

THE PHYSICIAN AT THE CORONER'S INQUEST.

Essay Read Before the Anderson County Medical Society April 10, 1899.

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Anderson County Medical Society: For the past fifteen or twenty years our profession has been pressing forward with so many new discoveries and made so many changes, both in the medical and surgical departments, that we are kept at a swift gallop to keep pace with the medical centres of the country; and so anxious is the medical man to keep abreast of the times that all of his thoughts and studies seem to be on some new remedy; some new work, some new surgical instrument or some new operation. To this I shall urge no objection; provided we do not carry it so far as to entirely discard all of the teachings of our older brethren. It is all right so far as it goes, but sometimes, when we chase the butterfly, we lose valuable time and gain no headway, especially in our profession. We must also remember that there is much to be learned outside of our medical books and periodicals in the daily pursuit of our profession. We must not forget that it is not only the college faculty before whom we must pass our examination, for they have trained us and will often bear with our shortcomings, but we have a more exacting faculty to pass before—"the people," "the public," and while they will give us credit for what is due us they will neither condone or excuse our shortcomings. Let me illustrate this idea by an incident that occurred at a medical college just before the final examination some years ago. It was during a professional visit of one of the faculty to the bedside of a sick medical student. After he had examined and prescribed for the sick student several of his fellow students said to the Professor: "We are studying hard, Professor, for the final examination, and we hope you will be easy with us. We hope to get your vote in our favor. The Professor replied: "Well, that is all right, young gentlemen. I always vote to graduate my students. I never blackball them. I send them home with a diploma, and if they are 'damn fools' their neighbors will soon find it out."

Therefore, my professional brethren, I would ask your indulgence to-day while I call you back to one of the duties of our profession that we meet with almost every day. I refer to the "Physician at the Coroner's Inquest." This may seem to many of you to be of very little importance to the general practitioner. This, however, is a great mistake, as we will see further on. Let me at this point speak of the Inquest and the parties concerned from a legal standpoint. In all civilized countries there is one branch of the government termed the judicial. Among its other duties is that of the trial of parties charged with the commission of crime. Before, however, a party can be arraigned for crime it is necessary for the crime to exist, especially that of death by violence or from other than natural causes. Now, in order to bring this matter in a proper manner before the Judicial Court for trial, a department of the judiciary, called the Court of the Coroner, is provided, consisting of the Coroner and his jury. I will not go into the details of the duties of the Coroner in other countries, but will confine this essay to the Coroner and the Inquest as it exists in this State. The Coroner is an elective officer, and before entering upon the duties of his office he takes a solemn oath to perform the duties appertaining to his office to the best of his ability, and also gives a bond of several thousand dollars for the faithful performance of the same. Under the old law it was the duty of the Coroner, upon being notified of the death of any person in the County from other than a natural cause, to immediately investigate the cause of the death and to summon his jury to assist. At a recent session of our Legislature, however, this law was amended so that when a death occurs other than from natural causes, the Coroner can only hold an Inquest upon the request of two or more reputable citizens or after a personal examination of the matter by himself. The Coroner on such notice and request immediately orders the sheriff, or some other officer, to summon a jury of twelve men; he also summons one or more Physicians to be present and examine the body of the deceased and give their medical opinion. After the jury has been formed the Coroner administers the oath they are to be governed by. The Coroner then orders the jury to view the dead body. After they have viewed the body and, if possible, identified it, the witnesses are then sworn and state what they know of the cause of the death (sometimes this proceeding is reversed and the Physician is first sworn.) This is the legal part of the proceeding. Now comes the medico-legal part, in which the Physician comes to the front. Let me here suppose this to be a case of murder. A row has taken place, weapons have been used, pistol shots have been heard, wounds

are seen on the body. The crowd is full of witnesses who know all about it, and can tell it all from the beginning to the end. The Physician is ordered by the Coroner to examine the body. He looks at the body and sees the wounds, he has heard all of the evidence of the witnesses. What must he say? What can he say? Upon his say-so depends the innocence or guilt of a human being, and perhaps his life. If there are more than one wound he cannot say which wound caused the death—he cannot say if any of them caused the death—for how can he know without a careful examination and dissection of the body. Right here the law steps in and puts a stop to his work.

