

DR. H. A. HARE reports a death following the administration of nitrous oxide (*Therapeutic Gazette*, December 15th, 1896), illustrating the influence which nitrous oxide gas may have when administered to persons suffering from atheromatous blood vessels. A man between fifty and sixty years of age, visited a dentist who makes a specialty of administering nitrous oxide gas, to have a couple of teeth extracted. He had taken the gas on previous occasions without any trouble. On this occasion he took the ordinary quantity, his teeth were extracted and he rapidly returned to consciousness. He left the chair and walked to a wash stand to rinse his mouth. He then complained of numbness in his right hand which extended up his arm and to his leg and side. He was put on a sofa, where he became unconscious; breathing was stertorous. In a few minutes he became absolutely insensible. Venesection and other measures were resorted to. He died twelve hours after taking the anæsthetic. The rise in the arterial pressure, produced by the gas, may cause rupture of a blood vessel in those having a tendency to apoplexy.

MOUTH PROTECTION AGAINST BACTERIAL INVASION.—H. Bourges, in the department of experimental pathology of the *Rev. des Sci. Med.*, gives a brief review of A. Hugenschmidt's experimental studies of the different methods adopted by the cells for the protection of the buccal cavity, against the invasion of the pathogenic bacteria, as described in his "These de Paris" (1896). Dr. Hugenschmidt doubts the claim that the saliva possesses bacteria-killing properties, and also its role in weakening the virulence of pathogenic microbes. He thinks that the protection against bacterial invasion is due to the following conditions: (1) The chemical properties of the saliva and the soluble products of the microbes contained therein excite an intense diapedesis which is carried on in the mouth, and which attains its maximum at the surface of wounds, bathed by saliva. (2) The mucus of the buccal cavity, when there is a suspension of the secretion of saliva, possesses bactericidal properties. (3) Incessant epithelial desquamation. (4) Vital concurrence eliminating the bacteria, not acclimated. *Amer. Med. Surg. Bull.*, February 10th, 1897.

INDISCRIMINATE USE OF COCAINE.—The topical use of cocaine is attended with a degree of danger at all times. Serious consequences more frequently follow its use in the deep urethra, nares or the gums than when injected into the body, or at the extremities. At no time is a solution of high percentage necessary, and the percentage should always be known. Many dentists use cocaine in a very reckless manner, and take no consideration of dosage whatever. They, as a rule, take no account of its constitutional effect, only thinking of its local action. Three cases of