

and *under all circumstances* forthcoming, upon such charges no man's life would be safe!"

Were such an assumption tenable, who indeed would be safe from the artful and designing poisoner, when the large number of available vegetable poisons is taken into consideration, whether irritant, narcotic or narcotico-acrid, that under some circumstances of administration leave not a trace behind, *post mortem*.

Happily, cases of accidental poisoning from Strychnine are of rare occurrence; consequently, opportunities of witnessing the morbid effects of the alkaloid on the animal economy, are equally rare, and as in many cases a person may live a sufficiently long time after taking the poison for the effects of it to be entirely removed from the stomach, blood, and tissues of the body, it is in a measure the duty of every lover of science, (apart from personal or private considerations) to furnish such evidence on the subject as circumstances may put him in possession of.

In the following case, a post mortem examination of the contents of the thorax and abdomen alone were obtainable, owing to the insuperable objection of the parents to any examination at all; in fact, the examination that did take place, was as it were accidental; and owing to the medical gentleman retained by the Coroner having misunderstood the instructions of the jury; "that the body should be carefully and minutely examined but *not* opened."

William Rowe, æt. 7 years, a delicate and emaciated-looking child, died Nov. 23rd, at about 6 P. M. The body was examined *post mortem* on the 25th inst. at 11 A. M., forty-one hours after death. There were no external marks of violence on the body. The limbs were flexible, though the jaw was somewhat rigid. Had been subject to occasional *vertigo* and convulsions, since two years of age. Had taken medicine for worms occasionally, and *santonine* three or four times within two years, with marked relief. At half-past five, or a quarter to 6 P. M. on Saturday the 23rd Nov., took three grains of Strychnine, for *Santonine*, in a tea-spoonful of water. Soon after swallowing it cramps in the legs set in, immediately followed by *opisthotonos*. Complained of thirst, but refused drink when offered, from the difficulty of swallowing. Tried to reject the medicine, but the mother urged the child not to spit it out, but to try to retain the medicine that had always done good before, and the child had asked for. Mother imagined the pains were convulsions, such as the child had before suffered from, and advised him, to try to bear them. Had suffered from convulsions on the two days preceding death, which took place, as near as can be gathered from the conflicting testimony of the terrified witnesses, in about fifteen minutes at most after taking the fatal dose. Both lungs were gorged with dark blood, and crepitated imperfectly, especially the right. The heart was flaccid and empty, as well as the large vessels. The stomach was distended with gas. On opening it, a peculiar faint odour, not unlike hydrocyanic acid was emitted. Stomach empty. The cardiac extremity was of a dark purple hue, for upwards of an inch in length, like a dark *ecchymosis*, and there were several vermilion-coloured spots, and patches on the mucous coat of the stomach.

The intestines contained no worms, and presented nothing remarkable excepting a few vermilion-coloured streaks on the mucous surface of the duodenum.