butable to ether or chloroform, in order to satisfy practitioners that "a meddlesome midwifery is still a bad midwifery." What should we think of the man who enumerated the poisonous phenomena manifested by an over-dose of opium for the purpose of altogether abrogating its use?

Southampton, April 14, 1848.

REPORT OF

AN EXTRAORDINARY DOUBLE-BIRTH.

By W. F. ASKHAM, Esq., Surgeon, Eckington, Derbyshire.

I WAS called upon, on the 3rd of February last, to attend a healthy young woman, then in labour of her fourth child, and according to her own statement, at the full period of utero-gestation. As there had been hæmorrhage to some extent previous to my arrival, I at once made an examination, and found the presentation a natural one, and the labour so far advanced, that nothing but an active pain or two appeared wanting to complete it. These soon came on, and the head was expelled, and almost immediately afterwards the shoulders, without difficulty. During the passage of the breech, however, I discovered something unusual; but before I could satisfy myself what it was, another vigorous contraction of the uterus took place, and the whole was expelled.

I was surprised to see a *lusus naturæ* of a very extraordinary character—two apparently well-formed, but still-born children, united from the sternum to the lower part of the abdomen, or rather, to the umbilicus—the one a male, but the other without any external organs of generation, or anus. When laid on a table, they lie nearly face to face. Examined internally, the following appearances presented themselves:—

Each child has its separate spine, one of which is considerably distorted by lateral curvature. There are two sterna, one forming the anterior, and the other the posterior boundary of the cavity which contains the thoracic viscera of both bodies, and is divided, vertically, by a fibro-tendinous membrane. One of the hearts—for there are two—is as large as a pullet's egg; but the other no larger than a hazel-nut. Each body has its set of lungs. The œsophagus of each passes into the stomach proper to it. Both duodena are natural at their origin, but soon unite, and form one canal; and at their junction they receive the ductus communis choledochus. This common intestine is continued for about two feet, when it expands into a triangular-shaped sac, of considerable size, from each of the inferior angles of which a small intestine issues, that on the left side continuous with a colon, cæcum, and rectum; but the other terminating shortly in a pouch, without any outlet that can be discovered. The abdominal cavity is common to both bodies. The liver is divided into two large lobes, each having a gall-bladder and duct; and the ducts unite before entering the intestine, at the point where the duodena join, and form one canal. The kidneys of the left child are large; those of the other, small. The bladder of each is normal. There is one placenta, and one funis; and the latter, at its point of insertion into the umbilicus, is of very considerable size. The right child has the imperforate anus, and the small-sized heart and kidneys; and it had also, on one hand, an extra thumb. In other respects it much resembles the other, and is of equal size and development. The smaller heart is perfect in structure, the auricles and ventricles being quite distinct; and the different vessels arising from it are as large as those arising from the more fully-developed heart of the other child. The bloodvessels have not been further examined, from an unwillingness to injure the preparation. I may add, that notwithstanding it is the woman's opinion she had attained to the full period of pregnancy, my own is, that she was three weeks or a month short of it at the time of her labour.

Eckington, Derbyshire, Aug. 1848.

ON AN INSTANCE OF SUCCESSFUL OPERATION FOR HERNIA, AC- CORDING TO THE PLAN OF MR. GAY.

By A. CATHERWOOD, M.D., Hoxton.

Miss M—, aged twenty-nine, had been subject to femoral rupture on the right side, for twelve years, but had not worn a truss, for whenever a protrusion took place, she was able, without difficulty, to return it.

Aug. 12th.—After some exertion, the rupture descended and she was unable to return it. I saw her in the afternoon and found it irreducible by taxis, although aided by bleeding,

the application of ice, and a purgative enema. Vomiting supervened, and continued with scarcely any intermission during the whole night; and the lower part of the abdomen, especially on the right side of the linea alba, became tense and painful.

13th.—A little before eight o'clock in the morning, I again visited my patient, and found the symptoms so extremely urgent, that I immediately determined on operating, and adopted the plan recommended by Mr. Gay, described by Mr. Coulson at the Medico-Chirurgical Society, and reported in *THE LANCET* of March 18th last, (p. 308.)

Mr. Gay saw my patient, and with his kind assistance, Mr. Burchell being also present, I began the operation, after chloroform had been exhibited, by making an incision, about an inch in length, between the tumour and the spine of the pubis, obliquely, from above downwards, and from without, inwards, the highest point of the incision being over the inner part of the femoral ring. After completely dividing the superficial fascia, the tip of the finger was readily passed to the angle between Gimbernaut's ligament, and the neck of the hernial tumour, and a section of the edge of the ligament made with a concealed bistoury. A few fibres were now found to hold the tumour, which were divided by bringing the edge of the bistoury directly forwards. By making a very gentle pressure on the sound skin, the rupture immediately returned. The whole operation occupied but a very short space of time. Within ten minutes the bowels were moved, and their action continued at short intervals during the course of the night.

14th.—Slight pain in the right side of the chest; abdominal pain nearly gone. She wishes to get up. Ordered, half an ounce of castor oil, to be taken directly, and when it has acted, twenty drops of laudanum every three hours, until the action of the bowels be restrained. Beef-tea.

15th.—Patient recovered; the slight wound healing fast.

Observations.—This mode of operating possesses such great advantages over the commonly-adopted method, that it only requires to be thoroughly known and understood, to receive the sanction of the profession.

1. The external incision is only just large enough to admit easily the forefinger.
2. Healthy structures are alone interfered with.
3. The wound heals by the first intention.
4. A truss may be worn three days after the operation.
5. The pain is inconsiderable, and the danger most materially lessened.

Charles-square, Aug. 15th, 1848.

Analyses

OF

COMMUNICATIONS IN MS. RECEIVED FOR PUBLICATION IN THE LANCET.

"L'auteur se tue à allonger ce que le lecteur se tue à abrégé."

CHOLERA AND ITS TREATMENT.

CONSIDERABLE advantage attends the presenting different methods of treating a disease at a single view, which we are accustomed to do in our "Analyses." The following communications from correspondents who have had experience in the treatment of cholera exhibit the successful results of various lines of practice which they have adopted, and will be perused by the readers of *THE LANCET* with much interest, and doubtless with commensurate instruction and profit.

Report of a late Case of (Asiatic?) Cholera in Westminster successfully treated with Capsicum, with Calomel, and Stimulant Applications.

By ALFRED FORD, Esq., M.R.C.S., &c., Pimlico.

"THE following case may tend to urge medical men in particular to lift up their loudest voice in arousing the Government to a sense of the crying necessity for the speedy adoption of sanitary measures, when straggling cases of that formidable scourge, cholera, are thus presenting themselves amongst the unhealthy districts of this densely crowded metropolis, like the advanced guard of a mighty army, steadily and surely advancing to sweep off thousands of our fellow-creatures.

"It sickens one to see how tardily measures having for their object the benefit of our poorer brethren creep through the