

two days, however, he was again sitting up. On the 20th, he was seized with fits, for which I ordered calomel and compound antimonial powder, and a blister, which was not applied. The fits ceased within half an hour of my visit; and he recovered his senses, and was become much better, when on the 30th he overbalanced himself and fell out of his chair. He was very much frightened by his fall, and complained of his head for a few days. I may, with propriety, observe that he had very little power of describing the situation of pain; it was in his head, or in his stomach, but he would seldom point out with his hand where the pain was seated; and as he always lay in one posture, it was very difficult to examine the various parts of his body; he had also lost a great deal of strength.

On March 1, I found him again sitting in his chair; but his cough, which he had had for some time, was very violent. His position rendered it very difficult to auscultate the chest; and when I did put the stethoscope to the apices of the lungs, I did not find much the matter, as will be shewn presently. During the month of March I saw him frequently. His suffering was great from disturbance of the *primæ viæ*, requiring frequent purgative doses, and his cough was extremely violent, not yielding at all to sedatives.

With a slight improvement during April, he gradually sank, and died on May 5th.

**EXAMINATION OF THE BODY**, twenty-one hours after death; Mr. Banner of Delamere Street assisting. The body presented a curved appearance; partly in consequence of not having been laid out straight directly after death, partly in consequence of the legs having been drawn up always as he lay in bed, and partly from a projection of the head, which all but compelled him to lie invariably on the right side of the head and right half of the nates. On measuring the head, the various lengths found at three and a half years of age were again found, with a slight variation attributable to the amount of hair, and to a possible difference in the way of making the measurement. It was perfectly clear that the size of the head had not varied during twelve years. The scalp adhered more firmly than usual to the bone; and the skull was completely ossified all round with the exception of three or four spots, principally on the left parietal bone, where there was membrane only. None of these spots was larger than three-quarters of an inch across. The projection of the skull backwards was found to have been caused by the constant pressure on a pillow in infancy, when the expanded skull was still membranous, so that the fluid poured out into the ventricles had bulged out the membranous skull by its own resistance to pressure; and when I mention that the ventricles contained not less than three pints of a serous fluid, it will be readily understood how constant pressure on one side of the head should have produced a bulging out in that part where there was pressure only from the inside of the brain. The substance of the brain was firm, and perfectly healthy; nothing was found which could have given rise, directly, to the fits which the child had at intervals during his life, except the expansion of the substance of the brain. The veins running over the brain were large; but not a trace of tubercle could be found in the membranes.

On opening the chest, the right lung was found to be firmly adherent to the side of the chest, and the left slightly so. The presenting part of the lungs appeared healthy, but inclined to be emphysematous. On removal of the lungs, the adhesions on the right side were so firm that the lung itself was torn through, disclosing a gangrenous portion; and the bases of both lungs were full of tubercles, and in a state of inflammation, being filled with blood, partly, of course, from gravitation after death. The upper lobes of the lungs did not contain a single tubercle, and it was clear that the aëration of

the blood must have been recently performed solely by them.

The gangrenous portion of the lung was precisely that part upon which the child lay, and from which he could not have been moved without great resistance on his part, for he invariably lay in one position; but I conceive that his complaining of pain in the stomach must have been caused by this inflammation at the base of the lungs; for no disease, except enlargement of the mesenteric glands, was found in the abdominal cavity. I may mention that the pubes was covered with hair, but there were no other symptoms of puberty.

I believe that the effusion of serum into the ventricles of the brain, at the age of from three months to a year, was completely stopped at that time, and that a state of health supervened; such health as could exist with three pints of fluid in the centre of the brain; that the fits which he experienced from time to time were brought on by some irritation of the stomach from indigestion acting upon the overloaded and expanded brain, and that intelligence was slowly developed as the extended masses of brain matter received strength from age. To speak of intelligence seems hardly correct; it was the intelligence of a mere child coupled with some powers of observation on what was said or done in his presence, as he often told his mother what had occurred during the day; but I believe that he could not always recall to memory my name, though he knew me perfectly when I called to see him or some of his brothers and sisters, yet, I was told, he often spoke of me.

3, Charles Street, Westbourne Terrace.

## CUTANEOUS ERUPTION PRODUCED BY BUTTERCUPS.

By EDWARD GARRAWAY, Esq., Faversham.

A LITTLE girl, aged 5, was brought to me a few days since, whose legs, from the hips downwards, were covered with a mixture of vesications, bullæ, and pustules, of the most anomalous character. Here and there would appear a perfect specimen of the *pompholyx solitaria* of Willan and Bateman; then blisters of indefinite shape, some being two or three inches in length, and perhaps the eighth of an inch in breadth, looking as if the part had been scored by a hot iron; near these would be large prominent globular pustules, resembling *scabies purulenta*. There was more or less erysipelatous redness accompanying the eruption, together with a certain amount of febrile action. My diagnosis was at a nonplus. However, a few questions solved the mystery. It appeared that the little girl, three days before, had gathered a large handful of buttercups, and, delighted with her acquisition, had taken them to bed with her; in the morning they were discovered, scattered, crushed, and faded, between the sheets.

On going to the roadside where the flowers were gathered, I discovered them to be the common *ranunculus bulbosus*.

The question suggests itself, how far the juice of this tribe of plants might be rendered available as a counter-irritant. I think I have heard of professional beggars producing artificial sores by buttercup-juice, but am not sure of this.

**AMERICAN NAVY.** The following naval general orders on rank and precedence have been issued:—Surgeons of the fleet, and surgeons of more than twelve years, rank with commanders. Surgeons of less than twelve years, rank with lieutenants. Passed assistant-surgeons rank next after lieutenants. Assistant-surgeons rank next after masters. Commanders and executive officers, of whatever grade, while on duty, take precedence of surgeons.