

the case of the isolated intestine the contrast, though plain, was not equally striking. This has raised the question why there should be a marked disproportion in the relative toxicity of comparable quantities of arsenic and arsenous acids, depending on the mode in which the test is made. The explanation proposed is as follows: The toxicity of the arsenic acid depends on the reducing power of the tissues with which it comes into contact. By this means it is converted into the very poisonous arsenous compound. Some individual organs or tissues have comparatively slight reducing potency. In the isolated heart, for example, arsenic acid exhibits little toxicity. Throughout the living organism as a whole the reduction of arsenic acid appears to be far more readily accomplished; hence, after intravenous administration of the ordinarily less noxious derivative, it may become more toxic so promptly by conversion to arsenous acid that the real difference between these related arsenic derivatives is no longer conspicuous. This may also explain some of the uncertainty or confusion which has existed in the past in respect to the comparative action of the two substances.—*J.A.M.A.*

REPORTED DANGER FROM ENAMELWARE

Among the thousand and one causes given for appendicitis, enamel chips from cooking utensils have been included. We are informed that the Superior Council of Hygiene for France recently recommended that legislation be enacted forbidding the use of enamelware meat choppers in the production of Hamburger steak. It was observed that the enamel on such machines was in many instances almost entirely worn off, and the assumption was made that the small particles of enamel which had become broken off were quite likely to be mixed with the meat. To avoid all possible danger from the consumption of such particles, this action was taken. Langworthy and Lang, of the Office of Home Economics in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state that there appears to be no case on record in which it is known that any serious injury has been done to the intestinal wall by enamel particles. They call attention, however, to another feature of the now widely used enamelware articles which is somewhat more likely to be a source of hygienic danger. In coloring the enamels, pigments are sometimes added in the form of one of the metallic oxides. Insoluble materials are also incorporated into the "glass," of which the enamel is essentially