

iar with its manifestations. If there be one subject within the circle of disease which more than another tasks and taxes the human mind, it is the subject of insanity. This is the opinion of every author who has written upon it, of every medical jurispudent, of every keeper of lunatic asylums, of every man who professes to have learned by study anything of the manifestation or phenomena of mental disorder, without exception; and yet my friend exclaims, "Does not every person know an insane man when he sees him?"

I wish it were so! I wish the most perplexing as well as the most important of all metaphysical inquiries, upon the proper solution of which life, liberty and reputation often depend, could be infallibly answered by a look. "It is a consummation devoutly to be wished;" but I fear it is not in the order of Providence.

A very distinguished jurist of Pennsylvania, the late Chief Justice Gibson, while deploring the ignorance of English judges and English authors on the subject of insanity, and denouncing the special unfitness of the House of Lords to determine the legal rules and psychological tests of the disease, uttered the hope that the day was not distant when insanity, in all its phases and types, would be as well understood, and as successfully treated, as ordinary bilious fever. His reliance, however, was not based upon the magic of a book, the panacea of a glance, but upon the combined observations and scientific toil of the finest minds of England, France, Continental Europe and America, directed patiently and watchfully to the detection and classification of the phenomena of the disease. The age is favorable to the investigation. The science of insanity is emphatically a science of observation, and no past age has furnished the facility for observation provided by the infirmary, the hospital and the asylum of this country. If the prediction of Justice Gibson shall be verified, it will be because the simplifiers are shut out from the investigation, because the difficulty of the attainment is admitted by those engaged in its accomplishment, because every step of progress will be a step of caution, in order that it may be a step of safety. No investigator will make real