

evidence of material internal disease, natural or adduced, we cannot infer the cause of death. The unusual and extensive vesication upon the external parts of the body, we presume will be explained by some collateral evidence, as we have none to adduce in explanation. We deem it our duty, however, to direct attention to this condition of the body, as we consider the surface involved in vesication sufficient to cause very grave consequences."

The following is the report of Drs. Hallowell and Philbrick of the post mortem appearance of the stomach, and chemical analysis of its contents:—

"Internal mucous coat was sound, slightly congested, especially towards its cardiac orifice, and more towards the pylorus; it was otherwise healthy. The organs contained from one to two drachms of dark grumous fluid which was removed for the purpose of analysis. The contents being submitted to a careful examination, were not found to contain the slightest trace of any animal, mineral or vegetable poison."

After the above was read, a number of questions were put to the medical gentlemen, with a view to elicit their opinion as to the cause of death. Finally they adhibited their names to the following statement:—

"We are of opinion individually and collectively that the late Job Broom came to his death from the combined effect of an overdose of morphia, and the means subsequently resorted to in the treatment."

After this, the jury could not but return "that Job Broom came to his death by an overdose of morphia, administered to him by Mr. Dickson, &c."

A very important question here presents itself. Do, or do not the facts elicited in evidence, or the appearances presented by post mortem examination, warrant the opinion which Drs. Philbrick, Hallowell, Grant, and Mellmurray pronounced after a number of questions had been proposed to them? We have not the slightest hesitation in saying, that they are not supported in their conclusion, either by facts of evidence or by necroscopic appearances. When a poisonous dose of morphia has been taken by a person, giddiness and stupor set in at some time within an hour, generally in from ten to twenty minutes. The stupor gradually increases until the person becomes insensible to all external impressions: he lies motionless, with his eyes closed, and he breathes slowly as in a deep sleep. From this state he merges into a state of complete coma. His countenance alters; his surface becomes cold and pallid, and his breathing stertorous. If measures be not adopted to relieve the patient, death usually ensues in the course of twelve hours. Now in the case of Broom, four or five minutes after he had swallowed fifteen grains of morphia, in the words of his son, "he went off in a kind of stupy." Observing this, Mr. Dickson immediately sought the assistance of Dr. Aikin, who at once adopted measures to save the