

fault of her daughter, whose moral training she had shamefully neglected, burnt completely, immediately after birth, in her drawing room, the body of the child of which the wretched girl, hardly sixteen years of age, had just been delivered. Facts of the most revolting and disgusting kind were brought to light by the trial; amongst which may be noted, that *the groom* was the father of the child. To these we do not wish to allude; but we are anxious to call the attention of the profession to this attempt of annihilating every trace of guilt by incineration. The ashes, after the child (which was alleged to have been still-born) was consumed were thrown into a dry well; but being submitted to M. Danyau, the eminent accoucheur of Paris, he recovered a fragment of frontal bone, and a portion of the malar. M. Danyau, and the medical men with whom he acted, had some difficulty to determine the age of the fœtus to whom these bones had belonged; but by comparing them with a number of specimens preserved in the museum of Paris, they came to the conclusion that the fœtus had reached the seventh or eighth month. The medical witnesses, however, thought that, the child might have been born at full time, but were not positive on that head. This was certainly a wise caution; for assuredly, in a case like this, it is very difficult to judge of the age, save, perhaps, by the amount of ossification. As to the question whether the child were born dead or alive, it is plain that it cannot be answered at all in crimes of this kind. No one was with the girl but her mother when parturition took place, and she made her walk out *the next day* to prevent suspicion.

We cannot but approve the French custom of appointing a *committee* of medical men to give in a report, rather than leaving the matter to one individual who implicitly believes the faintest reactions he can obtain in his laboratory. The small town of Chinon, where this tragedy occurred, has fixed, for several days, the attention of the whole country. Viewing the case in a moral, or rather in a psychological aspect, we find that the mother has fallen into crime by her unbending obstinacy, and the daughter by the poisonous effects of a class of profligate novels, which disgrace French literature, coupled with the absence of all moral or religious education, and intercourse with healthy society.

The girl was acquitted, and the mother sentenced to twenty years' hard labour.

HOW TO DETERMINE DOUBTFUL SEX.

SOME few weeks back, attention having been attracted to a hat which was seen floating upon the top of the water in the sluice of the river Irwell, at Modewheel, near Salford, further examination was made, when the body of man (as it was supposed) was found, standing upright in the water. The next day an inquest was held, and the body was identified as that of "Harry" Stokes, a well-known master brick-setter, of Salford. With this person was associated a rather strange history, and which, as it happened, was known to one of the jury of the inquest then

sitting upon the body. He accordingly mentioned his suspicions that the deceased was a *woman*, and not a man, though decidedly the body was that of "Harry" Stokes, the bricklayer. Accordingly, *two women* were deputed by the coroner to solve the mystery. They returned from their inquiry, entering the Court "tittering with the information, that, true enough, the body in the man's clothes was that of a perfect woman, and not a man. She was full-breasted, but the shape of her womanly make was distorted by a broad strap, which was buckled round her body, under the arms." Upon the method of scientific (!) inquiry here adopted, we have a few remarks to make; but previously to so doing, we shall state a few facts of "Harry" Stokes' history. This person is said to have been the child of a bricklayer, living near Doncaster. He ran away from home when he was eight years old, and offered his services to a bricksetter in Whitby. He continued to thrive at this work for nearly twenty years, when, apparently wanting a companion in life, he married a widow keeping a beer-house in an alley off Dean's-gate, Manchester. On the night of the marriage, however, there occurred between "Harry" and the widow a terrible quarrel. There was a downright fight, the result of which was, that the widow took out a summons against "Harry," for which he was condemned to the New Bailey for a month's imprisonment. During the hearing of the case, the widow declared that her husband was not a man, and that, therefore, she would not live with him. The case is said to have created much gossip at the time, forming the subject of popular ballads, whilst "Harry" Stokes became the object of much curious speculation amongst his brethren of the trowel. He maintained, however, a discreet silence as to his sex, only throwing out hints that the woman he had married was mad; and as the most effective proof that she was a malevolent libeller, he soon afterwards married another widow, some fifteen or twenty years his senior, with a grown-up son and daughter. This widow is stated to have solemnly declared that she did not know, until informed after the inquest, that "Harry" Stokes with whom she had been living as wife for twenty-five years, was a woman, and that her own children regarded him as their *step-father*. She averred that she received Stokes, in the first instance, into her house merely from pity, to shield him from the persecution to which he was subjected. The result was, that although there were surmises that "Harry" Stokes was a woman, and was constantly the object of curious glances, he escaped the open molestation to which he had been previously subjected. They lived together many years, she keeping a beer-house, and he having the special repute of being a first-rate builder of tall chimneys, and setter of stoves, grates, &c. In the days of the Chartist riots, "Harry" Stokes was sworn in as a special constable, and was made captain of the company. Notwithstanding that he had once done so well, "Harry" Stokes appears to have latterly fallen into decayed circumstances, which, with the fear of still greater poverty, are supposed to have been the causes of his commission of suicide.

