

gave indications of its presence; while in the liver, kidneys, lung, and tissue of the intestine, it was readily discovered. The deposit of poison in the osseous system has been interestingly shown in some recent cases of animal poisoning. From this system, however, it is ultimately eliminated; thus I could not discover any trace in a portion of the femur of a girl who died on the fourteenth day, although I found it in the liver. The recent researches of Mr Millon (*Annales des Chimie*) on antimony, demonstrate that the latter substance remains (in some cases of tartar emetic poisoning) in the structure of the bones for several weeks, and alte occasionally in the subcutaneous for I have searched for *arsenic* in the latter quarter, in the above case, without success.

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*The Distinction between Right and Wrong, a Test of Insanity.*—"Under the law of England, the substantial question in all cases, whatever the kind of insanity set up, as laid down by the most celebrated judges, was this,—Whether at the time the act was committed, the prisoner was capable of judging between right and wrong—whether he did or did not know that he committed a crime against the laws of God and nature, or to which punishment was annexed."—Mr. Justice Aylwin's charge on the trial of William Shutts for murder, as reported by the *Herald*.

There is scarcely a subject more eminently worthy the attention of the Legislator than that of Insanity, involving as it frequently does, questions of the gravest responsibility. In cases of murder, this plea is very frequently raised to shield the murderer from the consequences of his act. Indeed it has been so very frequently invoked in extenuation of punishment, as to have awakened the keenest suspicions of its reality in particular cases; and whenever urged, should with the greatest propriety be received with caution, and its grounds most nar-

rowly scrutinized. It is our firm impression that not every case of murder, in which the plea of insanity has been successfully urged in extenuation, has been one of impulsive homicide: equally so is it our belief, that the plea has not been advanced, or if so, not successfully maintained, in cases in which aberration of mind unquestionably existed. As an example of the latter, we may urge the case of Jones, a private of the 19th Reg. convicted of the murder of Corporal Fitzgerald, whose insanity, active at the time of the commission of the murder, terminated in utter dementia. This case, of late occurrence in this city, excited at the time very general interest, and was followed by the appointment of a *commissio de lunatico* which saved him from the scaffold. Under any circumstances, the greatest caution should be exercised in the acceptance or rejection of the plea, and in all cases, science as it is, not as it was some centuries ago, should be made to yield its tribute of information.

Of all the questions which can be submitted to the consideration of a medical jurist, there are none more perplexing than those involved in the existence or non-existence of insanity. It is a disease which, in its protean forms, defies the applicability of any single test; and although in early days of medical science, crude notions may have originated, and induced, the adoption of the test of insanity which heads this article, modern researches have completely exploded it. Of what use is the progressive march of science, unless it can be rendered available for beneficial ends—and it does seem to be a singular anomaly, that two such remnants of barbarism should still disgrace the statutes of English criminal law, as the definition and test of insanity just alluded to, and the empanneling of the jury of matrons to determine a question of pregnancy, which was actually put in practice in Aug. 1847, by Mr. Baron Platt, in London, in the case of Mary Ann Hunt. This highly respectable jury having duly investigated, reported—"the prisoner is not quick with