

by the side of gold, mercury, iodine, and arsenic. It does not produce any of the dangerous effects which have been attributed to mercury, and differs from it in its mode of action.

PURIFICATION OF SESQUIOXIDE OF IRON,

INTENDED TO BE USED AS AN ANTIDOTE TO ARSENIC.

It has been known for some time that metallic iron contains arsenic; and it has been asserted lately by M. Couerbe that all specimens of the oxide also contain arsenic. From a communication on this subject, published in a recent number of the *Literary Gazette*, it may be collected that iron, very frequently, but not always, contains arsenic; and that the latter metal exists in the best specimens of English, French, and Swedish iron. It is probable, therefore, that the sesquioxide (exammonia) frequently contains arsenic.

Dr. Schafhaenthl gives the following directions for obtaining the purified oxide.

"The salts of iron from which the hydrate of the peroxide of iron is to be prepared for medical purposes, ought to be perfectly freed from arsenic, by dropping the neutral solution of the iron salt into sulphhydrate of ammonia. After digestion for a few hours in a moderate temperature, the precipitated sulphuret of iron will be perfectly free from arsenic as well as sulphuric acid, and after being washed upon a filter, may be dissolved in aqua regia, and then used for the preparation of the hydrate."

The importance of purifying the oxide to be used as an antidote to arsenic is so obvious, that it is hardly necessary to urge the propriety of attending to this precaution.

It is evident that the mere detection of arsenic in the alimentary canal, &c. cannot be deemed conclusive of poisoning, in instances in which the impure oxide has been administered, inasmuch as that substance often contains arsenic; but, nevertheless, we think that the cases in which the discovery of arsenic, by analysis, should be considered insufficient to prove that substance to have been the cause of death, may be reduced to a very small number indeed, by attention to the following very simple rules:—1st. A portion of the oxide should be preserved and analysed, in order to ascertain the absence or presence of arsenic, and, if it be present, its relative proportion. 2d. The entire quantity of oxide administered should be noted down. 3d. The whole intestinal canal, as well as the stomach, the contents of the stomach and the matter vomited, &c. should be submitted to analysis. 4th. The arsenic procured by the medico-legal analysis should be accurately weighed. In this way data may be obtained which may enable us to conclude that the arsenic extracted by analysis *had not been introduced in union with the oxide of iron*, or, at all events, that the *whole of it could not have been thus introduced*.

Orfila's process should be adopted in such cases.*

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN LONDON.

LIST OF GENTLEMEN ADMITTED,

On Tuesday, December 22, 1840.

Edward Twining, Arthur John Cridland, William Bulman, Thomas Clarke, Thomas Fothergill M'Nay, Corbett Johnson Cooke, Robert Delafosse Shield, John Edwards, Joseph Dixon, Edward Henry Chase, Nicholas Lyttleton, Henry Squire Wilmott, George Banister.

IODURET OF IRON.—When a solution of the ioduret of iron comes in contact with atmospheric air, a portion of the iron is oxydised, and a corresponding quantity of the iodine is precipitated. Water saturated with sugar possesses the property of preventing the oxydisation of the iron; hence the remedy should always be employed in the following manner. Take of simple syrup, 200 scruples; liquid ioduret of iron, one scruple; mix. A teaspoonful of this mixture contains a grain of the dry ioduret.—*Journal de Chimie*.

* See Dr. MacLagan's paper on the Sesquioxide of Iron, analysed in the fifth number of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Journal.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

In order to make room for the reports from the Eastern Association of Scotland and from Newcastle (which reached us late in the week), we have been compelled to exclude many advertisements and communications.

A Country Subscriber.—Since our correspondent *must* have an answer, we have to inform him that, as a *literary* composition, his letter was not quite fit for publication.

Dr. Kennedy's Address to the Dublin Medico-Chirurgical Society will appear in our next number.

The Reports from Guy's Hospital and the Newcastle Infirmary in our next. The engraver has not yet finished the engraving for Mr. Baird's excellent case.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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