

disappearing altogether. The morbid sounds are almost immediately lessened, and the cough is allayed; while the appetite is peculiarly excited. Dr. Laborde thinks that the action of chlorate of potash tends powerfully to re-establish the patient's strength. In this respect this agent appears likely to be useful in all cases where it is necessary to awaken and stimulate the action of the stomach. The average quantity required for adults during the twenty-four hours, is 150 grains, which should be taken in divided doses with a large quantity of fluid.—*Bull. de Therap.*

**A CHISEL IN FRACTURES OF THE SKULL.**—Dr. Roger of Giessen, remarks that a little chisel and hammer are all that are required in cases of depressed fracture of the skull. By means of these alone, small fragments at the margin of the fracture can be removed, when those of the inner table may be easily taken away with a pair of forceps, and the wound cleansed of every obstruction. He says that he has denounced trephining for upwards of fourteen years, with a large and successful experience in the treatment of compound fractures of the skull, particularly those occasioned by gunshot wounds.—*Brit. Med. Jour.*

**OBESITY.**—Dr. Down relates a case of a girl of thirteen, who exhibited a remarkable proneness to obesity. A variety of plans were tried, to reduce her bulk, but none were successful, until she was placed almost exclusively on a meat diet, by which her weight was reduced seventy pounds in one year. The use of drugs appeared to have little effect in diminishing her size; while a vegetable diet was allowed; and iodide of potassium, although continued for six months, in doses of two grains and a half three times a day, produced no change.—*Clinical Reports of the London Hospital.*

**WHOOPIING-COUGH IN GAS FACTORIES.**—Dr. Commenge states, in a communication before the Academy of Medicine in Paris, that between the months of March and July last, he has closely watched the results of a hundred and forty-two cases of whooping-cough, at the Gas Factory of St. Mandé. Of these but eighty-eight were regular in their attendance, of which fifty-four perfectly recovered, twenty-four were improved whilst ten received no benefit whatever. An amendment was generally noticed after a few visits of ten hours each, whilst twelve such visits generally effected a cure in mild cases, and fourteen in the more severe ones. Dr. Commenge has never found that breathing the air of gas works has ever produced any injurious effects in this disease.

Coal gas is deprived of the sulphuretted hydrogen and carbonic acid gases always present in the crude product, by being passed through iron vessels partly filled with sulphate of lime and hydrated sesquioxide of iron. When these substances have fulfilled their object, they are extracted from the apparatus, and exposed in thick layers on the pavement of one of the yards of the works, and thus rendered fit to be employed again. When placed in contact with the atmosphere, they evolve a large quantity of ammonia, mixed with light volatile oils. These exhalations so much complained of by persons who reside in the neighbourhood of gas-works, are those which have of late been so highly extolled in the daily periodicals of Paris, and have become such a popular remedy with the public for whooping-cough.—*Med. Circular.*

**CHLOROFORM.**—Chloroform when administered by inhalation during the period of menstruation, Dr. Kidd affirms, may have the effect of inducing the belief that an assault has been attempted in a criminal way, whilst under its influence. Now, although we cannot, from our own experience, connect with certainty the fact of menstruation with this effect in more than a single instance, we are cognizant of three well-marked cases of the kind occurring in this city, and rumour speaks of several others. We were well acquainted with an elderly gentleman whose wife was so firmly convinced that a dentist had endeavoured to take improper liberties with her whilst under the influence of chloroform, that he had much difficulty in convincing her that he, the husband, had not left her side during the whole time. We also knew of a young girl, who, after an important operation, during which this anæsthetic was administered, positively affirmed that an attempt had been made upon her chastity by the chief surgeon; and from which trouble might have arisen had not other surgeons been present, and her friends been in the adjoining room during its performance.

The third, a case well-known to the profession, in which a respectable woman, whilst menstruating, was put under the influence of chloroform for the abstraction of a tooth, when she afterwards suffered so strongly from a similar illusion, that the husband being fully persuaded of its truthfulness, caused the prosecution and imprisonment of the dentist for assault. He was acquitted of the crime, but received a reprimand from the judge for having administered an anæsthetic without the presence of witnesses. This case elicited much comment at the time, and has had the effect ever since of rendering our physicians more than ordinarily cautious in the employment of chloroform in the absence of the patient's own friends.—*Ed.*

**CONTAGION OF SYPHILIS.**—The question of the contagious nature of syphilis was recently discussed by several master syphilographers at the Lyons Congress. Experiment and clinical observation have distinctly proved the contagious character of certain of the secondary accidents of syphilis, and of the blood of syphilitic patients. M. Rollet stated his experience. He demonstrated the fact of the transmission of syphilis, by reference to thirty-seven cases. In eleven of these, there was inoculation from chancre; in seven, from infected blood; in fourteen, from mucous tubercle; in three, from papular eruption; in one case, from congenital syphilis; and in one, from chancre of the amygdala. The experiments of M. Roberts show, that, by inoculating one puncture a mixture of the two kinds of chancre-matter, there are developed, first a soft chancre, and then an indurated chancre, followed by general infection. M. Lindworm's experiments prove that, when the syphilitic virus is inoculated into a simple chancre, the simple is converted into an indurated chancre, and followed by secondary symptoms; and, lastly, as has been often practised at the Hospital Antiquaille, when the pus of a simple chancre is introduced into a syphilitic (indurated) chancre, there results the kind of ulcer called mixed chancre. M. Rollet considers that, in syphilitic vaccination, the blood alone is the agent of the contagion. M. Diday read a paper establishing the contagiousness of syphilis by means of syphilitic affections, by means of the blood, and of the semen. Syphilis, he affirmed, followed the general laws of pathology in this