

last lumbar vertebra, and appeared to be a prolongation of the spine. It was upwards of three inches in length, and of the diameter of a goose-quill, tapering towards the end, and hard to the touch, without any indication of pulsation. Its connection with the body appearing extremely loose, Dr. Chapuis, chief physician of the hospital, effected a ligature at its base, which did not cause the infant to cry, and determined the fall of this singular appendage in the course of six days. After its separation, it shrunk to half its former size, and on being split open lengthwise, it was found to contain under the epidermis a stratum of nervous papillæ only perceptible by the aid of a magnifying glass, and some filaments of cellular tissue under the derma.

Dr. Devay, professor of clinical medicine at the medical school of Lyons, has just published an interesting work on the disastrous effects of marriages among relations. He shews that in fixing certain prohibited degrees of consanguinity, the church in point of fact was only favouring the observance of one of the most important laws of nature, the infringement of which is punished with inevitable degeneracy. Unions within the limits of consanguinity are hurtful not only to the human race, but also to animals. It is true that such unions among the latter are promoted by the breeder for profit's sake,—the Disley and Durham oxen, so admirable in the eyes of the breeder, are instances of this; but sterility is the usual consequence of the practice. In the human race two circumstances have contributed to favour marriages among relations—the first occurs when a small population is pent up in some remote hamlet not easily accessible. In such places, married between consanguinity people is the rule. The second case is that of families desirous of maintaining their rank in society, or preventing the dispersion of their fortune by marrying within their own circle. Dr. Devay states that out of 121 marriages of this kind observed by him, 22 were barren. Only four of the number were marriages between uncles and grand-nieces—the others were between cousins or the issues of cousins. When sterility does not occur, the issue is diseased, or afflicted with blindness or deafness; also in many cases afflicted with irregularity of conformation. Of all these irregularities, polydactilism, or multiplicity of fingers is the most frequent. Dr. Devay has observed this in 17 out of the 121 cases above mentioned. He states that in a certain secluded spot, where the inhabitants had no communication with other populations, polydactilism had become quite endemic, and that this strange anomaly disappeared some time after a new road had been cut through the place.

An interesting communication on the healing qualities of carbonic acid has been received by the Academie des Sciences from Drs. Demarquay and Leconte. These gentlemen had sent up a paper about two years ago on the modifications which atmospheric air, oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen, and carbonic acid were calculated to produce on sub-cutaneous sores, and had also given a description of the healing process. In their present paper they more especially mention the healing power of carbonic acid in the case of tendons of recent formation, whence they have been led to try it for obstinate sores. For this purpose the diseased limb is placed in an apparatus of their invention, made of India rubber, and communicating with a vessel in which carbonic acid is evolved. Sometimes the application is made only once in 24 hours, at others the gas is evolved every