The law now says a dissection shall not take place unless requested by the jury. If the learned and skilled Physician cannot tell the cause of the death, how can we expect a jury of men, however intelligent they may be, who are unskilled in the profession of medicine to say when a dissection shall or shall not take place. The Physician is requested to give his opinion without the dissection, and if he does it he does it at his peril. To-day, my professional brethren, I raise my voice in solemn warning against this loose and careless manner of conducting a post mortem examination at a Coroner's Inquest. It has on more than one occasion let the guilty criminal escape from a just and well-merited punishment, and allowed him to again roam about free and untrammelled, except from the stings of a guilty conscience; and again some times an innocent party is unjustly convicted for the same cause. The question is often asked who is to blame? Is it the jurists, the judge, or the lawyers? I answer no—not always. It is well for us to examine into this matter more closely, and it may be that sometimes the blame can be laid very closely to our own doors.

What, then, is the duty of the Physician at the Coroner's Inquest. Let me speak plainly on this subject, so that we can be put right before the jury of Inquest, right before the Courts of our country, and right before our people. A Physician, when called upon to make an examination of a dead body before a Coroner's Inquest, becomes the friend of the Court of inquiry, he is the hired servant of the State for the time being, he is in position of a Judge, his opinion is to be relied on by the whole State at large, and the strong arm of the law is thrown around him to protect him from harm. It is not the paltry sum of a few dollars that he is paid that is to be considered in the matter; that is a mere nothing compared to the responsibility of his position. Therefore, the Physician should feel not only the delicacy of his position, but should remember and maintain the dignity of his profession. His diploma and examination by the State Board gives him the right to practice and also protects him in his calling. It, therefore, demands and expects of him to serve the commonwealth whenever called on to the best of his ability; it is for this reason that the State, through her Coroner, called him to assist with his skill at the Coroner's Inquest. It is presumed that a Physician called upon to make an examination before a Coroner and his jury, must not be connected in any way with the cause of the death of the deceased. That he must be fully competent to perform the task assigned him, and if he is not he should say so at once, so that another Physician could take his place that will give his opinion as to the cause of the death without fear or favor to any party. This is not only good law but common sense.

When a Physician is summoned by the Coroner to examine the body of a dead person, he should answer the summons promptly and cheerfully. He should always take with him his dissecting case of instruments, and such disinfectants as he may choose, (also a note book for use as a reference afterwards.) When he goes into the Coroner's Court let him take his seat quietly and listen carefully to the testimony of the witnesses but make no comments whatever. Be careful to note the testimony in regard to the direction the weapon was held by the accused, the position in which both parties occupied at the time of the row, the size of the weapon, also of the ball or instrument used by either party, take notice of everything that gives information in regard to the wound, the time it was inflicted, the time the party died. Don't be in a hurry to ask questions or to give your opinion. Your opinion is your own private property, and if you express it, it belongs to everybody, and you may regret it when it is too late to recall it. Keep your own counsel—it won't burst your boiler and may be of great service to you hereafter. Answer no questions, unless to some one who is authorized to ask the question. When the Coroner requests you to proceed with the examination go to

