a pain on the crown of the head, extending over a space about the size of a penny piece; I also felt a slight nausea of the stomach, as if I had been smoking inordinately. I had kept eating the mace in small bits over about an hour and a half. I walked home, and dined about three o'clock. I still felt the pain slightly on the top of the head, and also the nausea and slight giddiness. I rose from dinner and looked out at the window, to dissipate, if possible, this disagreeable feeling. I then felt the blood rush to my head, but the feeling was as if an electric current had passed from the crown of the head downwards. Not wishing to be overcome in the room in which I then was, I made an effort, and got mechanically down-stairs. I then felt the same sensation which I should suppose a person would experience who had become nearly insensible from extreme cold, and that if I had yielded myself to its influence, I could have slept away out of existence without pain. I felt this sensation twice; the second time when I had got down stairs into the back parlour. I then walked about in the back yard, to endeavour to drive away the extraordinary sensations, but in a few minutes a cold shiver came upon me. I then got into the house, and laid myself upon a sofa near the fire. From that time I felt every variety of heat and cold from their respective extremes. At every time the blood went from and returned to my head, the current changed the sensation, sometimes feeling myself very hot, and the next very cold, but never the same sensation. I felt at one time such a pressure in the head, that it appeared as if all the blood in the body had rushed to obtain possession of that region, and I thought I could hear it gushing in my ears. These symptoms became gradually weaker. A medical gentleman was hurriedly called in, and some brandy was administered. The effect of this upon me was as if I had been electrified from the roof of the mouth downwards in a straight line, and dying off towards the feet; it then seemed to diffuse itself over the whole body. The state of my body generally felt as if I had had hold of slightly galvanized wires, the wires apparently working in antagonist directions, out of tune and keeping;—like, in fact, so many connecting rods working from excentrics out of truth, and jarring against each other. The state of the mind was, I should suppose, similar to that of the opium eater, entertaining no apprehension of the result, although aware of the presence of some danger. The pulse, during the several paroxysms, was very varied, being from 70 to more than 100. During the attack I felt every nerve in my teeth, but no pain."

The above description is, in the words of the party himself, whereby he has endeavoured to describe the anomalous feelings and intellectual disturbance produced so unexpectedly by the arillus of the nutmeg. Præcordial anxiety was remarkable, and the whole state of the patient induced the surgeon called in, first to administer hot brandy and water, and finding this of no service, he exhibited an emetic of sulphate of zinc and ipecacuanha, which brought away some trifling portions of the masticated mace. We now saw the

patient together. The feet were cold, and required artificial heat; the head throbbed, eyes looked injected, and the countenance acquired a bizarre expression, whilst the words he employed to express his sensations seemed selected for their merit of being the opposite to what should have been used. Camphor mixture and compound spirits of ammonia, with chloric æther, were given at short intervals; the bowels were moved frequently by salts and senna, and the forehead was kept cool by a spirit lotion and strip of linen. His temporal arteries beat strongly for several hours. The persistence of the intellectual disturbance was remarkable, for on the third day the odd and excited state of the sensorium had not quite disappeared, so that he even then felt himself unable to attend to his office books. His thoughts hardly submitted themselves to his control, unless by a consciously great effort.

The arillus of the nutmeg contains an expressible oil, one eighteenth part of which is volatile according to Duncan. Upon the latter the flavour is said to depend, and probably also the excitant power upon the sensorium, although this has not yet been determined, that I am aware of. The properties of both mace and nutmeg appear to be identical, and reside in the essential oil found in them, for the aromatic flavour and pungency of which only have they been introduced into pharmaceutical and culinary economy. The stimulating properties are less grateful in the envelope than in the nut itself, yet the potency of the one and the other, when too freely used, in developing symptoms of an injurious kind in the human subject, renders it needful that a salutary caution should be urged against the too liberal use of these common condiments.

CASES FROM PRIVATE PRACTICE.*

By JOHN RICHARD WARDELL, M.D., Edin.;

Late President of the Royal Physical and Hunterian Medical Societies, Assistant Pathologist in the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, &c. &c.

CASE V.

INFANTICIDE.

Post-mortem examination made on the body of a female child, February 1st, 1847, which had been found forty-eight hours previously, in an adjacent river.

