

IMPURITIES OF CHLOROFORM.

M. Regnault, at the Academy of Medicine, recalled the discussions relative to the impurities in chloroform used for surgical purposes, and the accidents which may supervene in consequence. He mentioned the unreliability of the ordinary permanganate test.

M. Gosselin had long been of the opinion that the accidents were due to the faulty method of administration, rather than to the impurities of chloroform. His method of administration was to cause the patient to take four chloroform inspirations, then two inspirations of pure air, then six of chloroform and two of air, then eight of chloroform and two of air, and so on, separating by two inspirations of pure air the lengthening series of chloroform inspirations. He thought the accidents were due to individual disposition, for all patients were not affected in the same manner by the same chloroform on the same day.

M. Verneuil considered the best, surest, and most practical test for the impurities of chloroform was the sense of smell. He, like M. Gosselin, considered the fault to be in the method of administration rather than in the contained impurities. He considers the accidents largely due to personal habits and diatheses. The only objection he had to chloroform was that it produced by its instant action upon the pharynx a spasm of suffocation—this did not occur in patients previously tracheotomized. The quality of the chloroform he considered of secondary importance; all depends upon the mode of administration. M. Maurice Perrin, on the contrary, considers the minor accidents, such as inability to produce anaesthesia, vomiting, &c., of which alone he is speaking, to be due to the contained impurities, and that they have nothing to do with the mode of administration. For thirty years he has used chloroform, yet it is only since 1878 that he has noticed it acting differently; with purified specimens he has obtained the good results of former times without being able to state precisely in what these impurities consist, he considers himself justified in attributing these accidents to the impurities of the drug.

M. Regnault thought that even the purest chloroform was susceptible of rapid alteration on exposure to the light, and in contact with a fatty body. He recognised as good chloroform that which poured upon a piece of paper folded in two retained its agreeable odour until complete evaporation. He thought some people had the chloroform sickness as others had seasickness.

SUCCESSFUL REMOVAL OF A TWENTY POUND CYST OF THE PANCREAS.

Dr. N. Bozeman, of the Woman's Hospital, New York, reported at a late meeting of the N. Y. Pathological Society (*Medical Record*, Jan. 14, 1882), the case of a lady, wife of a distinguished physician of Texas, who came to the hospital for the removal of a supposed ovarian tumor. Such had been the diagnosis given by all who examined her. The tumor had been growing for five years. It was exposed and two and a half gallons of fluid removed by tapping. On passing the hand into the abdomen the operator soon found that it was not attached to the ovaries or to the uterus, and after some difficulty traced it to the tail of the spleen, from which it was removed by careful dissection. The pedicle was about three-fourths of an inch long, and the same in diameter, and though it contained several large veins, there was no hæmorrhage, and not a single ligature was required. The weight of the fluid and tumor was twenty and one-half pounds. Its point of attachment, says Dr. B., was almost precisely in the position occupied by the bullet in the late case of our deceased President. The patient underwent special preparation for the operation. She took salicin, fifteen grains three times a day for two weeks. On the morning of the day on which the operation was performed she received fifteen grains of quinine with one of opium, and when she went upon the table she was thoroughly "cinchonized." The patient rallied from the anaesthetic and from the operation without any shock whatever. After the operation she took by the rectum, at intervals of six hours, ten grains of quinine with two ounces of beef-juce, half a drachm of liquor