

but exceptions, and the derangement in these eminent men has very doubtful characters about it, and is sometimes made a question.

Collins, whose case was after all one of inanition rather than insanity, had been a free-liver, and seems to have been hurt by having a fortune left him. Cowper was weak-bodied and was beset by religion mongers. Swift's body was full of bad humours. He himself attributed his disordered system to the effects of a surfeit, and in his last illness he broke out in enormous boils and blisters. This was a violent effort to help and purify the current of blood—the main object in all such cases. Dr. Johnson, who was subject to mists of melancholy, used to fancy he should go mad, but he never did.

The writer is not a believer in *madness in great minds*, hence one reason for his not sharing the belief with Dr. Ray, author of "Contributions to Mental Pathology," that Hamlet's insanity was real. Shakspeare has probably breathed more of himself into his Hamlet than into any other of his dramatic persons; his is a cast of mind at once philosophic and poetic; at once serious and mirthful; at once affectionate and brave: at once acutely observant of others, and profoundly reflective on self; instinct with noble sentiments, solemn convictions, immortal expectations. It is not of such material that lunatics are made of. The writer would like to know, from those who have most carefully studied the pathology of insanity, where there is a parallel case. It seems that in the thoughtful Prince of Denmark we overhear more of Shakspeare's inner man, his secret and serious cogitations and impressions. Hamlet is more profound in thought, more eloquent in language, than any other of Shakspeare's characters; he is marked by a solemnity of sentiment. Few madmen would like Hamlet, yearning after escape from life, restrain themselves from the act of suicide, by the apprehension of "something after death."

The subject is too long for discussion.* Schlegel says: "Hamlet acts the part of madness with inimitable superiority." The writer thinks so too, and he thinks his supposed madness is contradicted by his own words, where, speaking in confidence to his friend Horatio, he says:

"How *strange* or *odd* soe'er I bear myself;
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
To put an *antick* disposition on."

* Read a work entitled "Shakspeare Treasury," by Charles W. Stearns, M.D., published by G. P. Putnam & Son.