External aspect. The body is in various places besmeared with mud, especially about the head and nates; cutaneous surface on face, neck, thorax, and anterior aspect of superior extremities of a pale livid hue; conformation of chest full and rounded. Umbilical cord torn, its extremity being ragged and unequally divided, is of a pearly white colour, and bright and shining, not at all contracted or shrivelled, and feels soft and flexible to the touch; indeed, seems

* Continued from page 698 of last volume.

little, if at all, different to the state in which it is found at birth. At three or four places along the course of its vessels, are observable congested-looking spots, of a reddish brown colour; no indication of any ligature having been employed; measures eight inches in length; no discolouration nor evidence of powerful traction having taken place at its abdominal insertion. Nates are smeared with an olive-greenish meconium. Hair light brown, and in the usual abundance. Finger nails fully developed, and reach a little beyond the tips of the fingers; nails on toes also perfectly formed. The white saponaceous matter, so usually seen at the birth of mature children, is present on several parts of the body, but mostly on back and nates.

The body, on being washed in tepid water, becomes of a more distinctly pinkish colour. On the anterior part of the neck a slight line is observable where the cuticle is excoriated; this line is four and a half inches in length, and in some portions of its course ecchymoses are apparent. On the left side, a little above the clavicle, is a discoloured patch, resembling a bruise; the superjacent cuticle is somewhat abraded; colour of a greenish blue cast, of the size of a sixpence. No other external traces of violence. Weighs 5lbs. 14½ oz. avoirdupois. Measures from vertex to heel 19½ inches.

On making a vertical section, and reflecting back the scalp, a good deal of dark fluid blood has escaped from the posterior part. Cranial bones are not fractured. On removing the calvarium more dark blood oozes away, and the encephalic mass is much congested, the superficial and membranous vessels, as well as those proper to the substance of the organ, being of a very turgid appearance. Convolutions normally developed.

Dissecting back the skin corresponding with the line previously spoken of, on the anterior part of the neck, extravasation of blood into the subcutaneous cellular tissue is distinctly discernible, and beneath the bruised patch above the clavicle an irregular space from seven to eight lines in diameter, presents obvious sanguineous extravasation, and at three or four places in this space a small coagulum of blood, from the size of a wheat corn to that of a small pea, is discovered. The anterior surface of the sterno-cleido-mastoideus muscle shews one or two ecchymosed places, which, on a section being made through them, are found to extend into the substance of the muscle. No foreign body, nor anything anomalous, is discovered in the mouth, larynx, pharynx, or trachea. Behind the pharynx, between the soft parts and the cervical portion of the vertebral column, some dark coagulated blood is observed.

Opening the thorax, the lungs completely fill the chest, and their anterior margins overlap the greater portion of the pericardium, so that only a triangular portion at the apex is left uncovered. The organs are of a pinkish red colour, but on their posterior inferior parts they acquire a blueish hue; diaphragm less convex than where the lungs are uninflated. Distinct crepitation is felt in every portion of their substance, and when thrown along with the heart and thymus gland attached, into water, the whole mass lightly swims on the surface. Each lung being placed separately in

water, is extremely buoyant, and on each being cut into a dozen pieces, they all readily float; a piece taken from the posterior inferior part of the left lung (where there is congestion,) being powerfully squeezed by means of twisting it in the fold of a napkin, and then put into the water, swims as before. The lungs and heart together weigh 1175 grains; lungs alone 813 grains, and heart alone 362 grains. The heart contained some dark blood in the right side; foramen ovale still patulous; ductus arteriosus permeable, slightly contracted in central portion, and in it a small quantity of yellowish fibrinous matter is discovered; ductus venosus empty, but unaltered. On exposing the abdominal viscera the stomach is distended, and feels elastic to the touch; after placing ligatures around its extremities, it is removed, and on a puncture being made into its parietes, some gas has escaped, and the organ becomes collapsed; on laying it open, about a drachm and a half of viscid, mucilaginous, brownish-yellow matter is found; no morbid appearances detectible. Liver natural; intestines not at all distended, either with air or water, but rather seem contracted; the normal quantity of meconium is present. Other organs natural.

The following case occurred some few weeks subsequent to the above, at Malton, Yorkshire, and through the kindness of Dr. J. J. Wright, an intelligent physician of that place, who was employed by the coroner to make the examination of the body, I am thus enabled to present to the reader the subjoined example:—

CASE VI.

INFANTICIDE.

Examination of the body of a male infant taken from a well, April 11th, 1847.

