

presses the opinion that he is "the most truthful analyst of human action". From this author's book, "The Mad Folk of Shakespeare", I take the following quotations:

"Shakespeare not only possesses more psychological insight than all other poets, but more than all other writers."—J. C. Bucknill, 'The Mad Folk of Shakespeare', London, 1867, p. 3.

"His profound knowledge of mental disease, not only in its symptomatology, but in its causation an development".—*Ibid.*, p. 195.

"Our wonder at his profound knowledge of mental disease increases, the more carefully we study his works; here (*i.e.*, in *King Lear*) and elsewhere he displays with prolific carelessness a knowledge of principles, half of which would make the reputation of a modern psychologist."—*Ibid.*, p. 196.

Shakespeare's knowledge of nervous and mental diseases is more than sufficient to fill an entire Oration. I will only give here his tender treatment of the early stage of insanity:—

When Cordelia was overcome with the pitifulness of the insanity of her father, that "foolish, fond old man", King Lear, she invited help, but asked dubiously:—

What can man's wisdom
In the restoring of his bereaved sense?
Her patient doctor replied:—

There is means, Madam;
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.

How different from Macbeth is the tender Cordelia's reply to this good doctor:—

Seek, seek for him;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

She had already named the physician's honorarium:—
He, that helps him, take all my outward worth.

There is no mention that his fee was paid! Possibly gratitude was as short-lived 300 years ago as it often is to-day!

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude.

Three centuries ago insane persons were at large in the world, unless—poor creatures—they were kept chained up. For, in Shakespeare's time, no asylum for the insane existed in this country except Bethlehem Hospital, which had been taken from the monks by Henry VIII and presented to the City of London, only 17 years before the poet's birth.