

analysis of the urine in one case of bichromate poisoning, and could get no indications of the poison although it was present in the blood. This observation we confirmed in the case of a rabbit poisoned by the salt. No trace whatever of chromates could be detected in the urine.

These reactions seem to indicate that the bichromate, on coming in contact with the tissues of the stomach, was partially reduced to the condition of the insoluble green oxide and partially absorbed as chromate, the reduction taking place at the expense of the integrity of the mucous membrane, which was superficially corroded by oxidation. The absorbed bichromate was partially reduced and neutralized by the alkaline sodium salts of the blood, but not rapidly enough to prevent its action on the hæmoglobin.

Poisoning by bichromate of potash is a comparatively rare occurrence, and most of the cases recorded being of quite recent date, are not as yet to be found in the ordinary text-books on toxicology. Taylor, Christison and Blythe have, however, quoted a few cases. Before 1880 there are not more than four or five cases recorded; since then, as the salt became more generally used, a number of cases have occurred in Glasgow and in the great centres of chemical industry on the continent. In nearly all cases the salt has been taken with suicidal intent; only three cases of accidental poisoning are described. In all we have been able to find but fifteen cases recorded, and many of these were not fatal ones.

A synopsis of the commoner symptoms and post-mortem appearances noticed in these cases will show how far this case is typical, and at the same time show how varied are the effects ascribed to this salt. In the first place, the time taken to produce death in this case is shorter than that of any previously recorded case.* In fatal cases, death has usually taken place in between four and twelve hours, but it has been delayed several days. There is but little doubt that the salt is an extremely active poison under certain circumstances. We

* Dr. Waugh has recorded a case (*Lancet*, 1885) in which death ensued fifty minutes after taking a dose of four drachms.