

life of the patient. In this he was undoubtedly successful, as Broom recovered his consciousness, and remained sensible, according to Dr. Rolph's testimony, from Saturday until Tuesday, during which period he was under this gentleman's care. With these facts before him, we cannot conceive how a medical witness could affirm that death was caused by the effects of the dose of morphia. All the leading toxicologists hold the opinion, that if a person lives over twelve hours from the time of his taking a poisonous dose of opium, the chances are altogether in favour of his recovery. A few fatal cases have been recorded which extended beyond twelve hours. Taylor and Réaumur each mention a case which terminated fatally in fifteen hours; Orfila and Leroux each one which terminated in seventeen hours; Alibert one which terminated in twenty-four hours. "An instance has even been related," says Dr. Christison, "*which appeared to prove fatal not till towards the close of the third day; but the whole course of the symptoms was in that case so unusual, that some other cause must have co-operated in occasioning death.*" We have italicised the above quotation. All these cases have been noticed and published as unusual, because of the time which elapsed before death ensued; and the last, which extended over a period of three days, appears so extraordinary to one of the greatest toxicologists of the age, he is obliged to attribute the death to some other cause not made out. Broom, however, lived from Friday morning, when the dose was administered, until the subsequent Tuesday at 7 p.m.; a period of *four days and a half*. Are we not right then in saying that he did not die from the effects of morphia? Or, will the opinion of the four medical witnesses be considered superior to those of the eminent men we have referred to?

From the meagre account furnished by the public press of the post mortem appearances, it is quite impossible to say, whether or not any disease existed sufficient to cause the patient's death. There is no mention made of the brain having been examined; and turgescence of the vessels of the brain is the only appearance which can be relied on in poisoning by opium, and even that is not always present. The condition of the large intestine is not given. A very important omission, as Drs. Rolph and Telfer deposed that Broom died of dysentery. Indeed, the appearances observed at the post mortem, as published, do not afford the shadow of a reason for the opinion that the deceased died from the effects of morphia.

A difference of opinion appears to exist regarding the effects of the treatment adopted by Dr. Aikin. Drs. Rolph, Telfer and Ogden state explicitly that Broom died of dysentery; whilst the four medical witnesses who made the autopsy affirm that the extensive vesications partly