

feature in which this case differs from others, is that the crystalline deposit was found so recently after death; a period of eight days only having elapsed."

20.—Case of "Suspected Irritant Poisoning. Death from Peritonitis arising from perforation of the stomach."

The death was preceded by many suspicious circumstances, supposed to be indications of poisoning from some irritant matter. "She complained of severe pain in the abdomen, especially in the region of the stomach, which she described as a burning heat. There was great tenderness over the whole cavity"—free vomiting, and the bowels much relaxed; much thirst. Next day she was worse. Complained of intense pain in the abdomen, with vomiting and purging, thirst and a sense of burning heat in the throat. No medicines had been prescribed.

Inspection.—There were vomica in the lungs, with pleural adhesions; the heart was large and fatty. On opening the abdomen, the peritonæum was very red throughout, and as if wanting at the upper part; mesentery inflamed; adhesive bands existed between the intestines, which were very red on the outside. Stomach also externally of a dark-red colour; when opened, patches of redness throughout; stomach ulcerated on the mucous surface; the intestines were stained by the contents of the gall-bladder, which was sound. The liver was much enlarged.

The Stomach.—On laying the stomach open, a general inflammatory redness was observed about the smaller curvature. The mucous membrane was of a rosy tint, and very rugose. A dark-coloured mucus was spread over the surface in patches. The mucous membrane of the stomach was ulcerated, and the coats were much thinned towards the greater end. Immediately below the cardiac opening, and on the anterior surface of the stomach, there was an aperture of about an inch in diameter, of an oval shape. The stomach was much thinned and ulcerated around this opening, and the edges were of a dark colour. The mucous fluid about the orifice was acid, but not more than the contents of the stomach are commonly found to be. There were small lumps of fat on the surface of the stomach, but no signs of a gritty powder. There was no particular odour, except that of decomposing animal matter.

Analysis.—The coats of the stomach, including the central and inflamed portions, were examined for arsenic and other mineral poisons, but no poison of any kind was present.

Contents of the Stomach.—These consisted of a brown-coloured fluid like coffee-grounds, measuring ten drachms: there was no appearance of white sediment, on emptying the bottle containing the liquid; and, on pouring it from the measure, there was no gritty or mineral matter. The liquid was decidedly acid in re-action.

Three separate analyses of the contents of the stomach were made, but no trace of arsenic, or any mineral poison existed in them.

The Small Intestines.—On the outside these were much inflamed. Patches of ulceration were found on the mucous membrane, but this was not so inflamed as the peritoneal coat. There were some green patches upon them externally, extending through the coats. These were owing to decomposition and an altered state of blood, arising from post-mortem changes. A chemical analysis proved that they were not due to any mineral matter. No poison was found in the small intestines, or their contents.

CONCLUSIONS.—1. The result of this investigation is, that no poison of any kind was present in the stomach, intestines, or their contents.