave an arm; sometimes on a burial-ground; sometimes on the court before the hospital he attended. All the arguments of his friends availed nothing to prove to him that he was really in his own room. When they pointed out to him his own books, close beside which he lay, or the prints that hung opposite, he took it for a trick. Sometimes he did not recognize them for his own; and sometimes he conceived they had been removed to his present place of abode.—In these observations, we perceive the very nimbleness of wit, so conspicuous in confessed lunatics.—Of the effect of accidental irritations of the senses, he observes that a postilion's horn, or even the watchman, would transport him to a public place, filled with music and dancing—the neighing of a horse in the street, to a stable—the bad smell of his perspiration, or the blood coagulated in his nostrils, to a burying-ground.—When the physician in attendance consented to his removal into the wished for apartment, on the score of there being nothing to lose,

his whole internal feelings underwent an instantaneous revolution. Though he had lain for days and nights without sleep, raving, supplicating, and complaining, a placid sleep, the forerunner of a rapid recovery, overtook him in ten minutes !

It was another conceit that he was hated and deserted by the whole world—that all his friends had forsaken and his patients renounced him. The foundation of fact on which this superstructure of despondency was raised, he takes to be his missing three of his most intimate friends, who were absent or incapable of attending upon him. He adds to this a mistrust towards mankind, which his friends told him they had observed in his health. The number of unpleasant things he experienced from those about him, such as their refusal to let him quit his bed, forcing him to take medicines, applying blisters, must have added force to the sentiment.

What is strongly in point is this : “ my other  
 “ fancies were probably those most common in  
 “ every delirium. The flowers on my curtains and  
 “ tester I took for men in continual movement.  
 “ They all went towards the wall ; and as  
 “ there were none but my acquaintance, I  
 “ often joined them. We found ourselves in  
 “ large illuminated subterraneous chambers,  
 “ where I learned such family secrets, as every



“ man in the world above, keeps close locked  
 “ up in the recesses of his bosom. Once I really  
 “ called my wife to my bed-side, and told her  
 “ a shocking transaction, involving two of  
 “ our friends, which I had learned in these  
 “ subterraneous assemblies. I related the story  
 “ with so much consistency and gave it such  
 “ an air of probability, as to make her take it  
 “ for a real fact, which I must have known  
 “ before my illness.”

It is well understood that delirium can frequently be arrested by words uttered in a loud voice, by the introduction of a new face, or any impression strong enough to supersede the imaginative ideas. Now this happens also in madness; and the number of authentic cases, in which a cure has been thus effected, may justify a suspicion that it is an expedient not often enough resorted to. In the minute journal above mentioned as being in my possession, I find an incident, which shews the power of new and striking objects in suspending confirmed and obstinate lunacy. The patient was to be removed, through a succession of very rugged and beautiful landscapes, to another habitation. The measure occasioned great agitation; at first, a refusal and afterwards alarming suspicions. Awe of the medical

superintendent made the countenance appear strangely at variance with the eyes, “ the former  
“ shewing a forced calmness, induced by the  
“ seriousness of my observations, and the latter  
“ a wild anxiety, demonstrative of the emo-  
“ tions, which in fact agitated the patient’s  
“ mind.” Minute examination of the open sedan chair first—then of the chairmen with reference to the medical superintendent, as if they were in league, and denunciation of the latter as a conspirator against the state, were some of the extravagancies that preceded the departure. The first part of the road led through an inhabited spot; and here frequent efforts towards calling upon the passengers for assistance, with orders to the chairmen to stop, are noted down. Next, the scenery at the foot of an ascent drew attention; but this alternated with wildness. The ascent led to immense precipices, when the patient called on the medical superintendent, notwithstanding the aversion he was held in, to walk beside the chair. The supposed danger being passed, the wildness returned. The party soon arrived at an artificial lawn encompassed by woods. Here the invalid familiarly asked the superintendent for his pencil and a card, to sketch the surrounding beauties of the landscape. No sooner was the request complied with, than an instantaneous change



was remarked from serenity to great liveliness of countenance, with somewhat of a satirical cast. The eyes were, in fact, rivetted upon a human figure, bearing an umbrella before the sedan. The patient laughed heartily, and when the merry fit was a little over, committed to the card an admirable likeness of this figure ; with its long bearded chin, hooked nose, and diminutive fiery eyes.\*

