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THE INSANITY PLEA.

BY DR. D. CLARK, PRINCETON, ONT.

When a murder is committed now-a-days, either by man or woman, with or without provocation, it has become safe and fashionable, to put in the plea of insanity, in extenuation of crime, and generally with good effect. Experts are found, who are ready to prostitute their high vocation for gain, or medical men pretend to define in the witness-box, what insanity is, but are equally ignorant of what it is *not*. Dr. Allen, U.S., recently told the truth, when he said in evidence, "that lawyers made fools of themselves in trying to make asses of the doctors," when witnesses in such cases. The fact is, that no mortal man can correctly define and recognize insanity in its lowest forms, and in its mildest types, and not involve in his definition a diagnosis of the idiosyncrasies of the greater portion of the human family. The legacy of the great Satirist had truth, as well as irony, in its provisions, when he left his all to build lunatic asylums for his country, as its greatest need. Is eccentricity the first step in the *descensus Averni*? Then, who but a "good-