

• subject closely connected with the matter under consideration, but perhaps more immediately bearing upon the medico-legal point of great interest to the jurist, as well as to the practical psychologist. I refer to the subtlety, quickness of apprehension, ready wit, biting sarcasm, great power of self control, extreme cunning and extraordinary shrewdness of the insane, as well as the wonderful mastery they have occasionally been seen to exercise over their acknowledged delusions, whilst under the searching analysis of the ablest and most accomplished advocates of the day. In many cases it has been proved to be useless to possess the "key note" to the insanity of the person under examination, or "to touch the chord." supposed to be in unison with, and likely to awaken into activity, the latent insane delusion and cunningly concealed hallucination. The lunatic, if he be carefully trained and skilfully tutored, having an important purpose to accomplish by effectually *masking* his mental disorder, will, under these circumstances, act with wonderful ability and singular ingenuity, on the *defensive*, and, in the teeth of the most stringent examination, make "no sign." How often have I seen the insane (*who have been previously well prepared*) thus baffle the acumen of the most experienced and sagacious members of the bar.

It is a commonly accepted notion, that the delusive idea will immediately develop itself, provided its character be known, and special reference made to it by those engaged in testing the sanity of persons alleged to be of deranged mind. Nathaniel Lee, who acquired no inconsiderable degree of practical knowledge of the phenomena of insanity during his long incarceration in Bethlem, and prolonged association with the inmates of that hospital, appears to have been inoculated with this fallacy, for he says, in his description of the madness of Cæsar Borgia.

"Like a poor lunatic that makes his moan,  
And for a while beguiles his lookers on,  
He reasons well. His eyes their wildness lose.  
He vows the keepers his wronged sense abuse;  
*But if you hit the cause that hurts his brain*  
*Then his teeth gnash, he foams, he shakes his chain,*  
*His eyeballs roll, and he is mad again."*

It requires no ordinary amount of tact and skill, as well as practical acquaintance with the subtle psychology of insanity, to fully qualify a person to examine and unravel successfully a complex case of lunacy. I have often found it necessary to pay two or three protracted visits to a patient, conversing with him on general subjects, before I have considered it prudent to make any reference to the alleged delusions. By this process the confidence of the patient is effectually secured, his suspicions disarmed, and the expert able gradually to direct the attention to the points upon which the mind is thought to be disordered. If the lunatic clearly perceives the object of the physician's visit, the drift of the questions addressed to him, and fully realizes the importance of concealing impressions that are represented to be creations of a diseased imagination, it will require much persevering ingenuity to extract from him anything like an admission of his actual state of insane mind.

Feigned insanity is often unmasked by placing the patient under the influence of chloroform. Might not the same anæsthetic agent be found serviceable in analyzing a case of cunningly concealed lunacy? There can be no doubt as to the effect of chloroform in giving, in a particular type of case, great temporary prominence to insane delusions. I have occasionally observed, that when it has been found necessary to administer this anæsthetic agent by inhalation to persons mentally deranged, its immediate effect has been to develop and to drag from their hiding-place, hallucinations that were previously if not in a latent, but faintly and feebly manifested state.\*

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\* It will be important not to confound the hallucinations and illusions occasionally induced, in persons of healthy minds, by the administration of chloroform, with those that are clearly symptomatic of a state of mental derangement.