

Old Friends under New Faces.

BY DR. R. J. BLACKHAM.

"Make new friends but keep the old :
Those are silver, these are gold."

So sings the bard ; but his advice is not held to apply in matters pharmaceutical by our latter-day sages. The columns of chemists' journals are filled with accounts of the thousands of new drugs—some good, many indifferent, and a great many bad—which are poured on the English market from German and American laboratories ; but only in obscure corners can one find a reference to the newer properties of the old-established drugs. It is not to be imagined, therefore, by the honoured craft of pharmacy that the older drugs are played out and must soon give way to their younger brethren, and that the attention of physiological experimenters is confined to drugs which bear such high-sounding titles as methacetanilide or acetylphenylhydrazine.

On the contrary, they have found new uses for such old acquaintances as blue ointment, squills, calomel, and even Burgundy pitch. However, no journal has hitherto published a resume of these new uses of the old, old friends of our 'prentice days, so to the labour of love of putting them before the kind readers of this journal, who have said so many kind things of his efforts to interest them, the author devotes this article. With the space at his command the references must be brief, but details of any procedure can be obtained if desired.

Acetic Aether.—That this preparation is one of the most reliable antispasmodic, and carminatives, and highly preferable to ether itself on account of its pleasant odour and taste, has lately been demonstrated.—(*B. M. J.*, 1892).

Acetum.—Slightly diluted kills nits. Boocq suggests addition of one in 500 of perchloride of mercury. It is the latest remedy for liver spot.

Acid Carbolic—A 9 per cent. solution is lauded for baldness. Applied every two weeks. Combined with tannin and tincture of iodine (o xv. to 1 oz.) it forms a reliable ointment for chillblains. In the proportion of a drachm to 2 ozs. of rectified turpentine, it is now applied to erysipelas. Two drops every four hours are given with splendid results in influenza and puerperal fever.—SIMSON.

Acid Chromic.—Now used as an escharotic for interior of nose in asthma, and recommended in February's *Practitioner* as application for syphilitic ulcers in proportion of one in two.

Acid Hydrochloric.—A two or three per cent. solution is used as an application for diseased bone. Loudly praised in *Lancet* last May for vomiting. It was administered in small doses at short intervals.

Acid Lactic.—Said to be reliable remedy for infantile diarrhoea. Thomas gives a teaspoonful of a two per cent. solution after each meal for infants under six months. Constitutes a valuable aid to indigestion in adults.

Acid Sulphurous.—Has given excellent results in ringworm and lupus. Recommended in whooping-cough and asthma.

Aconite.—Owen cured a great number of cases of dysentery at Port Blair with the tincture. Aconitine in doses of $\frac{1}{10}$ gr. every six hours is given by Tison for erysipelas. It is also recommended in Grave's disease.

Agaricus.—This well-known fungus, which grows on the larch, has been lately re-introduced into the *materia medica*, as a specific for the night sweats of phthisis.

Ammonii Acetas.—Vidal recommends 35 to 90 grs. per diem of this for scarlatina. Two ounces of the B. P. liquor will usually steady the gait and clear the clouded brain of the inebriated.

Ammonium Chloride.—Now used as a diuretic in fevers. Its value as an hepatic stimulant is not fully recognised by the profession, nor has it attained the rank it deserves among the remedies for neuralgia.

Amyl Nitrite.—Invaluable in sea-sickness—three drops may be given every two or three hours if necessary. It is an antidote for chloroform poisoning, and should be always used in restoring animation in doubtful cases of death, such as drowning, hanging, or fainting.

Antimonium Tartaratum.—Is actually recommended in phthisis !

Antipyrin.—If I may call this an old friend—for it is, at any rate, a true one—I wish to point out that it cures chorea or St. Vitus's dance when nothing else will. It is an excellent local and general styptic.

Arnica.—Chemists must not be surprised to see this old household god used internally. It is given in small doses with some success in dysentery, chronic bronchitis, and nervous debility. The prescriber should remember its liability to produce erysipelatous inflammation.

Arsenious Acid.—Has been proved to be the sheet-anchor of the neuralgic, the gouty, the dyspeptic, and nearly every form of invalid where a general blood-forming tonic is required.

Asayatida.—The Master of the Rotunda Hospital adds the weight of his name to a new treatment for threatened abortion, which consists in giving pills containing $\frac{1}{2}$ grains of this drug in gradually increasing quantity until 15 grains are taken in the day, and then reducing the dose by degrees.

Atropine Sulphate.—Is now highly spoken of in Grave's disease and for various forms of muscular spasm. For uterine hemorrhage 0.0003 grammes has given very gratifying results.

Bael Fruit.—This is an old drug with a great future before it. The extract, prepared from the fresh fruit, has acted like a charm in the author's hands for dysentery and persistent diarrhoea. It possesses the singular property of acting as a reliable astringent in diarrhoea and a bland laxative in constipation. This is not mentioned in the usual text-books.

Belladonna.—For sweating hands and

feet nothing acts better than a lotion of 15 parts of the tincture to 120 of Eau de Cologne. It gives average results in seasickness. The new fluid, belladonna plaster, which seems to be a solution of the alcoholic extract in ether, has proved very useful in my hands for preventing suppuration. It has been advocated as a prophylactic of scarlatina, and the result of a series of experiments which the present writer was enabled to perform have established in his opinion its value in eradic nocturnal emissions.

Benzine.—A Russian author says there is no remedy for lice or pediculosis like common benzine.

Benzoin.—The value of inhalations of the tincture of benzoin in influenza is indisputable. In the recent epidemic in Kent, my patients and myself had reason to bless the good old Friar's Balsam.

Borax.—Has been recommended in mumps and loss of voice, but Dr. Folsom was the first to draw attention to the great value of this drug in one of the most formidable of maladies, namely, epilepsy. Dr. Stewart has since pointed out that it exerts a powerful influence over nocturnal seizures, but is inferior to bromide of potassium in averting diurnal seizures. A combination, therefore, of the two drugs has effected several cures. One or two drachms of borax are usually administered in the 24 hours. Gouley, of New York, states that five grains to the one ounce solution of borax cures gleet quicker than anything else.

Bryony.—This old root has lately been highly lauded for dropsy, rheumatism, pleurisy, bronchitis, and pleuro-pneumonia. (*Brit. Med. Journal*, May 7th, 1892.) In a recent copy of the *Lancet* is said to be useful in uterine bleeding, apart from the menses or pregnancy.

Burgundy Pitch.—A mixture of Burgundy pitch, 30 parts; black pitch, 8 parts; Venetian turpentine, 2 parts; and lard 1 part was highly spoken of in a recent issue of a foreign medical journal for the cure of ringworm.

Caffeine.—Praised by Elliott in sciatica. Although the drug causes wakefulness, it is recommended by Anstie for insomnia in chronic alcoholism without delirium.

Calcium Chloride.—This drug has been proved to be useful in preventing bleeding, hence it is invaluable in checking bleeding from the lung in consumption, and for administration before major operations.

Calomel.—I suppose on the homeopathic doctrine of *similia similibus curantur* this drug is now given in cholera and in typhoid fever. Five centigrammes with one of opium are given every two to four days (De Simone in *British Medicale Journal*.) Schunedeberg attributes to the drug antiseptic properties to account for its utility in infantile diarrhoea.

Cannabis Indica.—Lee recommends three-quarters of a grain of this drug three times a day for dyspepsia. One-sixth of a grain, combined with one-tenth of a