

when asked, at the end of the performance, by one of the admiring audience what he thought of it, with characteristic bluntness he replied "that it had been his lot in the course of his life, to meet with many old dotards, but never one who so fully deserved that title as the man who had just dared to lecture upon the art of war in the presence of Hannibal." It is probable that the writer may be considered either mad or a dotard to venture to express a thought upon the subject of insanity, because if he was asked to define true madness he would only be able to answer, in the words of Polonius :

"What is't, *but to be nothing else but mad :*
But let that go ;"

and judging from the definitions of insanity given by some physicians and jurists, whose thoughts upon the subject are

"Combinations of disjointed things;"

it is evident that they are not much more explicit, and that they have much to learn on the subject of mental derangement, and that their knowledge of insanity has not kept pace with their knowledge of other distempers. Some are content to say that the poor patient

"Fell into sadness ; thence into a fast ;
Thence to a watch ; thence into a weakness ;
Thence to a lightness ; and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And we all mourn for."

The writer considers that there is a great difference between what is generally understood by the word insanity and the nervous or melancholy disorders, the excess of which is so often confounded with it. Insanity may be traced to a malformation of the brain, not to an excess of brain, and is by no means of necessity attended with melancholy and ill-health. The patient in the very midst of it is often strong, healthy, and even cheerful. On the other hand, nervous disorders, or even melancholy in its most aggravated form, is nothing but the excess of a state of stomach and blood, extremely common. "An enemy may be put into the mouth to steal away the brains." The mind, no doubt, will act upon that state, and exasperate it; but there is great reaction between mind and body; and as it is a common thing for a man in an ordinary fever, or fit of the bile, or acute dyspepsia, to be melan-