I know not whether it will be thought to shew an affinity between the two affections, that fever, particularly where accompanied with

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\* It is probable enough that the patient could not have managed the pencil so well in the state of sanity. Thus, there are satisfactory testimonies of intellectual difficulties surmounted in dreams, which had baffled every waking effort.

The late professor WAEHNER of Goettingen, used to relate that in his youth, he had to put a thought into a greek couplet, he tried for two whole days, but in vain. One evening, he goes to bed on the eve of fruitless efforts. In the night, he rings for his attendant, asks for paper, pen, ink, and a light, writes down the two verses, which he had sought and found in his sleep. On awaking, without recollecting the least of what had passed, he sets again to his task, but still without success, gets up chagrined and finds a very happy couplet under his own hand on his desk. Upon learning from the attendant what had happened, he could not call back the least trace of it.—Chiarugi speaks of a maniacal patient of his who, without instruction, carved admirably natural figures in wood.

delirium is one of the best ascertained causes of insanity, (Mr. Haslam, p. 99.)

The doctrine, constituting an exalted imagination the fundamental circumstance in lunacy, is disputed by a person, whose attention to the disorder seems equal to the advantages of his situation. A short examination of the objection may throw light on the whole subject.\* The intelligent reader will probably

\* "If the disease consisted in the strength of imagination, the imagination ought to be equally strong upon all subjects, which upon accurate observation is not found to be the case. Had Dr. MEAD stated that together with this increased strength of imagination, there existed an enfeebled state of the judgment, his definition would have been more correct. The strength or increase of any power of the mind cannot constitute a disease of it: strength of memory has never been suspected to produce derangement of intellect: neither is it conceived that great vigour of judgment can operate in that manner: on the contrary, it will be readily granted that imbecility of memory must create confusion by obstructing the action of the other powers of the mind; and that if the judgment be impaired, a man must necessarily speak, and generally act," [what is speaking but acting?] "in a very incorrect and ridiculous manner." (Mr. Haslam, p. 2.) Mr. H's definition of insanity runs thus—"an incorrect association of familiar ideas, which is independent of the prejudices of education, and is always accompanied with implicit belief, and generally with either violent or depressing passions."

1. The word *incorrect* is as vague as *insane*. 2. The ideas



wonder to find it asserted that the increased force of a faculty cannot constitute a disease of the mind. To me it seems self-evident that the very belief in things unseen as seen, expressed in the objector's own definition, must be followed by mental disease. What ! when the force of association lays an imaginary eruption upon the clear skin of a person, afraid of the itch, is it not all over with judgment and discrimination ? Can the mad lover be less bewildered, who beholds his mistress in every female form he sees ? How is it possible any judgment can consist with so busy a fancy ? And what can be the fidelity of memory in that man, who is persuaded that incidents, of which he has only heard or read, have befallen himself ? Neither do I perceive why the imagination, if strong as to some ideas, must be universally strong. If the memory may be

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are often not familiar, till familiarized by the workings of the mind, that generate insanity. I shall mention instances below. 3. What is *education* ? Ideas early acquired often furnish insanity with its delusions. Mr. H. mentions several patients, who said that they had seen the devil : and they described him as he stands figured in foolish books. Had they but believed that he was so formed, all might have been sound within. But carrying the idea up to the liveliness of an impression constituted lunacy. Whatever false notions be imbibed, whether as prejudices of education or otherwise, they do not impeach sanity, till exaggerated.

strong as to some ideas and weak as to others, why need it be otherwise with regard to the imagination, which is a full and vivid memory? Old people, we know, let slip the occurrences of yesterday, while they have a perfect recollection of those fifty years back. When the delirious vassal repeated the greek verses he had learned 30 years before with his lord, no other ideas of the same period recurred!—It is not necessary, for the present purpose, to annihilate these mental faculties, which they raise up, in mock majesty, to sway the thoughts for their little moment, and then to deliver the sceptre to a potentate as evanescent as themselves. But it is high time that the fiction were banished from philosophy. It was convenient enough that the modes of association, which take place most frequently, should have particular names. But to take these nominal for real essences, was the sure way to confound the whole doctrine of the intellect.

