

been caused after death by decomposition of the tissues. Congestion of the brain is met with after death in many diseases. A much congested liver, full of black blood may be an indication of organic disease, but does not necessarily lead to such a supposition. An organic disease might cause sudden death. The injection of the kidney with black blood, and the dilatation of the spleen with the same substance are not symptoms of any particular disease, and might occur in ordinary or non-organic diseases just as well as in a disease which caused a violent death. The coating of thick black mucus on the surface of the stomach is common to many diseases, and indicates a lesion of the organs preceding death. In most cases cadaveric decomposition commences within twenty-four hours. The violet tints of the stomach are not always indications of inflammation of that organ. After death, the gastric juices which are in the stomach, often produce this discoloration, owing to their acquiring certain properties which they had not during life and also owing to the stomach having lost the powers of vital resistance. The black spots may have been owing to a stagnation of blood, and to the action of the gastric juices; this is often noticed combined with other symptoms which may be an indication of inflammation. I cannot say whether all the elements which compose strychnine, exist in the fibrine of the blood. Bichromate of potash is not coloured by sulphuric acid alone being added to it. I consider the colour test is infallible as a proof of the presence of strychnine. Lassitude of the limbs does not always accompany poisoning by strychnine. When the stomach is the seat of a disease, the last moments are sometimes accompanied with nervous tremblings and contraction of the face. The convulsions in poisoning by strychnine stop respiration and cause asphyxia which may cause death. The respiration is completely suspended in the paroxysm of the convulsion only. It is the muscles of the body becoming greatly contracted which causes the difficulty of breathing. Idiopathic tetanus comes on without any appreciable cause, great cold may cause this tetanus as also strong emotions; some authors have attributed idiopathic tetanus to the injection of certain substances. There are some who pretend that strychnine is decomposed by absorption into the blood and that it also changes the character of the blood. This question is not yet scientifically settled. I never saw a case of idiopathic tetanus; these cases are very rare, so much so, that one of the most eminent physicians of England, states that he has only met with one case of it.

*To the Court.*—Deceased may have died from poisoning by strychnine, and the body presents all the appearances described in Dr. Ladouceur's report of the autopsy.

DR. ROCH, M. S. MIGNEAULT.—I heard the evidence which has been given in this case, including that of Dr. Provost. I helped Dr. Provost to analyse a pellet of grease, which contained strychnine, an arsenic powder and a powder of sulphate of magnesia. I was present at the analysis of the contents of the stomach of deceased, I saw the result of the mucus and also the experiment made by Dr. Girdwood. I corroborate Dr. Provost's evidence concerning the analysis we performed together, and I certify as to the regularity of the proceedings and results produced. I saw the result of the analysis of the mucus of the stomach which was made by Dr. Provost, and I also saw the series of colours which were produced. This series of colors denotes the presence of strychnine.