External appearances.—The body was carefully and tightly sewed up in flannel, beneath which was a second covering of cotton. The features and limbs were distorted and compressed by the tightness with which the coverings had been applied; the legs were firmly pressed upon the abdomen. A considerable quantity of meconium had made its escape, and was smeared over the lower extremities of the child and over the cotton cloth in which it was contained. Cutaneous surface of the head, neck, and shoulders, of a roseate hue, except on a part of the right side of the face and head where it was slightly livid; over the rest of the body it was pale. Some frothy mucus exuded from the nostrils. The umbilical cord was torn off within a quarter of an inch of the abdomen; its extremity was ragged, colour a pale-red; there was no appearance of any ligature having been applied; there were no external indications of putrefaction. Hair light brown and rather more than usually abundant; nails fully formed, and reach beyond the ends of the fingers; the scrotum was slightly livid, it contained both the testes. No remains of *membrana pupillaris*. There were none of the sebaceous matter on any part of the surface of the body. Length from vertex to heel twenty inches; weight of body, 6lbs. ½ oz., avoirdupois. There were no external marks of violence.

On making a section of the scalp from before backwards, a little effused blood was found over the superior

angle of the occipital bone. The cranial bones were unfractured, full, ossified, and not overlapping each other. The anterior fontanelle was unusually small; the posterior nearly obliterated. The convolutions of the brain were fully developed; the vessels of the membranes and substance of the brain unnaturally turgid and filled with dark-coloured fluid blood. Not the slightest putrescent odour was perceived on opening the chest. The lungs occupied the greater part of the chest, and partially overlapped the pericardium; they were of a deep pink colour posteriorly, their anterior margin being of a much lighter hue; they were perfectly healthy and crepitant. The heart, lungs, and thymus body being thrown together into water, floated considerably above its surface. Each lung was separately buoyant. When divided into thirty-six pieces, each piece floated, and after some of these had been very powerfully compressed in a cloth, their buoyancy was still preserved. Weight of lungs, 812 grains. About a drachm of reddish serum was contained in the pericardium; the heart was perfectly healthy and weighed 330 grains; the foramen ovale was open; the ductus arteriosus was contracted towards its aortal extremity. Trachea and the whole of the bronchial tubes full of frothy mucus; blood-vessels of chest unusually full of dark fluid blood; stomach healthy, containing a little healthy mucus with some flatus; intestines filled with meconium. Other organs healthy.

(To be continued.)

PROVINCIAL

Medical & Surgical Journal.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 1848.

A numerous and influential meeting of medical practitioners, residing in the county of Dorset, has lately been held at Dorchester, at which the rules and regulations of the Dorset County Friendly Society, so far as they affect the medical profession, were taken into consideration. We have received a copy of such of the rules of this Institution as relate to the provisions for medical relief, from which we learn that the sum of two shillings and sixpence per head, from each benefit member, is paid to the medical officers;—that certain extra allowances, similar to those authorized by the Poor-Law Commissioners, are to be paid in protracted surgical cases and for capital operations;—that additional annual payments, *“which payments shall be understood to include all casualties whatever,”* are made for the families of benefit members, to the amount of two shillings for a wife or child above sixteen years of age, one shilling for each of the first

three children under sixteen years of age, and nine pence for each additional child;—that ten shillings and sixpence extra is allowed for confinements;—that all medicines, &c., as well as attendance, are supplied by the medical officers.

We believe, that from statistical calculations, made with a view to this very object, the average annual period of sickness among healthy persons who come within the scope of these institutions, is estimated at six days and some hours. This average period will, however, vary with the circumstances of the individual families; their dwellings, habits, occupations, general state of comfort, and, above all, the density of the population, and sanitary state of the localities in which they may be congregated. For the large towns of the manufacturing districts, for instance, the calculation is far too favourable, and we much question whether, if we had sufficient data for determining this point with accuracy, the period of sickness given would not be found considerably below the truth, even among an agricultural population, and in localities favourably situated. Assuming, however, the above average to be correct, and estimating the families to consist of husband, wife, and three children, the sum paid by each will, in all ordinary cases, amount to seven shillings and sixpence; the number of days of sickness, without mentioning the hours, will amount to thirty, which allows the munificent sum of exactly three-pence per day as the amount of remuneration for medicines, attendance, the expenditure of time, &c., leaving out of the question the anxious devotion of mental labour and exercise of practical skill which the more serious cases necessarily call for.

Let us now recur to the proceedings of the meeting. We regret that we are unable to report them at length, but the resolutions which we subjoin, afford an epitome of them:—

It was proposed by Mr. Fox, of Weymouth, and seconded by Mr. Fooks, of Stalbridge, and carried unanimously,

“That although the Dorset County Friendly Society would be of great utility in administering to the wants of a large portion of the industrial inhabitants of the County; yet that in the absence of any restrictive clause as to the admission of Benefit Members, it is to be feared that many persons, whose circumstances do not require that Medical and Surgical Relief should be administered as a charity, would be induced to join the Society; it therefore appears desirable to restrict Medical Relief to the Labouring Population and Journeyman Mechanics.”