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PROCEDURE IN POST-MORTEM MEDICO-LEGAL EXAMINATIONS.

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(Continued from page 11, January 1899.)

When the anterior wall of the thorax on the lines above indicated has been removed, the thoracic organs are examined in situ as to their general appearance and actual and relative position. By this we note the usual anatomical arrangement, or any divergencé from it, such as an increase or decrease in the volume of the lungs or in the area of the pericardium, or displacement or external tumor of either of the organs. The transverse arch of the aorta with its issuing vessels and the large veins must also be inspected. Then the pleural cavities are investigated by passing the hand around the lungs, and if adhesions be present they should gradually be broken down, and the lungs raised to discover the normal or abnormal contents of the cavity. There is generally a small amount of serous fluid in the cavity, and almost always some adhesion, either soft or firm. The inner surface of the ribs can also be felt at this time, though the proper examination of these comes after the removal of the organs. The pericardium is then seized by a pair of forceps and opened by a knife or scissors obliquely from above down; some make a crucial incision; the apex of the heart is then taken hold of and raised from the cavity in order to