

whom he had found lying in the street in a state of the utmost destitution and exhaustion; that he had barred the door of the watchhouse, and afterwards told one of the town policemen that he had placed a person there, but owing to some most abominable neglect no one had gone to the guardhouse until the Wednesday night, when the unfortunate creature was discovered. On Friday, the 12th inst., I was desired by the coroner and jury to make an inspection of the body, at which time I carefully noted down the following appearances:—

The face was much shrunk and emaciated; the eyes were open, and presenting a red fiery appearance, indeed, as intense as in a case of acute ophthalmia during life. The skin generally was particularly tough, and scarcely any cellular membrane was to be found on dissection. The tongue, lips, and fauces were dry and rough. When I first saw the body on the Wednesday evening there was a peculiar strong odour exhaling from it; this, however, was scarcely perceptible on the Friday. On opening the cavities of the chest both lungs were shrunk and contracted, especially the left; the pleura of the right lung was slightly inflamed; all the viscera of the abdomen were extremely healthy; the stomach was quite empty, even of gastric juice; the intestines were also empty; indeed, there was not one particle of chyle or fæces throughout the whole canal; the gall-bladder was nearly full of bile, and the surrounding parts were much tinged by it; the blood vessels were extremely collapsed, and nearly empty; the urinary bladder was empty and contracted, and it was evident that no evacuation had passed from it or the intestines during the time that the unfortunate man had been in the watchhouse, where he no doubt languished in agonising misery from the Monday night at ten o'clock, until some time on the Wednesday, as two respectable persons swore to the fact of their hearing repeated groans in the lock-up house towards the morning of that day.

In addition to the post-mortem examination I have thought it right to notice some of the circumstances of the above unfortunate case, as I think they will justify the opinion which I gave at the inquest, namely, that the man died from cold and hunger.

It is worthy of remark that three weeks and two days after death permission was obtained to disinter the body in order to prove the identity of the individual, and satisfy the minds of anxious parents and relatives, on which occasion I attended, and was forcibly struck with the fact that there was not then the slightest appearance of decomposition in the corpse. I have, therefore, no doubt but that the bodies of persons dying under such circumstances will longer resist the effects of external agencies, as I was led to contrast this occurrence with one

which I had observed a few days previously, where a young man in the enjoyment of perfect health had been accidentally shot; and in that instance decomposition had advanced so rapidly that six and thirty hours after death no one could have recognised any feature of the face. I remain, Mr. Editor, your obliged and obedient servant,

WM. TOMKINS, M.R.C.S.

Yeovil, Somerset, Feb. 20, 1838.

INTUSSUSCEPTION IN CHILDREN.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—The subject of intussusception having lately been discussed at the two principal medical societies in London, and nothing new having been elicited on these discussions, I take the liberty of suggesting to the profession, through the medium of your valuable periodical, the trial of inflating the bowels by means of a glyster-pipe attached to a common pair of bellows; it has fallen to my lot to witness several of these most distressing cases in children; the nature of the obstruction was foretold during life, and unfortunately verified by post-mortem examination. The last case of the kind which came under my care about two years since, presented all the usual symptoms: intolerable restlessness, the most obstinate sickness, the singularly distressed state of countenance and shrunken features, The usual remedies were had recourse to, viz. warm baths, glysters, anodyne frictions over the abdomen, &c., but without avail; as a forlorn hope I made trial of inflation by the above means, with the most happy result;—the sickness immediately ceased, the child within an hour passed a natural stool, fell into a sleep, and in the morning was almost without ailment. I am, Sir, your constant reader and obedient servant,

SAMUEL MITCHELL, Surgeon,
Kingston-on-Thames,
Feb. 26, 1838.

PUNCTURE OF THE BLADDER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—On the 16th of December last there appeared a letter of mine in THE LANCET, detailing the history of a case in which I deemed it necessary to tap the urinary bladder. In that communication I stated pretty accurately all the circumstances connected with it, in order to acquaint you, Sir, that even among the quiet vales of Cambria, an occasional application of THE LANCET might prove of incalculable benefit to the sacred cause of suffering humanity. For here, as unfortunately, in many other places, no