*Further Remarks on the*  
*TRANSITION to INSANITY.*

Injuries on the head, abscesses in the ear, habitual drunkenness, fevers; the cessation of natural secretions or artificial evacuations; large use of mercury, and palsy have



been recorded as the chief exciting causes of madness. Of 113 patients, concerning whom Dr. PINEL obtained accurate information, 34 were reduced to insanity by domestic chagrin, 24 by disappointment in love, 30 by the events of the revolution, 25 by terrific ideas of the next world. Indulgence of grief or of any other passion, affections sudden and violent, as fright or indignation, religious terrors are observed, in this country also, to be followed by the same effect. It is remarkable that the very moral or physical causes, as blows or panic fear, that sometimes occasion insanity in grown persons, at an inferior age bring on epilepsy, hysterics, nervous headaches, atrophy. Why blows on the head should give bolder relief and brighter colours to certain ideas, must remain a mystery, till we have facts enough to unite the physical and metaphysical phenomena of human nature into one consistent body of doctrine. It is easy to give an hypothetical explanation. The brain appears to be concerned in the reproduction of ideas. Any given groupe or train may be present or passing at the moment of the injury; and the structure of the organ may be so altered, as to raise them to the utmost distinctness. Other associated ideas, by the intervention of these, may acquire a connection with the morbid

actions of the brain. That frequent intoxication should, in the long run, produce a similar alteration of structure, will not surprize us, if we advert to the ordinary effects of drinking upon the head. Why a particular complexion should dispose to exaltation of ideas is likewise, at present, inexplicable. Do not states of distant parts, by sympathy, produce such changes in the brain, as to call up ideas vivid enough for madness? This may happen from a particular stroke of the heart, condition of the stomach, or tension of a remote fibre. And such exciting causes may be accompanied with obscure feelings, or none at all. Dr. DARWIN thinks a diseased liver occasions lunacy. It may be so: though both may arise from intemperance as a common cause. Nor need pain be at all concerned, as he thinks.

The action of the brain upon thoughts or impressions, and of these upon the brain, seems perfectly reciprocal. Just as in hypochondriasis, whatever lowers the spirits injures the stomach, and whatever injures the stomach, lowers the spirits. When disastrous intelligence oversets the reason, we have first the impressions on the hearing and sight, as raised by the written or spoken words and countenance; then the ideas connected with these words; lastly, the affection of the brain. This therefore one



would be inclined to set down as secondary, when moral causes do the mischief. The disorganization of the brain, as an important circumstance in madness, is controverted by some, and among others, by Dr. PINEL. But accurate observers, as Mr. HASLAM, have found the head of every patient they opened, manifestly altered in its structure. And Dr. PINEL's own remark that he has never found any thing within the skull, *except* what had equally occurred after death from epilepsy, apoplexy, fever and convulsions, is in confirmation. It would be too much to expect that so clumsy a tool as the scalpel should detect specific alterations, corresponding to these several affections.—Persons, little conversant in medical disquisition, may wonder how any lucid interval should occur under a permanent lesion of the brain. But this is perpetual in pathology. Neither a stone in the bladder, nor a carious tooth, always give pain; nor does the disorganized heart always palpitate. Some external influence seems necessary to induce that condition of the parts, in which they shall be morbidly irritable. It is scarce to be believed what a trifling cause will bring on a maniacal paroxysm. A patient seeing his own face in a looking-glass, shall first smirk, then make grimaces, next gesticulate, and, in a few minutes, arrive at full frenzy.

