to examine the body, for the cause of his sudden death was unknown. Judge, Sir, of my surprise, on hearing, on the second day following his death, that the inquest had been held, a verdict given, and the man buried, or about to be buried. It was a case of great interest, and I was, as you may expect, surprised at not having been summoned, disappointed of an interesting dissection, and disgusted with the haste with which the affair was hurried over. But for this there is no remedy by law. If coroners are still to be chosen from the hordes of small attorneys, I trust they will show a little more respect to medical men than was here exemplified; but I sincerely trust the whole subject will soon undergo a parliamentary investigation, with a view to a thorough reform.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
X. Y. Z.

London, August 5, 1823.

DR. FOX'S GLASS-LEECH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As it appears to be Dr. Fox's object to give every publicity to his newly-invented glass-leeches for cupping, and as the inventor may be thought to be somewhat partial to his own invention, perhaps you will allow me to bear testimony to their efficiency.

I have been in the habit of using the glass-leeches occasionally for the last ten months, and have never failed in procuring the requisite quantity of blood; and on the temple, and behind the mastoid processes, I have found them to be peculiarly advantageous, being enabled to take the full quantity at once, and in less time than it can possibly be accomplished by the common glasses, the repeated applications of which, by pressing on the arterial branches, frequently occasion considerable delay and difficulty.

In answer to a letter which I wrote to Dr. Fox, soon after the appearance of his first letter in *THE LANCET*, he very politely sent me a drawing and description of his glasses, by which mine were made. I have since lent patterns (some having small mouths, adapted for the temple, &c.) to Messrs. Millikin and Co., surgeons' instrument makers, 301, Strand, who now keep them on sale.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
GEORGE FREDERICK KNOX,
Surgeon-Dentist and Cupper to the
Central Infirmary, &c.
11, George Street, Adelphi,
Aug. 2, 1823.

CASE OF EXTRA-UTERINE FETATION, IN WHICH THE FETUS REMAINED IN THE ABDOMEN FORTY YEARS.

*Communicated by HENRY LEE HEISKELL, M.D.
of Winchester, Va.*

THE following case occurred in the poor-house of the parish of Frederick, in Virginia.

Venus Collins, a coloured woman, late of the city of Philadelphia, became pregnant with her seventh child, which she bore until her death, which occurred in the summer of 1825. As near as could be ascertained by a reference to the records of the clerk's office, and the statements of her fellow servants (one of whom was her daughter-in-law,) she was from seventy to seventy-five years of age, and carried the fetus forty years. During this period, and in particular the latter part of it, she enjoyed remarkably good health for one in her situation, being only occasionally incommoded by a sense of weight and bearing down in her right side, which was sometimes accompanied with slight pain. In the early part of her pregnancy, she had hydropic effusions, for which she underwent the operation of paracentesis abdominis. She had no show of the menses after this period, nor did afterwards conceive again. For several years before her death, the infirmities attendant on old age, and the difficulties of providing for herself, rendered her removal to the Poor-house necessary, where she remained until her death, which happened in consequence of an attack of dysentery.

A post-mortem examination of her body was conducted by Drs. A. S. BALDWIN and HOLLIDAY, in presence of several medical students. On making a crucial incision through the parietes of the abdomen, and turning back the flaps, a large bony tumour was found in the lower part of the epigastric region, inclining rather to the right side, and firmly agglutinated in front to the parietes of the abdomen, and behind to the small intestines. The only morbid appearances of the viscera presenting, were a diminished size of the uterus, and an obliteration of the fallopian tubes: the ovaria were not to be found.

The tumour itself was of an oblong form, which, when removed from its attachments, weighed four pounds and six ounces. The envelope formed a perfect bony hermetically sealed sac, on all sides, but rather thin at the part corresponding to the anus; for, when considerable pressure was made in the direction of its short diameter, a few drops of dark fluid made their way through the covering.

