ment. But the definite proposal made at the recent meeting of the British Medical Association, that the House of Lords should be invited without delay to ask the judges to answer "certain questions with regard to the defence of insanity in criminal cases,' imparts to the latest revival of this interminable feud not a little extrinsic interest and importance. Five distinct tests or criteria have at different periods in the history of English law been employed for the purpose of determining the criminal responsibility of the insane. First we have what has been compendiously described as "the boy of fourteen" theory. For this we are indebted to Sir Matthew Hale. "Such a person," said that great jurist, "as laboring under melancholy distempers hath yet ordinarily as great understanding as a child of fourteen years, may be guilty of treason or felony." In the beginning of the eighteenth century this primitive standard was superseded. One would gladly think that its abandonment was due to the eventual perception by the judges of the day that no two states of mind could be more unlike or less capable of comparison than the healthy immaturity of a boy of fourteen and the diseased maturity of a lunatic. But, unfortunately, this comforting hypothesis is untenable. For the boy of fourteen theory gave place to a still more unscientific test. On the trial of Edward Arnold, at Kingston, in 1723, for wounding Lord Onslow, Mr. Justice Tracey, in charging the jury, said that "a prisoner, in order to be acquitted on the ground of insanity, must be a man that is totally deprived of his understanding and memory, and doth not know what he is doing, no (*sic*) more than an infant, a brute, or a wild beast." No such lunatic ever existed, and the only excuse that can be offered for Mr. Justice Tracey's famous dictum is that he merely gave an exaggerated and inaccurate description of the violent and acute mania to which the asylum system of his day steadily reduced all other types of insanity. The "wild beast" theory, however, marks the lowest depth to which the law of England as to the criminal responsibility of the insane descended. Its subsequent ascent has been curiously fitful and irregular. On the trial of Hadfield in 1800 for shooting at George III. in Drury Lane Theatre, Lord Chief Justice Kenyon told the jury that the prisoner's responsibility depended on the question "whether at the very time when he committed the act his mind was sane." But this advance was not long maintained. For in 1812, on the trial of Bellingham for the murder of Mr. Perceval in the lobby