the body, note of the position you find the body, unless it has been moved. Notice carefully the clothing; note its condition; then inspect carefully the body; search for the wound or wounds; notice for powder burns and everything of importance. After you have gone through with this to your satisfaction, if you can consistently do so give your opinion. If you can not give an opinion be sure to say so in a plain, but respectful manner, to the Coroner and Jury, and tell them of the necessity of a careful dissection of the body. The law does not expect impossibilities of any one. Also remember that it is a very serious matter to give an opinion that will perhaps let a guilty party escape or condemn an innocent party, and cause him to suffer for one's incompetency or carelessness. Also remember that there may be many causes to produce death besides the wounds found on the body of the deceased. How many times have we seen our soldiers in the Confederate army wounded in almost every part of the body, and left on the battlefield as beyond all hope from medical aid, and some of them are living and apparently well, even at this late day. Another point. Remember the opinion you give way off in the country to a small but excited crowd around you, may cause you considerable annoyance when you are placed on the witness stand at the session of the Circuit Court. It has been stated by an eminent authority "that it is very unwise on the part of a medical man to give his opinion as to the cause of the death of a party by violence, or other unnatural cause, without first making a careful dissection of every organ of his body." I would, therefore, urge upon you to be careful of giving your opinion of the cause of the death of a party without a careful dissection of the body. If the Jury consents to the dissection of the body, (and I am sure no reasonable jury would object,) I would make the following suggestions: After disinfecting the hands well, proceed in a very deliberate manner to make your dissections. Allow no one to dictate to you what to do, or when to stop. Don't allow them to hurry you in your work. If you need any help select your own man—some good, level-headed man is easily found in a crowd, and make him obey your orders. Don't let him lead you. You are the responsible party, and it is your opinion that will tell the tale. You will sometimes find a smart Aleck, or a bulldozer in the crowd who will do considerable talking, and be as full of suggestions as an egg is of meat. This will sometimes cause you some annoyance. Just call the attention of the Coroner to the necessity of keeping order, and the Coroner will readily come to your relief and make it pleasant for you. Be sure to examine the body until you are fully satisfied. If there is any doubt on your mind, go over every organ again—even take in the spinal cord and brain. Of course if you are satisfied soon after getting into the body it is all right. Don't forget, however, you may be asked about the condition of every organ in the body at the Circuit Court. The lawyer always takes care of the doubts in favor of the prisoner. When you have satisfied yourself as to the cause of death, and you are through with the dead body, say nothing. Keep quiet. After washing your hands ask for pen, ink and paper, and write out your opinion in a plain and intelligible manner. Above all things leave off your technicalities—they don't count for anything with the jury, it only shows you don't understand the English language, and have to borrow from some dead language to express yourself. Use plain English, nothing more. After writing your opinion hand it to the Coroner, and let him swear you. Again answer no questions, unless by order of the Coroner or jury, as by so doing you are only furnishing ammunition for the lawyers at the next term of the Court. Having made the post mortem and delivered your opinion to the jury, keep your mouth closed until you are ordered to open it by the proper authorities at Court.

I have hurriedly sketched our duties at the Coroner's Court in a murder case. I have not gone into cases of poisoning, child-murder, abortion, rape, insanity, &c., as my paper has already exceeded the limit, but I trust I have said enough to cause a halt, at least for a while, in our rush after new things, and to consider some of the more practical duties of our profession.

Respectfully submitted,
R. F. DIVVER, M. D.

"A word to the wise is sufficient" and a word from the wise should be sufficient, but you ask, who are the wise? Those who know. The oft repeated experience of trustworthy persons may be taken for knowledge. Mr. W. M. Terry says Chamberlain's Cough Remedy gives better satisfaction than any other in the market. He has been in the drug business at Elkton, Ky., for twelve years; has sold hundreds of bottles of this remedy and nearly all other cough medicines manufactured, which shows conclusively that Chamberlain's is the most satisfactory to the people, and is the best. For sale by Hill-Orr Drug Co.

How to Win a Man.

Many a wife complains that her husband does not take her about, that she only sees him at meals, or that he makes friendships in which she has no part. She blames him for neglecting her, and thinks herself ill used. Yet he is only following the natural instinct of humanity in seeking for sympathetic friendship; the fault really is hers. If her conversation does not interest him sufficiently to hold him, she should study him and the subjects that he cares for, and try to live to his standard. She has once had his love and sympathy; if she has not kept it, it is she who is to blame for not striving to care for the things which occupy and interest him.

