

United States Pharmacy from a German Standpoint.

Carl Weber, Jr., son of the former apothecary to the unfortunate Maximilian of Mexico, writes to the Vienna *Pharmaceutische Post* from Chicago, giving his Austrian and German colleagues some points on the manners and customs of the United States and preparatory to a series of letters on the Columbian Exposition. He incidentally depicts the U. S. pharmacy as it strikes him as follows:

"They make a distinction in the United States between the so-called 'prescription drug store' and the 'drug store.' The first are prepared to dispense prescriptions and the latter only to sell drugs or ready-made prescriptions. In this connection it may be remarked that the so-called American pharmacy is the veriest grocery store. All articles for general use, such as shoe-polish, cigars, brushes, and an innumerable variety of things are sold here, and in many cities the pharmacist is at the same time the owner of a saloon or other business.

"In the temperance sections (that is, sections in which no spirituous liquors may be sold), the pharmacist uses more whiskey than many regular whiskey dealers, and the pharmacy is seldom conducted as a true pharmacy in the sense understood by us. There is however no rule without an exception. There are pharmacies here which are conducted carefully along the lines of the European model.

"We live in the land of liberty and every man may do as he will. No one cares what the pharmacist makes and sells and there is no governmental supervision. In order to satisfy myself on this point I recently purchased 5 grains of morphine, which was unhesitatingly handed out to me, only the young man whom I found in the store first had to look up morphine to see what it really was."

The Heaviest Thing in the World.

The metal osmium is the bluish-white metal with violet lustre, which Smithson Tennant discovered ninety years ago in the residue from dissolved platinum ores. This metal has a specific gravity of 22.177, that of gold being 19.265, lead 11.367, iron 7.79, and lithium, the lightest, only 0.594. The French chemist, M. Joly, has just placed it beyond question that osmium is likewise the most infusible of metals. It could never be made to yield to the oxyhydrogen flame which makes platinum and iridium run like water. But M. Joly has been subjecting osmium to the excessively high temperature of the electric arc which M. Moissan has of late employed successfully in the manufacture of diamonds. Under this fierce heat the rare metal, ruthenium, which used to be deemed all but infusible, readily melts. But osmium remains refractory, there being apparent only the faintest traces of fusion. On this account osmium cannot be prepared in sufficient quantity to make it very useful in the arts. But its alloy

with iridium, which defies the acids, is of some value, nothing better having been found wherewith to tip gold pens. Being unoxidisable and non-magnetic, its employment for the bearings of the mariner's compass has been advocated.—*Mo. Magazine of Pharmacy.*

Sterilised Collyria.

Dr. Stroschein has described a method for sterilising solutions of the alkaloids used in ophthalmic practice. He has had made for him a certain kind of blown glass bottles and suitable droppers. The bottles may be directly exposed to the flame without breaking, and the liquid contained in them can be thus rapidly sterilised. His pipette has two conical surfaces, and may be introduced into the neck of the bottle with the point upward. Before reversing the pipette the rubber hood must be removed. If the collyria are to be boiled, the small tube must be reversed so as to give free vent to the steam, which passing out by the pointed end of the tube sterilises it at the same time. Two or three minutes boiling appear to be sufficient. The loss of water which is produced by three or four minutes' boiling is about one cubic centimetre. To avoid concentration thus produced fifteen drops of water are added to the collyrium before the boiling is proceeded with.—*Archiv. fur Ophthal. Vol. 38.*

Sodium Salicylate as a Solvent.

M. Conrad, who has previously observed that the fluid extract of cascara is miscible with water in all proportions when an aqueous solution of sodium salicylate has been previously added to it, now states the results of further experiments with the same substance as a solvent. Phenol dissolves in the salicylate solution readily, loses in part its toxic properties, and then mixes in all proportions with water. Creasote also dissolves, but the subsequent addition of water produces a milkiness. Guaiacol is more soluble than creasote. A mixture of equal parts of creasote and sodium salicylate solution (equal parts of water and the salt) has a syrupy consistence, and forms a good pill mass on the addition of liquorice powder. The mass remains soft for a considerable period. Menthol and thymol are dissolved by the aid of the salicylate, as also are essential oils. It is noted that when turpentine is present in the latter, a larger proportion of the salicylate is required for their complete solution than when the oils are pure.—*Pharm. Zeit., Journ. de Pharm.*

The Solubility of the Salts of Quinine.

Hydrochlorate of Quinine and Urea (Quinine muriate twenty parts, muriatic acid twelve parts, urea three parts) soluble in equal parts of cold water. It represents sixty-one per cent. of quinine. *The Bisulphate* contains sixty per cent.

of quinine, and is soluble in ten parts of cold water, and very soluble in boiling water.

Hydrobromate, same strength as bisulphate, soluble in sixteen parts of water, or in equal parts of boiling water.

The Hydrochlorate, soluble in equal parts of boiling water.

The Sulphate contains seventy-four per cent. of quinine, and is soluble in 7.40 parts of cold water, or thirty parts of boiling water.—*Meyers Bros.' Druggist.*

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