

The delusions of the over-sanguine, the groundless fancies of the visionary, the baseless conceptions of the jealous, the morbid religiosity of the despondent man, all find their legitimate projections in some fixed condition common enough in the dread abode of the insane, and all have lessons for us. The asylum held up the mirror to the observant eye of Dr. Milner Fothergill, showing him our natural and healthy moods when perverted by disease, mismanagement or neglect, into forms of mental disorder. A bad habit or the dominance of an unfortunate predilection may disturb the balance of an otherwise healthy mind, as effectually as the touch of a magnet on the balance wheel of an exquisite watch will impede its regular motion.

How easily is our mental balance disturbed! A single serious reverse may blight a man's hopes for life, yet with another and a sterner habit of thought the advancing phthisis of a Richard Jeffreys will not have the least ill effect. What a variety of moods are caused by food alone! A hungry man can scarcely be termed quite sane in comparison with one who is comfortably digesting the dinner of one of the "city companies."

A cynic might turn upon us, and declare that the man who has just dined well evidences his cerebral disturbance by the ease with which a liberal subscription can be obtained from him, and that his less replete moments are his prudent and normal ones. When the Church desired to reduce us to a proper sense of our deserts and shortcomings, she bade us fast, and as fasting has always been associated with penitence, it might be argued by a theologian that we are more truly our real selves when hungry than full. Andrew Boorde, the monk-physician, in his quaint book, *The Dyetary of Health*, rather inclines to the "city company" idea of sanity, when he advises his readers to "Fyrste lyne out of syn, and folowe Christes doctrine, and then vse honest myrth and honest company, and vse to eate good meate, and drynke moderatly."

Shakespeare thought that the "lean and hungry" looking Cassius must naturally be dangerous, and the general testimony of English writers at any rate is to the close connection between fat folk and good temper. Dr. Fothergill was a grand example