A man to be won and kept, must first be attracted, and then made to feel that he has found a sympathy which draws him out, and makes him talk about what interests him most. It is not enough to make him listen while he is being talked to. For a time that will keep him, but he will tire of always being a listener, of all ways giving his sympathy and receiving none. To hold a man, a woman must understand and study him; she must not be exacting, for to expect too much only makes him feel that he wants to give less. She must realize that men are almost always selfish, in gradation so, not from any innate depravity of their sex, but merely from the modern conditions of life which have molded them.

A man usually goes out into the world young, he leads a separate existence at an age when his sister is still surrounded by her home circle. When his work is done, if he has any, he has only to think, "What shall I do to-day that will give me the most pleasure?" That men act more and more on this principle is shown in the way they now treat their ordinary social engagements; the way they will break one when another more attractive offers itself, and will not decide until the last moment whether or not they will go to such and such a party. Can any one wonder that many years of indulgence in this, coupled with a larger command of money than their sisters, should make them more selfish, should end by fixing the habit of thinking of their own pleasure so firmly in their minds that it is practically ineradicable? It may be overpowered for a time by a strong affection, and all the counter influences of courtship and early matrimony. But later, when these have ceased to be novelties, and a man settles down to a regular married life, the old selfish habit of years reasserts itself, and his wife is inclined to blame him for changing toward her.

This is unjust, for he is no more to be blamed for the habits which have been acquired from his circumstances and environments than he is to be held responsible for those qualities which he inherits from his progenitors. It is better for the woman who lives with him, and whose happiness is bound up with his own, to recognize this fact, and, in studying his tendencies, to take her measures accordingly.

A woman, on the contrary, is trained in a different school. When her brother is out in the world earning his living, or, at any rate, leading a separate existence, she is usually at home with other members of the household, whom she has always to consider when any plans or engagements, however trivial, have to be made. She, though she rarely realizes it, can only think, "What can we do to-day which will interest or amuse us?" She cannot go about much alone, and often her means are too limited to allow of much independent action. Having thus to defer to the wishes of her relations, she is duly trained in habits of yielding to others and of unselfishly giving up her will and pleasure to them. Thus he in his bachelor days is duly trained to selfishness, she, in her spinsterhood, is equally brought up to unselfishness. The sooner a woman recognizes this fundamental difference between the acquired natures of herself and men the more likely is she to be attractive to them, and the better chances she will have of lasting happiness.—*The Mexican Herald.*

Couldn't Silence Him.

"I thought I had him silenced," remarked the man whose mind stoops to small things. "But I hadn't."

"To whom do you refer?"

"That old inhabitant who is always declaring that it's the hottest or the coldest weather the city has known. I strolled up to him and said, 'This is very moderate weather we're having.' 'Yes,' said he, to my personal knowledge, it's the moderatest weather we've had in sixty years.'"—*Washington Star.*

Rheumatism Cured.

My wife has used Chamberlain's Pain Balm for rheumatism with great relief, and I can recommend it as a splendid liniment for rheumatism and other household uses for which we have found it valuable.—*W. J. CUYLER, Red Creek, N. Y.*

Mr. Cuyler is one of the leading merchants of this village and one of the most prominent men in this vicinity.—*W. G. PHIPPS, Editor Red Creek Herald. For sale by Hill-Orr Drug Co.*

Rajah Has Killed His Ninth Man.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., April 9.—The murderous elephant, Rajah, known as the "Man Killer," added another to his list of victims this morning when he killed his keeper, Frank Fisher. Fisher is the ninth man that Rajah has killed during the seven years that he has been in captivity. He probably will not add to his list, for there is a movement on foot to have him slain.

Fisher went to the circus' winter quarters at Argentine this morning. He was proud of his powers as an animal tamer. To prove his powers, he visited, in turn, the lion's cage and the bear's den, coming out of each uninjured.