The substance of the sac or covering was of an ossific nature, of a dirty-white or cream colour, varying from two to three lines in thickness, and so resisting, that it required not only a strong knife for its division, but also a very considerable degree of strength.

On removing the sac, which had formed adhesions to several parts of the fœtus, particularly the superior part of the right thigh, a fœtus, perfect in its form and configuration, was presented, having apparently gone the full period of utero-gestation. Its position in the sac exactly resembled that of a fœtus in utero; having the chin resting upon the chest in such a manner that the face looked towards the left side; the trunk was incurvated, the legs bent upon the thighs, the thighs upon the pelvis and abdomen, the feet crossed, and the arms folded between the head and knees. Owing to the firm pressure of the sac, the abdomen and lower part of the chest received the impression of the arms and thighs; and the latter, in turn, from the same cause, were somewhat flattened.

The weight of the fœtus, divested of its covering, was three pounds and three-quarters, and measured, in its contracted state, eleven inches and one-half in length. So faultless was every limb and feature, (with the exception of the above stated,) that not one of them presented an exception worthy of special remark. The general aspect, however, of the fœtus bore evident marks of age, (if the remark might not be considered a contradiction.) The muscles and integuments were firmer and more consistent than in the natural state, and the latter were very generally ossified, except those portions which were covered by the foldings of the arms and thighs: consequently the integuments which partook of the ossific character had a decided preponderance over the parts which did not take on a change of structure. The pericranium was entirely in an ossified state, over which some traces of hair were discernible, and the remains of the eyelashes were distinctly perceptible.

On examining the contents of the cranium, thorax, and abdomen, the following appearances were noticed:—The brain was a soft pulpy mass of an ash colour, presenting nothing very remarkable in its appearance. The contents of the thorax and abdomen were in a singular state of preservation, as perfect as those of a stillborn child; nothing of decay or putrefaction could be discovered in any portion of them. The meconium had the usual dark appearance and consistence. The tongue was firm and ash-coloured; and the nails of the toes and fingers perfect. There were no traces of umbilical chord or placenta.

SOCIETY OF GERMAN NATURALISTS AND PHYSICIANS.

THIS Society has existed five years, and was principally established by Oken and Blumenbach. It consists of all German naturalists and physicians, who, by the publication of some work, have contributed to the progress of natural sciences. Meetings are held once a year during summer, at one of the principal towns of Germany, which is always fixed at the preceding meeting. The members assemble daily for several hours, and the meeting continues for about a fortnight. During this time, the collections of natural history, anatomy, &c., botanical garden, physical and chemical laboratories, &c., of the town are inspected, discourses on scientific subjects are held, and the best means considered in order to promote the national study of natural sciences. Hitherto the meetings, which were held successively at Leipsic, Dresden, Frankfort, Munich, and Berlin, have been numerous attended. Almost every important town, and every scientific society, sends some representatives; and from the liberality with which the respective governments have promoted the objects of the Society, from the zeal, freedom, and harmony with which the assemblies are conducted, and from the scientific intercourse which thus is facilitated through the whole country, we may anticipate the best success from this national institution. From what we hear, an Encyclopædia, completing all branches of natural history, and a new edition of Pliny's Works, are contemplated by the Society. The last meeting was held at Berlin; Humboldt acted as president, and Liekhenstein as secretary.

EXTIRPATION OF THE PAROTID GLAND.

This operation has recently been performed in two cases of scirrhus, by Mr. Gen-soul, of Lyons. During the first operation eleven arteries were tied, the external carotid included. The wound healed within three months, and the patient at this time seemed perfectly cured. After six months he died, from frequent dietetic excesses; and the examination exhibited several disorganisations of the liver and the stomach, which, entirely independent of the previous operation, accounted for his death. No trace of the parotid was found. At the second operation, the external carotid was also tied, and the internal carotid, jugular vein, and the pneumo-gastric nerve, were laid bare up to their entrance into the