The consideration of moral causes of slow operation is the most curious as well as most useful in this whole enquiry. A medical person, not now living, who shewed manifest signs of derangement, told me that his ill success in his profession filled him, as may well be supposed, with anxiety for his own subsistence and that of his family. He would sit at home for hours ruminating; and when he found, day after day, no summons arrive, he would saunter abroad and occupy himself with a reverie of wishes. These wishes he would sometimes arrange into a climax of events, worthy of the glassman in the Spectator. At length, he would direct his footsteps homewards under a sort of persuasion that some person of consequence had actually sent, during his absence, to call him in. This is a state full as near insanity as sanity.

Madness perpetually realises the wonders of Ariosto's magic, and prepares palaces or dungeons for those, whom it possesses. A person under disappointment or chagrin, sets about to imagine by what possibilities he may be delivered from his perplexities. They return to his thoughts by day and by night, gathering more or less body according to the intensity of his feelings. At last, after a long struggle, Imagination obtains the



mastery compleatly, and ever afterwards she uses calamity as her hobby horse.

During grand political crises, when society is subverted from its foundations, insanity often takes this turn. The suddenness and magnitude of the events kindle the imagination. A total change of fortune irritates the feelings of those, who are plunged into the abyss of adversity. Grinding injustice draws forth all their indignation. No prospect of redress by ordinary means opening, they ponder upon extraordinary deliverances, till they are lost in the labyrinth of their own thoughts. For if hope deferred maketh the heart sick, hope extinguished maketh the head fanciful. In this, among other ways, does the revolution in France appear to have operated upon many intellects. It dethroned one monarch indeed, but it raised a multitude to the supreme power. Nay, the madhouses of France were peopled with gods as well as with kings. Three Louis XVI's. were seen together, disputing one another's pretensions. There were besides several kings of France, of Corsica, and other countries: there were sovereigns of the world, a Jesus Christ, a Mahomet, so many deities as to render it necessary to distinguish them by the place they came from, as the god of Lyons, the god of the Gironde.

Among a number of persons, struck with insanity, though some are seen to harbour pleasurable delusions; others, according to their character or previous habits of thought, fall into the contrary extreme. This unhappy change has been of late as largely exemplified in France as the preceding. The constant terror of the guillotine hung over some: others perpetually mourned, with aggravated ideal sorrow, in consequence of being deprived, by the military requisition, of their only child. The unfortunate father, from whom GARRICK caught the gestures and countenance of his LEAR, was probably of a temperament the reverse of sanguine, and little accustomed to the dreams of hope, even before his infant dropped out of his arms from the balcony into the street. So his imagination could but perpetually reproduce the scene in its original horrors. We know from the records of insanity that another parent of a disposition, previously more cheerful, might easily have mistaken a pillow for the child sleeping, after he had been dressed by the surgeons, and have kept eternal watch to prevent him from being disturbed by any noise.

It is no wonder that hypochondriacs, when the blue phantoms that flit at times before their fancy, become by degrees fixed and em-



bodied, should be apt to suffer from terrific illusions. Clerical insanity, I suppose, will generally be found to have begun in hypochondriasis. There is another class of persons, exceedingly subject to insanity, and to insanity of the painful sort. Go, for instance, to the scenes of trade at London or at Bristol. Among the faces that appear at high 'Change, mark those that bespeak the cares attendant upon wealth already accumulated; and those others, where an added air of wildness characterises the speculator, too much in haste to wait for the reward of regular industry, and burning to get rich by a lucky hit. Some of these men will grow mad enough to be watched at home or sent to a lunatic asylum, where they will be haunted by the fear of coming upon the parish. Many others just sufficiently mad to be only run miserable all the rest of their lives from similar apprehension. So that the thirst of gold seems to maintain its character throughout: and there may be difficulty in saying whether it most debases the soul in sanity or insanity.

The votaries of devotion of a gloomy character often lose their wits, and have the place supplied by depressing imaginations. A poor collier heard a field-preacher rave much about damnation. He immediately felt himself encompassed by the terrors of hell.