Then he went over and commenced to play with Rajah.

Rajah was in a particularly vicious mood and refused to obey Fisher's orders. When he refused to open his mouth, Fisher struck him on the trunk with his fist. This angered the animal. In a second he had grabbed Fisher's arm in his mouth and crushed it to a pulp. The sight and taste of blood and the trainer's screams crazed the monster. He tossed Fisher to the ground with his trunk and tried to gore him with his tusks. His tusks were so short, however, having been sawed off close, to render them less murderous, that he could not reach his victim with them.

Rajah then deliberately knelt upon Fisher's chest. He broke every rib in the man's body and crushed the life out of him.

The coroner will hold an inquest tomorrow morning, after which legal proceedings will be taken to have Rajah put to death. Several efforts in this direction have been made before, but his owners have always been able to thwart them.

Nearly all of the nine men whom Rajah has killed have been circus employees who had nothing to do with the elephants. Fisher is the first keeper Rajah has killed. It has not been because of any fondness that Rajah had for Fisher that the latter escaped until to-day, but because the brute was afraid of him.

Fisher had been Rajah's keeper ever since shortly after he was brought to this country, and had had several narrow escapes from death before. He was an Englishman. His home was in Montreal.

Rajah had been particularly troublesome this winter, although Fisher was the first man he had killed since the circus went into winter quarters. A few weeks ago he broke loose and was at large for two days, during which time he made all kinds of trouble for the railroads in the switching yards at Argentine by tearing out their switches and signals. He even tipped a box car over one day, blockading the track until a wrecking train could be secured from Kansas City.

He was shot several times before he was captured, and it was feared for a time that he might die, but the bullets never seemed to bother him much beyond making him more surly than before. Rajah is a very large East Indian elephant.

CASTORIA
For Infants and Children.

The Kind You Have Always Bought Bears the Signature of *Chas. H. Fletcher* The Kind You Have Always Bought. **CASTORIA**

900 DROPS
Vegetable Preparation for Assisting the Food and Regulating the Stomachs and Bowels of INFANTS - CHILDREN

Promotes Digestion, Cheerfulness and Rest. Contains neither Opium, Morphine nor Mineral. NOT NARCOTIC.

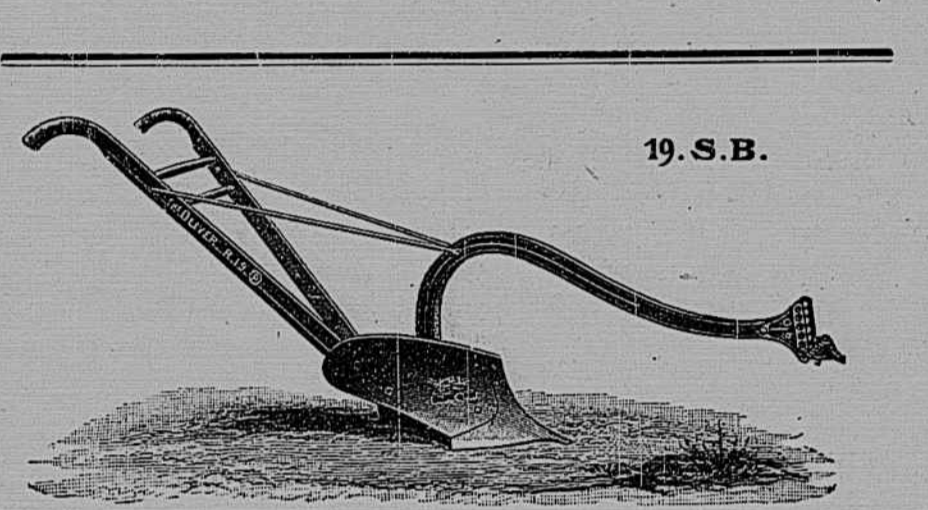
Recipe of OLD DR. SWEETLANDER
Pumpkin Seed -
Aloe Sassa -
Rhubarb -
Sassa -
Sassa -
Sassa -
Sassa -
Sassa -
Sassa -
Sassa -

Perfect Remedy for Constipation, Sour Stomach, Diarrhoea, Worms, Convulsions, Feverishness and LOSS OF SLEEP.

