the chambers being dependent on the condition of the muscular walls, whether in diastole and systole, and also on the pathological alteration due to dilatation, hypertrophy, atrophy or aneurism of the walls. There may be various combinations of these and other changes. Again, the fluid blood only could be withdrawn, and the character of the clot with regard to size, colour, consistence and adherence to the walls, interlacement with the chordæ tendineæ, and connection with clots in the great vessels can only be determined when the heart is completely opened. On the whole, there does not appear to be much to recommend this course, though it is sometimes adopted by eminent authorities ; and on suspicion of such rare conditions as the so-called embolism of the pulmonary artery, it might be of advantage to open up all the large vessels and cavities before the organ is cut out of the thorax.

The lungs are then removed by completing the section of their roots and examined in detail as before suggested.

It is not as a rule necessary to weigh the lungs, though for the completeness of the examination this is sometimes done.

The thorax is to be carefully sponged out and the amount of fluid estimated or measured, and the remaining parts of parietal pleura examined, and the ribs followed individually round their curves and any fracture or abnormality observed. This more complete examination of the thoracic viscera is especially desirable in the cases of newborn children, or in suspected deaths from corrosive poison or in such conditions as œdema of the glottis from injury or disease.

When the examination of the thorax is completed, the abdomen is next taken in hand. In the majority of postmortems the stomach is not at first examined, but, when poisoning is suspected, it is the first organ removed ; in fact, some pathologists take it out before the thoracic viscera are exposed. If the œsophagus has already been tied in the thorax, this need not be done, but if not, it should be tied above the cardiac end of the stomach and severed above the