

as a matter of police, to exclude turpentine varnish from the arts.—*Clarus in Schmidt's Jahrbücher*, Band cxvii. No. 1, 1863.

[The experiments made by Dr. Liersch confirm an observation made by a correspondent to the *Lancet*, two years ago, to the effect that turpentine administered rapidly and freely by the lungs produces results almost identical with the vapour of chloroform. Some researches of our own confirm this view. We must, nevertheless, be cautious in accepting the statement that the inhalation for many hours daily of the vapour arising from turpentine varnish is not ultimately injurious to health. We have direct evidence that so inhaled it produces giddiness, deficient appetite, and extreme anæmia, and that the system never bears it with tolerance.—B. W. R.]—*B. and F. Med.-Chir. Rev.*, April, 1863.

52. *Poisoning Properties of Thallium*.—M. LAMY, announced to the French Academy of Sciences, his discovery of the deleterious properties of this metal. Having experienced certain pains, especially in his lower limbs, while pursuing his studies on thallium, he was induced to attribute them to a noxious influence of the metal; and in order to ascertain whether such was the fact, he dissolved five grammes of sulphate of thallium in milk and offered it to two puppies, each about two months old. But after tasting the liquid they left it, and could not be induced to take any more. On the following day the milk, which had been left in the yard, had disappeared, and it soon turned out that it had been partaken of by a dog, two hens, and six ducks; for a few hours after ingestion the dog became sad and refused to eat. During the night it was seized with violent gripes, which caused it to utter piercing cries. Its features had undergone a change; its back was bent up through the effect of pain, the seat of which was evidently in the intestines. Its hind legs, after a continuance of convulsive motions, became paralyzed, and it died sixty-four hours after taking the poison. On the day before its death a hen and six ducks died, and in those which were watched in time, the paralysis of the legs was remarked. The two puppies which had scarcely touched the milk had meanwhile shown symptoms of fatigue; by degrees they were seized with convulsive trembling, and could hardly stand; then came the acute pains which ended in death, although every precaution had been taken, apparently in good time, to save their lives. All these animals being subjected to dissection, there could not be found the slightest corrosion or even inflammation of any consequence; only the gall-bladder of the dog was found considerably distended, and in some of the ducks various serous membranes, that of the liver especially, had assumed a whitish and granular appearance. As to the nature of the poison, if there could have been any doubt about it, it would have been at once dispelled by the characteristic green band peculiar to thallium in the spectral analysis of the organs of the dead animals. Eight days later another hen was taken ill. Its wings hung down, it could hardly walk, and when it wanted to peck its food, its neck seemed to have lost the power of bending down sufficiently, so that its beak did not reach the food. The hen was killed, and thallium found in the intestines, but in a very small dose indeed, and the other organs did not contain any. M. Lamy next administered a *decigramme* (a grain and a half) of the sulphate to a dog two months old, and it died forty hours after taking it. Hence, M. Lamy infers that sulphate of thallium is a powerful poison, producing pain in the intestines and paralysis of the lower members. This poison and the nitrate have but little taste, and might therefore be used for criminal purposes; but fortunately there is not a poison that can be traced with more certainty through spectral analysis than this. This new method of analysis bids fair to render excellent service in cases relating to forensic medicine.—*British Med. Journ.*, Sept. 26, 1863.