

CASE.—Mrs. B. ætat 30, married; and pregnant with her first child, was seized during the night of the 20th inst, with labour pains. Being a refugee from the late fire, she occupied part of a garret in which two or three other families, and some young men were sleeping. Feeling a natural delicacy, at being confined under such circumstances, she suppressed her cries till daylight, when she descended into a lower apartment, in which resided a woman who had been recently confined by me, to whom she detailed her feelings, requesting at the same time that some warm water might be given to her to “sit over,” to relieve what she described as a great pressure at the lower part of the bowels. She had hardly seated herself upon the edge of a rather high chair, when a severe bearing pain seized her, and before any assistance could be afforded (though one or two women were in the room) the child was forcibly expelled, and fell head-foremost on the floor, being killed upon the spot.

I should have mentioned that I was sent for immediately after Mrs. B. had descended into the lower chamber, but did not arrive till about twenty minutes after the delivery. The child which was a remarkably fine one was perfectly dead, and still attached by the cord to the placenta, which came away shortly after the infant.

In the above case not the *slightest suspicion* of criminality can attach to the mother; but, suppose the delivery to have taken place under circumstances precisely similar to those in Pendry's case, though there would be ground for a medico-legal investigation, still, with the fact brought before them by the coroner, that cases such as I have now reported, do not unfrequently occur, a jury should be extremely cautious how they blast a poor creature's character, by returning such a verdict as that recorded against this unfortunate woman.

oil; on moving it with a stick he found it was the head of an infant. The girl, on a surgeon and her mother arriving, at once declared, that while sitting on the seat of the water-closet, the pains came on so suddenly that she was unable to get off.”

“The surgeon deposed, that on visiting her she appeared to have lost a good deal of blood; that the internal organs of the infant were healthy; that air had entered the lungs, although not to their full extent; and that the child had been born alive; that under the scalp, over one of the parietal bones, was effused half a drachm of blood, and in the bone a fracture, (a fissure?) which might have been two or three inches in length; that there was no indentation, no depression, and that the brain and its membranes were uninjured; that there were no marks of violence except at the umbilical cord, which was broken an inch and a half from the belly. The surgeon could not depose as to the cause of death.”

In the first place, it was the girl's fourth illegitimate child, and therefore, as she was “used to it,” the deed could not be prompted by those feelings of shame which might actuate a more unblemished character. This must be particularly recollected as the first great incentive to infanticide.”—*Lancet*.—Ed.

I am happy to have it in my power, by a recent case in point to support the view taken by Mr. Ryan.

I have the honour to remain, Sir, your obedient Servt,

JAMES A. SEWELL, M. D.

QUEBEC, July 26th 1845.

OBSERVATIONS ON CHARBON (MALIGNANT PUSTULE.)

To the Editor of the British American Journal.

SIR,—The number of your Journal of the 16th June contains the report of a case of “Charbon,” which was treated at the Montreal General Hospital. If the following case and remarks are worth a place in your Journal, my object will be achieved.

I am, Sir, your's, &c.

W. MARSDEN, M. D.

Nicolet, 23d June, 1845.

Marie Bourgeois, ætat 17, of St. Esprit, was brought to me on the morning of Sunday, June 26th, 1842, with swelling of the right arm, extending about half-way up, and swelling of the fore-arm and hand, accompanied with a good deal of heat and pain. On the palmar side of the wrist, about the junction of the carpal bones with the radius, was a very dark brownish black shining pustule, about the size of an English shilling. About half an inch above, and the same distance to the ulnar side of the wrist, and at the junction of the carpal and metacarpal bones of the index finger, on the dorsal side, were three other pustules, varying in size from five-eighths to three-eighths of an inch in diameter, with livid edges, and phlyctenous elevated centre, containing a yellowish transparent serum.

She stated that she had on the previous Sunday morning, before mass time, assisted in skinning a steer that had died suddenly during the night. That on the Tuesday evening following, she felt a species of *engourdissement* in the fore-arm and hand, but not pain. On the following morning, Wednesday, she felt slight pain, which continued increasing until evening, when it became referable to the axillary glands of the same side. On Thursday morning a small pimple, (or *bouton*, as she described it,) appeared, and successively until Friday three others, at which time the pain was most intense. Until Saturday about noon the pustules continued growing larger and darker, and the swelling to extend up the arm; but as the pain did not increase, and she had not the means to hire a conveyance, she delayed calling on me until Sunday morning, a neighbour having promised to bring her down on going to mass. I will as briefly as possible describe the plan of treatment I adopted. Having first removed her to a convenient lodging in the village, I pro-