

Reinsch's test as recommended by the author, and at the conclusion of the paper, brought forward the preliminary evidence in the Smethurst case, as a confirmation of his views, inasmuch as a solution was examined for arsenic, a number of times without success; and the poison was only discovered after repeated operations. We formerly gave great credit to Drs. Taylor and Odling, for their perseverance and skill in detecting arsenic under such circumstances, a proceeding which is only rendered difficult, by a bigoted adherence to one method of treatment. We then intimated that the non-detection of arsenic must have been owing to some other mysterious agent than chlorate of potassa. The mystery has since then been cleared up; the fact being, that there was no arsenic present, except such as existed in the copper employed, and was dissolved during the progress of the experiment.

Herapath has well observed, that no ordinary copper could possibly contain such an amount of arsenic as was found by Dr. Taylor; this is undoubtedly true, but on the other hand it is well known, that no reliance is to be placed on the method adopted by Dr. Taylor for ascertaining the quantity present.

In the evidence given at the trial which has since taken place, it appears that arsenic was detected in a portion of an evacuation, but it must be remembered that the same copper was employed and that nothing is said concerning the absence of nitrates, chlorates, &c.

In some of the articles which have appeared in recent English newspapers on the subject, doubt is thrown on chemical evidence as to the presence of poisons. In the case of arsenic and all mineral poisons, we most decidedly object to this opinion; there is no difficulty and no uncertainty affecting our decision on this subject, if proper precautions be adopted, and if we do not refuse to avail ourselves of the results of recent and accurate investigations.

In a late number of the *Philosophical Magazine*, Davy has shown that arsenic is present in the superphosphate of lime, used as a manure, owing to the employment of impure sulphuric acid in its preparation. He has also detected it in turnips grown on soil treated with this manure, and in peas grown in mould moistened with a solution of arsenious acid.

The test employed in all cases, was however, that of Reinsch, and the copper may have contained arsenic. Davy states that the reagents were proved to be pure, but as in the principal experiment, the copper was boiled with the acid for three hours, and as we know from Odling's