Now, although there are some circumstances which have been recorded about Stokes, leading, no doubt, to a fair presumption that the person was a female, yet it by no means follows that such was surely the case. To be able to state this with scientific accuracy, we must depend upon data very different from that capable of being afforded by the evidence of two "tittering" women. It certainly is strange in these days of progress and of universal knowledge that, on the one hand, a coroner should direct two old wives to decide upon a case of doubtful sex, and, on the other hand, that a jury should have heard so little about the difficulties of hermaphroditism and monstrosities as to be satisfied with whatever such old cronies might assert. We thought that juries of matrons had been banished altogether, and not alone in cases where prisoners assert pregnancy. The true sex in the case before us may or may not have been easily determinable upon due examination; but which was really the case, we maintain the Court had not sufficient evidence before it to conclude. We have seen adult males, called, dressed up, and treated as women, and, *vice versa*, adult women, called, attired and considered as men; we have seen one case also in which it was a disputed point whether the poor creature was a man or a woman. What, it may be asked, was "Harry Stokes"? Now, truly, as Sterne says, "they order this matter better in France." A case relative to our present subject is now pending before the Civil Tribunal of Castelsarrazin, near Toulouse. A lady of that town, who was married as far back as 1845, has brought an action against her husband in order to have the marriage annulled. This is upon the ground that he is not a man, but is a woman. At her request, the Tribunal has charged three physicians, Professors of the Faculty of Toulouse, to examine the person of the husband, and to make an official report to the Court. Surely Manchester or Salford might have furnished some professional "experts," by which the case of "Harry Stokes" might have been rescued for science. In default of this, however, we have laid before our readers in the present LANCET an interesting communication from Dr. Girdwood. The psychologist as well as the physiologist must be interested in its perusal, and the case has points about it which make it well worthy the attention of the practical medical man. Peculiarities of structure and arrests of development are said to be much more common in man when in a state of civilization than while in the savage state.

ARGUMENT FOR FOUNDING AN HOSPITAL FOR EPILEPTICS.

It cannot be doubted that the principle of multiplying medical specialities is open to the serious objection, that by favoring the isolated study of a particular disease, it tends to obscure the relations of pathology, and may thus even obstruct the knowledge of the very disease it is sought to advance. It is on this ground that we should oppose the establishment of any new hospital to be devoted to a special form of

disease, unless a very strong and peculiar case of necessity were made out. We think that no one can question that such a case exists for a special hospital for epileptics. Epilepsy does not admit of treatment in our general hospitals; patients afflicted with this dire disease are declared ineligible for admission. It is, nevertheless, certain that in a vast number of instances no effective treatment can be pursued in private dwellings. The consequence is that the subjects of this terrible disease are condemned to forego the advantage of constant scientific vigilance at the period of the greatest importance, and that the disease, therefore, continues to deal its fearful strokes until its unhappy victims are helplessly prostrated in body and brutified in mind. And what is then their refuge? Having impoverished their relatives and desolated their homes, they swell the lists of the incurables in our public asylums for the insane. It is already becoming a question of momentous interest, how we are to encounter the growing demands upon these institutions. In every county, asylums are extending, and still the outcry is for room for our lunatics. It is of the most urgent importance to exert every effort of science and philanthropy to lessen the ever-growing pressure upon our asylums, by striking at the root of the sources which feed them. Here is an application, if not of preventive medicine, at least of early curative medicine of almost equal value. These were the views which, for several of the latter years of his useful life, occupied the sagacious mind of our great physiologist, Dr. Marshall Hall. These views led him, two years ago, to propose the founding of an hospital for epileptics. This testimony in favor of the project now taken up so worthily by Alderman Wire will weigh with every medical practitioner. It is an answer to every doubt that may be entertained that any curative benefit is to be anticipated from such a project.

The magnificent and solid advances made, of late years, in our knowledge of the anatomy, functions, and diseases of the nervous system—for which the world is mainly indebted to Sir Charles Bell, Marshall Hall, Schröder van der Kolk, and Brown-Séquard—have opened a new path, full of hopefulness, in the treatment of epilepsy. There never was a time more opportune for carrying into effect this noble scheme. It is needless to urge that its success must depend upon the judgment with which the details shall be settled, and especially upon the choice of officers. It must not for a moment be forgotten that an hospital for epileptics must have for its foremost object the *curative* treatment. It is not to be an asylum, but an hospital. Unless this distinction be observed, a small institution, such as the one contemplated must be at starting, will be choked up with chronic cases, and become comparatively useless. Upon the choice of officers depend, not only the medical treatment, but, in great measure, also the funds which are necessary to maintain the institution. We regard it as the most favorable circumstance in connexion with the movement that a man of such pre-eminent qualifications and vast reputation as Brown-Séquard is willing to devote his intellect and his