

The following recipe for the manufacture of a sublimate was given by Dr. Ivan, a member of the Franco-Chinese mission, to the authorities in Paris: Sulphate of iron, 940 grammes; sulphate of alumina, 920 grammes; potashes, 900 grammes; sulphate of mercury, 120 grammes; an unknown sulphate, 600 grammes; ordinary table salt, 600 grammes; borax, 930 grammes. These ingredients are mixed in a certain order, and are then exposed to fire heat. Of course, from a European standpoint, such a concoction would be condemned as useless. In fact, most of the Chinese prescriptions are only put on paper with a view to calculating the cost of the ingredients. No notice whatever is taken of the proportion or effect of the drugs. Naturally, this method saves our Chinese friend from many of the difficulties with which the European pharmacist has to cope, and his whole method of doing business is on a par with this process. The Chinese classify natural products in the most irregular manner without the least regard for appropriateness. Of course, in a country where the science of pharmacy in all its branches is so imperfectly understood, it cannot be expected that much good can result from its practice; still we must give our Chinese colleagues credit for being very shrewd observers, and for possessing a thorough knowledge of the qualities of all the products which are dealt with in their drug markets. The "Pen-tso," or Chinese Pharmacopœia, is almost daily consulted by the Chinese druggist, and is very highly esteemed.

Great care is exercised by the native druggists in collecting and preparing plants and other natural objects. Buds, flowers, roots, and leaves of the same plant are supposed to produce totally different results. The various parts of the plant have, according to the Chinese method, to be collected during certain periods, and at a certain stage of development, so that collecting goes on all the year round. The middle and southern provinces of China are very bare of woods, a circumstance which is probably due to the dense population, which causes all the suitable ground to be used for agriculture. From reports of travellers we gather, however, that the south-western provinces of China are, on the contrary, densely wooded. The mountainous islands of Formosa and Heinan are doubtless well wooded, the former possessing a great number of camphor trees, which furnish, next to Japan, one of the richest sources for the supply of camphor to our markets.

The careful manner in which the Chinese preserve their plants or herbs is evident from the fact that the dried flowers and leaves retain their natural colors in a remarkable degree. The reason of this exactitude may be due to the Chinese belief that the precise effect of various substances is mainly influenced by the manner of their application. For instance, a doctor would usually order medicine to

be given either in powder or in pills, or dissolved, because he feels convinced that the effect produced would vary according to the state in which the medicine is exhibited.

In China a chemist will commence his career as an apprentice, and after having served for three years in shop and laboratory will begin his theoretical studies. This training seems to answer in a country where the pharmacist carries on his business more on a trading than on a scientific basis. The Chinese pharmacists form a very influential caste, and much respect and deference is shown to them by the people. For instance, the quarter at Canton where they chiefly reside has been named after them "Physic Street." This name would appear, however, to be only partially appropriate, as only wholesale dealers live there, and they have nothing to do with the dispensing of drugs to the public. The dress of the pharmacist is that of the well-to-do classes, consisting of a long cloak reaching down to the ankles, and a large cone-shaped straw hat, covered in summer with horsehair and with black velvet in winter.

The pharmacists, knowing that their profession is usually associated with the thoughtful and grave physiognomy of the learned, imitate those characteristics, and are found affecting a stoic calmness and adopting a patronizing demeanor when talking to the public. Comical are the gestures with which they seek to impress the uneducated with a sense of their mental superiority. The Pen-tso, or Chinese pharmacopœia, is divided into fifty-two volumes, which are again subdivided into numerous parts and chapters; the work seems to treat with the whole creation, and thus affords the student a wide scope for work. The 1st and 2nd volumes describe the origin and growth of pharmacy, the 3rd volume deals with the effects of certain remedies. The 12th to 28th volumes contain a history of the vegetable world, these volumes being classified under eleven heads, which does not speak favorably for the work. The 38th volume is of special interest; in this nothing is discussed but antique furniture, apparatus, and clothes worn by druggists in both past and present times. In the 52nd volume anatomy is dealt with, especially that of those parts which are most likely to require medical treatment.

In Pekin, where hawkers and itinerant pedlars are numerous, we find in the streets the medicine cheap-jack and the quack doctor. These people are always surrounded by a crowd, and it is very comical to notice how a quack doctor puts some ointment on his finger and then daubs it under the noses of his audience who are squatting round him, and who without moving a muscle allow the wonderful medicine to have its effect upon them. The effect of rat poison is represented in a very realistic way by its vendors; they spread out on a piece of blue cloth on the floor their bottles, etc., and in front of these they place a number of dead rats.—*Pharmaceutical Journal*.

The Bicycle for Drug Stores.

The poetry of motion has found a new and modern illustration in the festive bicycle, which from the cumbrous, awkward and lumbering vehicle of a half decade ago has emerged into the light, beautiful, and universally serviceable agency of individual locomotion and transportation. The uses of a bicycle as a pleasure vehicle are now quite universally recognized by both sexes in all the nations. Its evolution in this direction will doubtless continue, but probably its most important function will be as the servant of traffic of all kinds within range of its strength and limitations. The "craze" is clearly less a passing fancy than a widespread popular discovery of an instrument of extraordinary utility, and as such the bicycle is no doubt destined to permanent popularity.

The trade in bicycles is now seeking avenues of distribution best adapted to its nature. Instead of a separate retail store the advantages of its association under the same roof with certain other branches of business have already been demonstrated. The path of distribution once formed will probably remain, and it is therefore highly important that the recognized advantages of the retail drug store be emphasized and fixed in the minds of the manufacturers and the purchasing public without delay. Many drug stores are, of course, not adapted to a department of this kind, but in nearly all the smaller cities and larger towns many of them are provided with superior facilities both for the sale and display of this popular vehicle, which bears a not distant relationship to the fascinating soda fountain and its votaries. By common consent the attractive drug store is the fitting abode of the beautiful fountain fruitful with profit to the druggist from its own service and from the army of patrons it attracts to the store. The reputation of the drug store may be similarly established for the graceful bicycle, which, by reason of its health-giving qualities, has an additional claim on the recognition of the pharmacist.

Great fortunes are being made in the industry at this time, and few articles are in such extensive demand at prices which afford a good profit to the retailer. It is by the prompt appropriation of new additions like these to the wants of human kind that the retail drug store may compensate for the loss of articles which for any reason have preferred to seek a business home elsewhere. The bicycle should clearly follow the soda fountain.—*Western Druggist*.

Arsenic or mercury may be made into pills, says Lang (*Mon. f. Bakt. Derm.*), by employing a mass consisting of milk sugar, 2 or 3 parts, and lanolin, 1 part.

Mydrine is a name given to a mixture of ephedrine and homatropine. It appears as a white powder, soluble in water. It is employed in 10 per cent. aqueous solution.