On a dreary winter's day, he was found more than half naked, squatting in the twilight of his chimney-corner. As the wind howled over the heath, "hark!" says he to a medical person, entering to inspect his situation, "there is the devil come to fetch me in his chariot. Did not you hear his horses neigh?" For keeping the intellects sound, or if it come to the worst, for merging them in cheerful madness, how much preferable is

A false religion, full of pomp and gold—

to a religion full of damning dogmas, which must necessarily be false!

The reader will easily be able to carry on this method of considering the subject to love, anger, and other affections, productive of a permanent exaltation of the imagination. I shall only add here that by some unobserved physical cause, the feelings may first be rendered intense, and then any accidental ideas will be metamorphosed into imaginations. This will in part account for changes in the delusions of mad, as well as sometimes for madness itself.

### *PREVENTION.*

To preserve the human mind from the irregularities exemplified in this essay, in as far as they arise from moral or slowly operating



causes, would seem a task of the utmost simplicity ; to restore its equipoise, when that is beginning to be lost from violent gusts of passion, by no means difficult.

The first great preservative of mental, as of bodily health, is active occupation. No species of nervous disorder easily fastens upon persons, who devote a part of their time to moderate labour. It should, at the same time, be diversified and enlivened by scientific explanations. For mere labour is not enough.—The uniform operations of ingenious artisans sometimes wear a track in the brain, along which the torrent of imagination rushes with destructive violence. Hence insane projects for producing the perpetual motion. The mischief might always be avoided by contriving channels in different directions : and not only would mischief be thus avoided, but the intellectual streams, which, when collected into a single body, do so much damage, would be beneficial from their division.

It is evident that many dangerous series of reveries must be prevented by combining the thoughts and actions in efforts to produce some useful or curious purpose. It would even appear that total aberrations of the understanding are most effectually corrected upon this principle. At Saragossa in Spain, there is

an hospital for the sick in general, and the insane of all countries. The patients of the latter class are divided early in the morning into parties, some of whom perform the menial offices of the house; others repair to shops, belonging to their respective trades. The majority are distributed, under the superintendence of their guards, through a large inclosure, where they are occupied in the works belonging to gardening and agriculture. Uniform experience is said to have proved the efficacy of these labours in reinstating reason in its seat. It is added that the nobles, who live in the same asylum, but in a state of idleness suitable to their rank, retain their lunacy and their privilege together, while their inferiors are restored to themselves and to society. (*Townshend's Travels; and Pinel, p. 226.*) If this be true, how shocking to think that, in other countries, lunatics are kept inactive moping, or left to torment themselves with hurtful agitations. Many of them are capable of feeling the full force of motives\*.

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\* The overthrow of popery in France overset the mind of a young man. After practising upon himself severities equal to those of the ancient anchorites, he renounced nourishment altogether. At the end of the fourth day, the keeper repaired to his cell with a vast apparatus of terror,



As manual occupation dissipates sadness and prevents the reveries, preliminary to derangement, so does temperance preserve the mind from dangerous intensity of feeling. Repeated drunkenness brings predisposed persons nearer and nearer to insanity; and the time comes at last, when the fire once kindled by intoxicating beverages, continues to blaze on without intermission. Thus, it is satisfactory to find that the same course of life, which is attended with most cheerfulness and self-enjoyment, affords the best security against the various disorders, that result from the power acquired by man in civilized society over external things, before he knew what his own nature (*faciat vel ferat*) can either do or bear.

But though what has been said of the maintenance of health in other cases applies, with full force, to the present subject, predisposition to insanity requires a peculiar discipline of the mind. I shall not repeat what a thousand moralists have said (and ABRAHAM TUCKER

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and laid food before him, threatening the utmost cruelty if he did not eat it before morning. He complied with the order; and during his convalescence confessed to Dr. PINEL that the most dreadful conflict had kept up for two hours between the fear of sufferings in this world and in the next.

under the name of SEARCH, more sensibly and practically than all) on restraining the passions. Let those who are interested draw all they can from this source. Only let them not follow bigots in *mortifying the inward man*. This error is calculated to multiply, not to diminish, the number of lunatics. Or what is worse, those who escape lunacy, will be wrought into hypocrites or fanatics.