Fac-Simile Signature of *Chas. H. Fletcher* NEW YORK.

16 months old
35 DROPS - 35 CENTS

EXACT COPY OF WRAPPER.



The Great Oliver Steel Beam Plow.

19. S. B.

OVER ten times more OLIVERS sold in Anderson than any other make. They have been tried. The verdict is unanimous for the OLIVERS. The Steel Beam a great feature. Warranted to stand anywhere. Handled in Car lots we give lowest possible prices. The sizes for this section are Nos. 40, 20, 19, 13, &c.

Buy only the Oliver Steel Beam Plows if you are after the best.

DISC, SPADING AND SMOOTHING HARROWS, &c.

Twenty years experience has taught us the needs of the farmers, and we know our Harrows are just the Implements for this section.

An absolute, broad, personal guarantee given by us.

SULLIVAN HARDWARE CO.

"Pitts' Carminative"

Saved My Baby's Life.

LAAR & RANKIN DRUG CO.

I can not recommend Pitts' Carminative too strongly. I must say, I owe my baby's life to it.

I earnestly ask all mothers who have sickly or delicate children just to try one bottle and see what the result will be. Respectfully,
Mrs. LIZZIE MURRAY,
Johnson's Station, Ga.

Pitts' Carminative is sold by all Druggists. PRICE, 25 CENTS.

W. G. McGEE,
SURGEON DENTIST.

OFFICE—Front R. Com. over Farmers and Merchants Bank—
ANDERSON, S. C.

Feb 9, 1898 33

SWEET STRAINS OF MUSIC.

Music for Christmas!

WITH the lightness and brightness of Christmas comes the desire for Music—for better Instruments, and for Goods that suit the taste and please the sense. WE give you the BEST VALUES in Music, the greatest pleasure in Musical Goods, and the best prices you ever saw. Having recently—

A Full Carload of Pianos,
— AND —
A Large Number of Organs,

And having made sweeping reduction in Prices until Christmas, feel sure that we can make it to your interest to carefully inspect our large and handsome Stock. Call and see the celebrated Columbia Graphophone, which we sell at manufacturer's prices.

Soliciting your patronage, which will be highly appreciated, and thanking you in advance for an investigation of our Stock, we remain—
Most respectfully,
THE C. A. REED MUSIC HOUSE.

Township Commissioners.

ANDERSON, S. C., April 4, 1899.

At a meeting of the Board of County Commissioners held this day, it was resolved by said board to appoint Sub-Commissioners in the various Townships in Anderson County, to whom the people can apply to, and make report of any bridges or any job of work that requires immediate attention.

Any person doing a job of work in Anderson County before he presents his claim, must have his claim verified by the Sub-Commissioners of the Township in which said work is done.

Also, the Board decided to receive computation road tax until 15th April, after which time they positively will not receive any money, and parties will have to work the roads when warned or pay the penalty; and for convenience of the people parties can pay money to the Sub-Commissioners in the Township, or to the County Treasurer until 15th April.

Broadway—J. N. Vandiver.
Belton—J. J. Vaughn.
Brushy Creek—H. F. Cely.
Centerville—L. J. Burris.
Fork—E. A. Sullivan.
Garvin—J. P. Garvin.
Gowan—P. H. Brown.
Honey Path—J. M. Hanks.
Hall—W. P. Bell.
Martin—R. E. Parker.
Pendleton—Samuel McCrary.
Rock Mills—B. F. Shirley.
Savannah—J. F. Smith.
Varennes—J. H. Jones.
Williamston—J. F. McAlister.
W. P. SNEEGROVE,
County Supervisor.

J. F. CLARDY,
Clerk Board Co. Com.