

was quite dry. Mr. Wingrove's house, in which the disease is conjectured to have commenced, is perfectly clean, wholesome, well painted, containing nine rooms, and if there be anything amiss in it, perhaps the ground-floor may be too "draughty" in windy weather, from there being doors front and back, with a turn in the passage. The yard is twelve yards long by seven wide, paved irregularly, and was, at the visit in question, wholly free from wet, after an excessive rain eight hours previously. Everything in it was perfectly clean and dry, and the drain has a fifteen-feet fall into the Holborn sewer. At the end and on one side are very capacious carpenter's or back-maker's workshops, fenced with walls of open lattices. Not a damp shaving or spot was there. Neither pigs nor fowls were living in the yard, and none had been, Mrs. Wingrove said, for two years. Mr. Wingrove is healthy, though not robust, being partially lame from an injury of his knee. He has lived there during twenty-six years, and Mrs. Wingrove (at present healthy, but having still some slight disfigurement at one angle of her face) for ten years. Her three elder children are perfectly healthy, having never been ill excepting from the common diseases of youth. The fourth is pale from recent illness. The family have invariably lived on the best food. Indeed, the mother said that "her doctor used to consider that she kept them too well." No one in the house has any communication with horses; nobody visits the house who tends horses; and there is no stable on that side of the "park," or just opposite. Both husband and wife are firmly convinced that neither food, nor horses, nor malaria, had anything to do with the illness of Mrs. Wingrove, or her child, or Frances Lambert. Neither of her brothers had been there since August last, when William called to announce his father's death from disease of the heart. Since the demise of the brothers, the Commissioners of Sewers have had the place examined, without finding imperfections in the drainage.

Titchbourne-court, a branch of Whetstone-park, was mentioned at the hospital as a seat of disease, even worse in condition than the "park," and a family was reported to have been similarly attacked in that place. But Titchbourne-court does not verify this allegation. That passage was perfectly clean and dry; the houses are humble, but not closer than scores of such houses running out of great thoroughfares like Holborn. In the most central house was to be seen as hearty an infant as ever was nursed, and the mother (Mrs. Wright) was quite healthy. All her other children and her husband (foreman to an oilman at Temple Bar) were well. No "mumps" had affected them, nor any unusual illness; and so little disease had there been in the court, that Mrs. Wright knew of but four deaths there in young persons, during ten years. Had there been more, or any particular recent illness, the court was so limited that she said she must have known it. Nearly all the inhabitants have lived in the court for many years. Indeed, "her doctor had recommended that place to her, because he knew it to be healthy." At the Holborn end lives a milkwoman—Mrs. Jones—a very healthy woman, with every one healthy in her clean and comfortable-looking house, where she has been tenant for seven years, on removing from Theobald's-road, with much improved health, ascribable, though, to the exercise of carrying pails out of doors. A lodger of hers for twenty months past, named Keeble, coachman to Mr. Day, of Lincoln's-inn-fields, whose horses are stabled in Whetstone-park, where he has worked for many years, is a robust and hearty man. No drain-smell is observable in the house. Mrs. Jones also knows of no disease in the court.

Mrs. Wingrove states that Frances Lambert came on Tuesday from Cumberland-market to help wash some blankets, and that, after the work, "the cold shivers" came on in both of them, for which her husband persuaded her to take a little spirits, which somewhat dissipated the feeling, but it returned at night. On the next day (Wednesday) the glands of her face swelled a little. On Thursday, the infant was attacked with swelling of the neck, and Mr. Headland was sent for, when he asked the mother what was the matter with her, and suggested that she had the "mumps," (of which she had never before heard,) and sent her medicine to be taken next morning. She thought that the child had caught the "mumps" from her when suckling. Mr. Headland desired her to go up-stairs, and not come down again at present. Her servant-girl, frightened at a disease that was "catching," ran away, and then Frances Lambert was sent for again, and soon becoming very unwell, was directed to go home. A new servant was procured after Frances left, who has constantly nursed the child, and has slept frequently with her mistress, without becoming unwell.

