

haps the urea would have been discharged by the skin. However, it is a sufficiently curious instance of nature's provision in extremity, for the salivation to continue so long as the function of the kidneys was dormant, and gradually to cease as that function became restored.

It is remarkable that, with the amount of inflammatory action in the peritoneum, there should have been no tenderness of the abdomen; and that with the great distention from fluid in the peritoneal cavity, and consequent pressure upon the venous circulation in the abdomen from this source, and from the enlarged uterus, there should have been so little swelling of the legs.

The pain in the kidneys I was never able to account for. Its relief by leeching would appear to indicate inflammation or congestion, yet there was no evidence of either after death, and the abscess in the right kidney had no doubt been in existence for a long time: the alleviation of pain, and increased secretion after tapping, would refer the uneasiness to pressure from the accumulated fluid; yet the secretion ceased altogether, and the pain became greatly augmented before the fluid had re-collected in any quantity.

Great Charles-street, Birmingham,
Feb. 10, 1842.

POISONING WITH A MINIM AND A HALF OF LAUDANUM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—On Monday, February 14, I delivered a poor woman of a fine female child, and before leaving her prescribed a draught, containing twelve minims of tincture of opium, in an ounce of pimento-water, with a view of relieving the after-pains. Both mother and child went on favourably until Wednesday, when, on making my morning call, I was informed by the nurse that she had given the child half a teaspoonful of the draught prescribed for the mother, in order to compose it, and prevent its crying. I immediately directed my attention to the child, and discovered it to be labouring under all the symptoms of poisoning by opium. The infant was lying motionless, in a state of profound coma, with closed eyes, pale face, stertorous breathing, cold skin, and very contracted pupils. Occasionally there was such an impediment in the respiration that the face became livid, and the child apparently dead. The pulse could not be felt; but on applying the ear to the chest the

the saliva, except by salivating the animals. In the latter instance I have twice succeeded in detecting urea in the saliva. I shall shortly give a detailed account of the experiments in *THE LANCET*.

heart's action was quite perceptible. The symptoms were so far advanced, that the administration of an emetic was impossible, and even if possible would, doubtless, have been useless. Accordingly the only means to be relied upon were the use of stimulants, and the employment of artificial respiration; I therefore moistened the lips and tip of the tongue with some brandy, and rubbed a portion of the same spirit on the chest. Artificial respiration was then commenced, and persevered in, until the child was considerably revived. I then ceased, but observing that the symptoms of intense narcotism were again becoming manifest, I again resorted to the same means, and was rewarded by the same success. No sooner, however, did I stop, than the coma again supervened, and once more compelled me to employ artificial respiration. Notwithstanding the persevering use of these means for the space of four hours, the child gradually sunk, and at length died. The period between the receipt of the poison and the occurrence of death was fourteen hours. If the statement made by the nurse can be relied upon, then this child, an infant two days old, was poisoned by a minim and a half of laudanum. That the child obtained no opium from its mother's system is very evident, from the circumstance of its never having suckled. The example given by Christison of the smallest fatal dose in children, occurred in an infant three days old, who took by mistake about the fourth part of a mixture containing ten drops of laudanum. These facts fully prove that very young children cannot take the most insignificant doses of opium, without running the greatest risk of being poisoned. With this remark I remain, yours very truly,

GEORGE EVEREST, Studens.
London Hospital, Feb. 19, 1842.

UNDILUTED CREOSOTE IN SCALDS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—On the evening of Saturday, the 12th ult., I was called to see a lady who had a short time previously scalded her hand and forearm, whilst making tea, portions of which adhered to the parts. I found her in a highly-excited state, and appearing to suffer most excruciating agony, which, owing to her being of a peculiarly irritable temperament, and being pregnant, it was of importance to allay as soon as possible, especially as she had had two miscarriages a short time previously.

The usual remedies were applied, such as cotton, to keep it from the air, oil and lime-water, turpentine, liquor of lead, &c., without the slightest alleviation of the pain; when, finding that every fresh application