

In any case, however, where the body is clothed in ordinary wearing apparel the clothing should be carefully examined and kept for future investigation, if found necessary, and if blood stains are suspected, the clothing or other articles should be removed to another place before the post-mortem begins, in order to avoid any possibility of the stains being produced after the body is opened.

Then should follow a thorough examination of the body externally, also of the orifices, with a more or less detailed description of the body as a whole and a minute and clear description of any external injuries; and here, as in the internal examination, one must remember that artificial light is very deceptive in regard to colors such as jaundice, stains of nitric acid, etc.

From this point on, the method of procedure varies as to the class of cases we have to deal with, and I intend to consider only two of these, namely, wounds and poisons.

In regard to wounds the direction of the same should, if possible, be made out accurately, and their correspondence with cuts and tears in the clothing should be accurately determined. The condition of the parts, whether gaping or not, should be investigated, as well as the condition of the tissues, to determine whether the wounds were made ante or post mortem and their condition as to healing, to determine how long a time has elapsed since their infliction.

Should a wound extend deeply, it is best to approach the deeper parts not directly by enlarging the wound and following it from the outside, but by opening any cavities, supposedly penetrated, from a point some little distance away from the wound and then ascertaining the condition of the parts within, assisted by the introduction of a probe gently inserted through the wound, in this way varying the ordinary mode of procedure, so as to make the wound a pivot round which the rest of the examination centres.

One other point I wish to dwell on is the importance of stripping the dura mater from the bones at the base of the skull in all cases of injury, for only in this way can one be certain that a fracture of the base does not exist.

It is, of course, scarcely necessary for me to say that any unnecessary disfigurement of the body is to be avoided, but on the other hand we must not omit examining thoroughly and minutely any portion of the body that is likely to throw light on the question at issue. The condition of the various organs must be examined also in a thorough manner in order to complete your report.

In suspected poison cases great care must be taken in the examination of the surroundings, orifices, search of clothing,