

normal and the natural out-crop of successive voluntary acts by our progenitors or ourselves. In other words they are not the products of physical or mental disease, and are more or less the inheritance or acquisition of every one. This law of interpretation would include a large number of the insane as responsible beings. There are times in the lives of many lunatics, when they not only know right from wrong (the distinctive Shibboleth of so many judges to the present day), but also when they can refrain from wrong doing, for fear of punishment, as rational beings do in every day life. They can curb the insane impulse, by volitions which are within their control. Should they be exempt from penal consequences? The asylums are full of inmates, who for weeks together, are—as far as human knowledge goes—comparatively sane. Their insanity is periodic. In the intermissions of sanity such have full control over all their acts, and are cognizant of their relationship to society. The equilibrium of the mind at such times, as far as we can judge, is maintained, and such are quite capable to transact business, to bear injuries with equanimity, and forbear from any overt acts as any perfectly sane citizen. If at such times, and during such intermissions the individual commits a felony, should he be held responsible and punished for his crime? I am well aware that objection may be raised that during these so called "lucid intervals" the mind does not fully recover its normal tonic. This may be true to some extent in many cases, but if the mind have not all the strength of a totally sane man, in vigorous mental health, it has sufficiently recovered, at these times, to perform all its necessary work in the same manner and within the same control as the great majority of mankind. It is proposed to medical men, in view of these difficulties, to confine the definition of insanity to mean brain disease. In this way the question of responsibility would still remain with the Court. If by disease is meant organic lesion, then would the definition be too limited; for functional derangement will dethrone reason for a time. This is seen in the inhalation of anæsthetics, in drunkenness, in the wild delirium of fever, and in the effects of many other topical agents. The brain may become affected functionally, because of excitement in one or more distant organs of the body. This is seen in the kleptomania of women

at certain menstrual periods. The woman who revels in wealth, will become a thief at such times, but would revolt at the thought when the frenzy passes away. It is the love of stealing, not the pleasure of possession alone, that prompts the act. We see the same eccentric causes in puerperal mania, at the climacteric of female life, hysterical mania, nymphomania and such like, which may in their initiatory invasion be excitants, and the cause of permanent lesion of the brain in the long run, but none can say that the mischief has not begun outside of the brain. Disease of the brain will cover the large majority of insane. Disease of the body, outside the brain, will show an efficient cause in many. The two combined make a good majority in our asylums, but to say that lesion of the brain only, is a complete definition of insanity would not be in accordance with experience. *Post mortems* often show extensive adhesions inside the skull, and serious invasion of disease in the substance of the brains of those who have died of other bodily diseases, but sane to the last. Also many an insane person dies, and leaves no evidence of mischief in the head. The exciting cause may affect the encephalon from without, or it may be beyond the research of the pathologist, and cannot be a basis to support the definition above given. Even if this definition were correct, it would be impossible to state when it existed except by mental and physical manifestations; then why not accept a formula like that of the German Penal Code, viz.: "An Act is not punishable when the person at the time of doing it was in a state of unconsciousness, or of disease of mind, by which the free determination of the will was excluded." This does not reject the idea of bodily disease, but it takes the outward manifestation as an indicator of the mischief within, just as the hands of a watch point out the condition of the machinery within. It is a question of *will not* and *can not*—of voluntary or involuntary action—or, in other words, had the accused in any particular act sufficient mental strength to control his actions at any time he wished, or was he led blindly and irresistibly, from any cause, to conduct unnatural and unusual for him to do? Properly speaking none are absolutely free. Inherited predisposition, educated bias, confirmed habit, hobby-riding, well-fed ambition, and such like, are manacles to impede volition. The free will of a sane man must always be considered