

Situated  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches distant from this wound, in a straight line, is a smaller ragged wound in the posterior part of the neck, in the right side, at the same level as the anterior wound. A fragment of muscle tissue protrudes posteriorly, and 3 grains of No. 4 shot were extracted.

The cervical vertebrae cannot be ascertained by palpation to be injured.

No other marks of violence.

*Conclusions.*—The body shows a severe shotgun wound, fired at a distance not exceeding a few feet from a point in front and slightly to the left. The exact nature and extent of the injuries cannot be determined without an autopsy.

*Verdict.*—"Excusable homicide."

### PERITONITIS FOLLOWING SURGICAL OPERATIONS.

D. P., aged 30, consented to have exploratory laparotomy for gall stone performed, after being warned of a possibly fatal result, which followed a few days after the operation. The body showed no signs of jaundice. The abdomen much distended and tympanitic.

The suspicions of the friends had been aroused by certain incidents in the case, which, on inquiry, appeared to be innocent enough. There was no accusation of negligence and therefore, as the performance of the operation in the presence of four legally qualified practitioners showed it not to be of the nature of an unlawful act, the friends withdrew their demand for an inquest.

This case shows the advantage of preliminary medical inquiry in averting a groundless charge of malpractice.

In the event of any case of this kind requiring inquest, it might be well to employ a special jury, half being composed of medical men, to investigate the case. This practice has been followed in New York with excellent results.

### UMBILICAL HÆMORRHAGE. (?)

CASE 25.—*Autopsy* upon the body of a new-born infant found at St. Louis de Mile End, April 9th, 1893. Body of a female.

Length, 13 inches. No signs of violence. A little vernix present in the armpits and groins. The umbilical cord has been encircled with a piece of knitting wool, tied in a loose knot, but too loosely to compress it. The ligature can be readily slipped off without untying it. The cord appears to have been cut. The umbilical vein and arteries contain a little soft clot. Large intestines filled with meconium. Stomach contains air, but no traces of food. Small intestines empty, and sink in water. The lungs light pink; are fully distended; float as a whole, and also when cut in pieces, except at the base. Portions compressed between boards still float. They are anæmic. The heart is flabby and collapsed, and its cavities practically empty of blood. Fœtal orifices persist. Spleen, kidneys, liver and brain are all intensely anæmic and almost bloodless. Ossification in sternum and astragalus; none in lower epiphysis of femur.