

The numerous signs which are ascribed by authors, as indicating death from drowning, are all equivocal, and according to Dr. Beck, the presence of frothy mucus, is undoubtedly the most important one. No water will be found in the stomach of persons dead before drowning. In the first case, the blood is generally fluid, and particular attention is to be paid to external injuries, and the circumstances attending submersion; and it is to be remembered that every instance is marked with peculiarities which render it impossible to lay down general rules applicable to all cases. The Physician, therefore, must be possessed of an accurate knowledge of physiology and pathology, to enable him to give a correct opinion.

“In death by smothering, circumstantial evidence must be the principal, if not the only means of ascertaining whether the event has been produced by crime or accident. Tumours pressing on the organs of respiration, or foreign bodies found in the trachea or œsophagus, are of course indications of accidental death,”

In the cases of death from wounds, we find a great number of interesting narrations and trials, as well as valuable instructions to the Surgeon, which are long and do not admit of being given in a smaller compass, than in the author's own words, without proving in a great degree useless. The article on *spontaneous combustions* is also very important, and the number of cases which are related of this extraordinary accident, amounting to eighteen, seem sufficiently authenticated as to leave no very reasonable doubt of the possibility of its taking place, at least in individuals who indulge in hard drinking.

The concluding paragraph in this chapter is on persons dead from hunger, and we copy the following indications of this accident:—

“The body is much emaciated, and a foetid, acrid odour exhales from it, although death may have been recent. The eyes are red