Francis-street, Dec. 1st, 1845.

Dec. 4th.—I have to-day heard that the wife of Gregory Lambert has this week been attacked, in the house of her husband, with genuine scarlet fever.

SCARLATINA MALIGNA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—From the newspaper reports of the inquest on the Lamberts in the Middlesex Hospital, permit me to suggest that the disease under which they sank was Scarlatina Maligna; than which, I know no malady—not even excepting the Asiatic cholera—more destructive of human life. I was greatly surprised, on reading Dr. Elliotson's published lectures, to learn that so experienced a practitioner should never have had to treat a case of this malignant species, as I have known repeatedly two, three, and in one instance four children in a family, to be lying dead at the same time, victims to this horrible disease. It occurs under all circumstances, in salubrious and in malarious localities, among the rich and the poor, in the isolated cottage and in the crowded city; I may, however, observe, that a considerable number of the cases which I have witnessed have occurred at residences in close proximity to grave-yards. I am confirmed in my view of the cases which occurred in the Middlesex Hospital, by the rash and desquamation which were noticed in one of the subjects; though the bulimia with which, I believe, they were all affected, was a symptom that I have never remarked in any instance of scarlatina which has fallen under my care.

In these malignant cases, one of the earliest and most characteristic symptoms is obstinate vomiting, which frequently lasts two or three days; and on its cessation, typhoid signs supervene, which, though there are, occasionally, delusive remissions, augment in severity till the final close. Frequently, there is somnolence of many hours' duration, alternated with great irritability, and intolerance of the least motion; and usually articular inflammation in the lower extremities occurs.

The few autopsies which I have seen, throw but little light on the disease; the glands of the throat and neck are enlarged, and the mucous membrane of the fauces and larynx inflamed, and occasionally ulcerated. The fauces and posterior part of the palate are covered with sordes, and often in a state approaching to gangrene. In two cases, in which, for some days prior to death, a fetid discharge of pus from the ear occurred, there was found, as had been anticipated, softening and ulceration of the brain, communicating with the external meatus. Occasionally, however, the post-mortem appearances are not sufficient to account for the fatal result, and it seems as if death had been caused by the evolution of a poison in the blood, which had deteriorated all the tissues.

Though I have had very many cases of this malignant form in children to treat, I have only seen two instances in adults, and of them one recovered.

As to the treatment, I deeply regret that, in my experience, it has been most unsatisfactory: I have seen different modes of practice adopted—the heroic—Stevens's salines—the tonic—leeching, ammonia, bark, quinine, wine, the internal and external use of the chlorides, &c.; and in the great majority of cases, unavailingly. I have known some recoveries after a severe and protracted struggle, when abscesses had formed in the neck and throat and discharged externally; but whether in consequence of this termination of the inflammation is questionable, as in other apparently similar cases my little patients have succumbed to the disease. But though we are at present, I believe, ignorant of any successful mode of treating this malignant form of scarlatina, the day, I trust, is not distant, when, by following the track of the illustrious Liebig, our increased knowledge of organic chemistry will enable us to discover, not only the nature of, but also a remedy for, this and other now intractable maladies.—I have the honour to remain, Sir, your most obedient servant,

Dorset-place, City-road, Dec. 2nd, 1845. JAMES KINNEIR, M.D.

REVIEWS.

THE REFLEX FUNCTION OF THE SPINAL MARROW.

DR. COPLAND AND THE REVIEWER OF "THE LANCET."

DR. COPLAND has had a full opportunity of stating his objections to our recent critique. Bearing our former estimate of his work in mind, we have carefully examined his comments upon our strictures, and have re-examined, with scrupulous care, the article on "Paralysis." We would not be supposed to detract from the useful labours of Dr. Copland, but we have nothing now to retract from our original opinions. We have said that this author's "physiological reminiscences were not up to the knowledge of the present day," and that in the article in question, "the discoveries of Bell and Hall were not treated with that prominence which they deserve."