Acetanilid (Antifebrin).

Previous to the time when antifebrin was first brought to the notice of the medical profession and came into general use, the writer had considerable experience in its manufacture, and thought it might be of interest, and perhaps profit, to the readers of the Drug Store, to know something of the process by which it may readily be made. Although a rather complex organic compound, its manufacture is comparatively easy, and has long been used as a means of obtaining chemically pure aniline. Aniline is the amido, derivative of benzole (coal tar benzine), and is obtained from benzole by first forming the nitroxyl derivative by treating with nitric acid, and then treating the nitrobenzole (known comercially as myrbane oil) with nascent hydrogen, when the aniline is formed, and may be purified by distillation.

For the manufacture of acetanilid as pure aniline as possible should be obtained, and as it is now a cheap article of commerce, no difficulty will be found in doing so. Equal volumes of pure aniline (boiling point 180° to 185° C.) and glacial acetic acid should be mixed in a suitable retort or ordinary chemical flask, connected with an inverted cooler so that the vaporized acetic acid may be condensed and run back into the flask. The mixture should then be boiled until it forms a solid mass on cooling, which will require some time, generally from one to two days. After sufficient boiling the cooler may be lowered, and the water and uncombined acetic acid and aniline distilled off. Continue to heat to 120° C., and then, to avoid breakage, transfer the acetanilid remaining in flask to a copper still and distill. That portion which comes over below 280° C., will not completely solidify, but the most of it will come over from 280° C. to 290° C., and will form on cooling a very solid mass which may even be powdered. This is yellowish in color and has a waxy appearance. It is then purified farther by crystallization from water, when it forms the small white crystals, almost in powder, the form in which we are familiar with i as the commercial antifebrin.

It is very sparingly soluble in hot water (only one part in 180 parts of water) and scarcely at all soluble in cold, so that it is very readily deposited on cooling a saturated solution. It may also be crystallized from alcohol, when it forms larger pearley crystals, or it may be sublimed, forming a beautiful pearly white sublimate.—Drug Store.

Some New Drugs.

NAREGAMIA ALATA.—This new drug, described for the first time by Hooker, has for some time been largely employed in the General Hospital in Vienna. The active principle was discovered by Hooker, and by him named naregamine. It is an alkaloid which forms crystallized salts, with sulphuric, nitric, and hydrochloric acids. In addition to this alkaloid the bark of the rhizome contains wax, gum, asparagine, starch, but no tannin.

The natives on the coast of Malabar, where this plant is indigenous, employ it as an emetic, and as a remedy in bilious conditions, rheumatism and digestive disorders. It has likewise been recommended in dysentery and in bronchial catarrh. In the General Hospital at Vienna this remedy is employed under the form of a fluid extract, or it may be given in the form of pills or of tincture. The dose of the fluid extract is stated to be from 30 to 50 drops, in water flavored with laurel water.

XANTHOXYLON SENEGALENSE (artar-root) —Giacose and Soave have found four alkaloids in the bark of this plant, one of which, artarine, closely resembles berberine in constitution.—Les Nouveaux Remedes, July 24, 1889.

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