

Canada Medical Journal.

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THE BRITISH PHARMACOPŒIA.

The General Council of Medical Education and Registration of Great Britain is composed of three physicians and three surgeons, appointed by her Majesty, with the advice of her Privy Council, and of one representative from each of the colleges and universities in the United Kingdom. By the Medical Act of 1858, among other powers granted them, they were entitled to issue a book containing a list of medicines and their compounds, to be termed the "British Pharmacopœia," which, when published, "shall for all purposes be deemed to be a substitute, throughout Great Britain and Ireland for the several Pharmacopœias already in use."

The necessity for uniformity in pharmaceutical preparations is unquestionable. It is not to be long tolerated in these days of telegraphs and railroads, when a man can breakfast in London and dine in Edinburgh, that he should be subject to the risk of being hurried from this mortal sphere, simply because he presents a prescription received from some London physician, and which if prepared in that city would be at least harmless, but which, if made up in Edinburgh, might send him, without much warning, to eternity. We are supposing a strong case, but one, nevertheless, which might occur. It is, therefore, in every way desirable that uniformity in the strength of medicinal agents should exist throughout the whole kingdom, and extend to the colonies. The question now becomes, whether the work issued by the Medical Council fulfils the requirement,—is it in itself a complete work, or one which should command the confidence of the medical public.

On all sides it is regarded with disfavor, and has suffered at the hands of the entire medical press very severe criticism,—and very justly so, when we look into the work itself: in fact, the Medical Council allow that it is wanting in many particulars, and have, at a recent meeting, appointed a committee, consisting of one member for Scotland, one member for Ireland, and two for England, with the President, whose duty, in the language of Dr. Quain, was "to consist in drawing up a plan as to