In conformity, however, with an opinion I have expressed on many other occasions, I think there is much more safety in rational information, than in the most authoritative precepts or the most powerful appeals to the heart. I advise therefore that parents avail themselves of the facts dispersed through a multitude of publications, respecting the power of imagination. The facts I speak of are such as the testimony, upon which they rest, places beyond dispute. They are admitted as a common basis of speculation by writers on the mind, and are not therefore liable to the disreputable uncertainty of metaphysical opinions. It is too much to expect another Cervantes, capable of generalizing Don Quixote. Nor is it necessary. Plain narrative would suffice without distinguished dramatic powers. And



I know not how a greater service could be rendered to society than by merely making a judicious selection of such facts—from the first whims of caprice, up to the wildest ravings of amorous, avaricious, and religious insanity. Demonstrate to young persons, from their own feelings, how certain emotions affect the chest, and what sympathy there exists between the stomach and spirits. They will then know how to estimate those enthusiasts, who fancy the touch of God himself in every palpitation of the heart, and believe the glow after a good dinner to be a particular inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Whether the keepers of asylums for lunatics have availed themselves of the wise counsel of the author of *Zoonomia*—to force, by frequent repetition, upon the disordered mind rational ideas, exactly the reverse of those, by which they are disturbed, I am not informed. Every body knows that a dextrous method of holding up ridiculous opinions is frequently sufficient to occasion them to be renounced. And it is beyond a doubt that the same effect has been brought about by contrivances, adapted to the complexion of this and that variety of madness. So that we have proofs of the efficacy of the method in the two extremes of mental aberration.

tion, from which we may draw a favourable inference for the intermediate stages.

I believe that it will frequently be enough if a dextrous performer out-herod the very extravagancies of the patient, or take up others as similar as possible. SIMON MORIN was shamed out of the idea of his incorporation with Jesus Christ by the folly of another madman, who fancied himself God the Father. A person, who believed that he had been guillotined, and fitted with a wrong head, was cured by the following contrivance. A jocular convalescent in the Bicêtre manages to turn the conversation on the miracle of St. Denys, who carried his head under his arm, and kissed it as he walked along. The lunatic vehemently maintained the possibility of the fact, and appealed to his own case. His companion burst out into a loud laugh, and asked him in a tone of mockery : “ *Why how could St. Denys contrive to* “ *kiss his head. Was it with his heel, you* “ *fool ?* ”—It is true that as you drive insanity out of one of its forts, it often retires to another. But there let it be attacked by the same arms. I perceive indeed that their use requires discretion, and that when one line of attack does not succeed, another must be tried. But none



ought to meddle with the mad, who have not discretion and genius into the bargain.

As reading occupies so much of modern life, it must be a great art to lead the inclinations towards proper books. It is easy to see in general that the volatile should be fixed by one sort, and the gloomy enlivened by another. Perhaps SHAKESPEARE himself, by the beautiful soliloquy, and indeed by the whole character, of his Hamlet, has established in many minds the *tædium vitæ*, when it otherwise would have been but a slight and floating listlessness. Feelings of every kind obtain a *settlement* in the breast by being associated with harmonious language and strong images.—The difficulty, as to a choice of authors, lies in stealing away the affections from writings, congenial to a dangerous habit of thought, and attaching them to those, least likely to please at first.

The doctrine that the knowledge of the excesses (*les ecarts*) of the imagination, is a preservative against them, might receive illustration from an enquiry into the reason *why so few great poets have run mad?* None perhaps have derived their insanity from their poetical vein. Is it not because those, that deserve the name of poets, must have a prac-

tical knowledge at least of the way, in which imagination is affected? They are therefore in the secret. They stand in the situation, in which we would wish to place those, who seem in most danger. They are not merely worked up by passion; but however much they may work themselves up, they have a goal in view, which hinders their thoughts from going astray past recal.

END OF ESSAY X.