

tion. On every page of their history we see that their emperors, consuls or senators, continually exercised the art in discovering conspirators, and that inferior officers were compelled to study the whims and caprices of their superiors, in order to save themselves from the sword.

Shakespeare, in "Julius Cæsar," gives us a good idea of the peculiar disposition of the Roman mind. The conspiracy against Cæsar is typical, and the way in which Cæsar speaks of Cassius is also indicative of how the conspirator was usually suspected. Cæsar was one of the famous men of ancient times who undoubtedly possessed the gift of character-reading. He sums up Cassius' attributes as follows : (Act. I, Scene 2.)

" Let me have men about me that are fat ;
Sleek-headed men and such as sleep o' nights.
Yon Cassius has a lean and hungry look ;
He thinks too much ; such men are dangerous.
I do not know the man I should avoid
So soon as that spare Cassius. He reads much ;
He is a great observer, and he looks
Quite through the deeds of men : he loves no plays ;
He hears no music ;
Seldom he smiles ; and smiles in such a sort
As if he mock'd himself, and scorn'd his spirit.
That could be moved to smile at any thing.
Such men as he never be at heasts' ease
Whiles they behold a greater than themselves ;
And therefore are they very dangerous."

In this estimate of Cassius is contained an excellent summary of the evidences by which a man's character may be judged. If he is, as Cassius was, a spare man, with a lean and hungry look, exhibiting the weariness of neglected repose, does not the very appearance of such a man inspire us with fear. If, in addition, he keeps to himself and thinks too much, we will not be far astray, if at all, in concluding that he is laboring under some hallucination that bodes no good for himself or his fellow-man. But then it is difficult to decide whether a man of such traits is turning over a dangerous plot in his mind, or whether he is a plain simpleton, incapable of serious mental operations. To choose between these two extremes, requires a careful observation of the man's activity and whatever other characteristics he may possess.