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AND

J. E. RAY, M. D.,

May be consulted at their Office,

22 RICHMOND STREET EAST
 TORONTO, ONT.

—O.O.—

—OFFICE HOURS:—

9 to 11 a.m., 2 50 to 4 p.m., and 7 to 8 p.m.

Toronto, May, 1868.

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uses of the pharmacist as well as for family consumption.

Salt, Nitrate of Potassa, Potato Starch and water are added to increase weight, while Borax, Alum and Sulphate of Copper are intended to give it a firm consistence, and more especially that proper degree of whiteness which is always desirable in good brands of lard. If not transgressing on space I might make mention of one of the many enterprises that have flourished and died in our great western city. The recital may not be new to many, but it is not without interest to those who are pharmaceutically concerned. About ten years ago there was a firm in this city engaged in the manufacture of lard, who had machinery adapted to the adulteration of that staple, by incorporating twenty per cent. of water, and an uncertain per centage of Sulphate of Copper with kettle-rendered lard, which was packed in casks, branded as "Pure Leaf Lard," and shipped to Southern States. The general appearance of this detestable stuff was decidedly fine, it had a hard consistence, was firmly grained and of a snowy whiteness. Have any of our Southern pharmacists ever made Citrine Ointment which had a fine yellow colour when finished, but when taken from the shelf a few days later would be of a dark brownish hue, or has any other pharmacist in this vicinity been surprised with a similar discovery? I fear the factors of "Pure Leaf Lard" have many scores to cancel in that respect.

With these few remarks on the physical condition of a portion of the material used in compounding Citrine Ointment, I submit the following formula for the benefit of those who are interested in dispensing—a smooth ointment—with a fine yellow color and good consistence—instead of a crumbling mass with a variety of colors, or a dark brown (sometimes black) semi-fluid substance, with about as much strength in the odor as in the remedial power of the several products of its facture, in their primitive condition:

Take of Mercury..... one troy ounce.
 " Nitric Acid (1.42) two troy ounces.
 " Leaf Lard..... eight "
 " Olive Oil..... four "

Dissolve the mercury in the acid, then heat together the lard and oil in a porcelain vessel, when the lard has melted, slowly add the mercurial solution, stirring briskly with a wooden spatula, then raise the temperature gradually until the mixture begins to effervesce, remove from the fire and continue to stir briskly until the reaction is thoroughly established, after which an occasional use of the spatula will suffice until the ointment stiffens.

The *modus operandi* of this formula does not differ essentially from that given in the Pharmacopœia, except in the application of heat. By adding the mercurial solution immediately after the lard has fused and then raising the temperature, stirring in the meanwhile, until the reaction is established, all danger of burning the ointment is avoided; a result that often follows when the heat is above 200 degrees.

I do not consider it necessary to raise the heat so high as 200 degrees, as I have succeeded in every experiment in getting up a good reaction by the above means at 190 degrees, with a liberal extraction of nitrous fumes and a very satisfactory result.

The proportion of acid and mercury is about the same as in the officinal formula. Olive

oil is substituted for Neatsfoot oil, not only because it is more readily obtained than a good quality of Neatsfoot oil, but, when it is used as directed by this formula, it yields a finer product, almost devoid of that strong, rancid odor which usually accompanies the ointment as prepared according to the U.S.P. Fresh Poppy Seed oil can be substituted for Olive oil without detriment, although it does not make as firm an ointment as the latter.

The sample which was prepared one year ago still retains its original consistence. The golden yellow color is somewhat deepened by age, and the odor stronger, otherwise it is a fair specimen of one of the incomplete Pharmacœutic products, but not the "*desideratum*" among the ointments, notwithstanding American Pharmacy has made rapid strides during the past few years, and thus far the "carpet-baggers" of the Western Empire have outrun, in many respects, many of the savans of the Old World.—*Pharmacist.*

On the Morphia Strength of Commercial Opium.

BY P. W. BEDFORD.

Query 18.—What is the morphia strength of commercial powdered opium (a number of samples); and what is the most ready means of determining it?

In accepting this query the writer continues a subject on which he presented a paper to this Association some eight years ago.

During the past year he has examined eight specimens of powdered opium, purchased from wholesale houses in our city.

The results have been as follows:

Sample No. 1	contained	9.40	per ct. morphia.
" 2	"	9.01	" "
" 3	"	6.33	" "
" 4	"	8.10	" "
" 5	"	7.05	" "
" 6	"	6.75	" "
" 7	"	6.00	" "
" 8	"	6.25	" "

The quantities operated upon were ten and twenty grammes, and two or three such portions were taken of each sample of opium. The process used was that officinal in the U. S. P.

Recently in conversation with Professor F. F. Mayer, he stated that the process did not yield accurate results, and suggested a process which he has used in such analysis for some time past. Since that conversation I have not been sufficiently at leisure to take up the subject, and at my request Professor Mayer examined two specimens which I procured for him from two of our best wholesale houses.

No. 1	contained	13.60	per cent. morphia.
" 2	"	9.04	" "

To the second portion of the query, "what is the most ready means of determining it?" I am now prepared to give a reply satisfactory to myself. The doubts thrown on my mind as to the perfect reliability of the process of the U. S. P. recently, by conversations with those more familiar with the subject, and the limited time at my disposal, have decided me to leave this portion of the query, for further investigation, and another year I will continue the subject.—*Proc. Am. Pharm. Assoc., 1868.*