

Cases are related in this place, to show the difficulty which sometimes exists in detecting concealed insanity, and we must say that the most consummate experience will frequently fail in the attempt ; for “ the medical witness has to decide—not whether a person is actually or feignedly insane for the first time in his life, but whether there is such a recovery from madness as to entitle the person to the appellation of a sane man.” It is also worthy of notice that an insane, when placed in the society of other madmen, will sometimes be capable of detecting their folly and aberration from reason, and endeavour to convince them of the absurdity of their prevailing opinions. In fine, when examining a maniac we should never forget the direction given by Haslam, which is, not to commence the conversation directly on the subject of his aberrations ; “ the purpose is more effectually answered by leading him to the origin of his distemper, and tracing down the consecutive series of his actions and association of ideas. In going over the road where he has once tumbled, he will infallible trip again.”

The leading principles of the English law respecting the insane, are next brought into view ; but as the civil laws of England are not in force in this country, we shall follow the author in the consideration of that part of the criminal code which relates to the present subject. It is only necessary for the moment to remark, that, if at any stage of the trial, the prisoner should become of nonsane memory, no further step is to be taken against him : “ but if a lunatic has lucid intervals of understanding, he shall answer for what he does in those intervals, as if he had no deficiency.” Esquirol says the insane are more agitated about the full moon, but so are they about day-break every morning ; hence he says that “ light frightens some lunatics, pleases others, but agitates all.” The subject of insanity is one of such importance, and involves so many difficult questions, that we have been