# THE CANADIAN PHARMACEUTICAL JOURNAL.



In order to prepare it for use, it is first left in the air for a short time, until the gelatinous part is decomposed, then the mass is washed in hot water, and afterwards in a bath of dilute muriatic acid. The toilet sponges are bleached by means of chlorine and hyposulphate of soda. The so-called wax sponges, that are used by doctors for dressing ulcers, are purified sponges dipped into fluid wax, and then pressed between hot plates.

The French and Austrian governments have lately commenced to rear sponges artificially-the former on the shores of the Mediterranean, the latter on the coast of Delma-tia. The cultivation is said to be perfectly successful, and to yield large profis. -- Druggists' Circular.

### Estimation of the Value of the Various Linds of Cinchona Bark.

Dr. A. E. Vogl.-Forty grms. of previously-pulverised bark are intimately mixed with 10 grins. of quick-lime, and made into a thin paste with water; and this mixture is dried (the temperature is not stated). The dried mass is pulverised, and repeatedly exhausted with boiling alcohol at 90 per cent. (600 c.c. are a sufficient quantity for this purpose; the alcoholic ...olution is filtered, and to the filtrate are added about 5 c.c. of dilute sulphuric acid. The enusing precipitate of gypsum having been removed by filtration, the alcoholic fluid is submitted to distillation, and, after having been greatly reduced in bulk, is further evaporated to a very small bulk on a water-bath, whereby, a flocculent, resinous, vanilla-like smelling aromatic substunce is precipitated. After this material is again removed by filtration, to the filtrate is added a sufficient quantity of a solution of caustic soda as is required for the precipitation of all the alkaloids contained in the bark. These bodies are, by this mode of treatment, obtained in a high degree of purity in the shape of a white caseous, or crystallino-flocculent precipitate, this should be collected on a previously-tared filter, washed with the smallest possible quantity of water, and thoroughly dried, and rext weighed. In order to separate the different bases from each other, the aforesaid precipitate is digested for twenty-four hours in a small flask with about 5 c.c. of ether. The ethereal solution is filtered off from the insoluble residue, which is first washed with ether, and next dissolved alcohol. Each of the solutions so obtained is evaporated, yielding, in some instances, an amorphous, in others, a crystalline residue. These residues are dissolved in dilute sulphuric acid; and, after these solutions have been filtered, the alkaloids are precipitated from these solutions by means of a caustic soda solution, which has been titrated so as to correspond with

stated. This method of the estimation of the value of the cinchona barks is recommended by the author for the reason-(1) that it is easily and rapidly executed; (2) because it affords complete exhaustion of the valuable constituents of the bark, with very little, if any, loss ; (3) because the bases are obtained There directly in a high degree of purity. are appended to this paper a series of results of analyses of various kinds of barks, made partly by this and partly by other well-known methods, as devised by scientific men who, liko Dr. D. Vrij, Dr. Rabourdin, and Prof. Schneider, are high authorities on this subject. From the results here published, this method deserves overy praise .- Neus. Jahr. für Phar. in Chem. News.

## Conium.

Dr. J. C. Reove, in the American I racti-tioner for June, calls attention to the preparations of conium. As a rule they are almost worthiess, as he and his professional friends have found by experience, and as has been demonstrated by Dr. Harley, of London. This drug is nevertheless one of decided power, and Dr. Harley has shown that the succus conti prepared from the fresh herb, by a process peculiar to the British Pharmacoposia, is a reliable preparation. As this is not within reach of the American practitioner, attention is called to the fact an-nounced by Wm. Manlius Smith to the N. Y. Medical Society in 1867, that a *fluid* extract of the unripe fruit is also active and reliable, producing all of the characteristic effects of the drug. Attention is called to two facts announced by Dr. Harley, namely; that a high temperature, in preparing, in jures the value of conium extracts, and that the monsy odor, developed by triturating them with liquor potassie, is a fallacious test of their value.

The action of conium is especially directed to the nervous centers of motion, producing an effect opposite to that of strychnia.

As a therapeutic agent it is applicable to affections marked by irritation of the motor centres, whether direct or reflex. It has proved of great service in the irritability of dentition, in laryngismus stridulus, some forms of chorea and epilepsy, irritability of the reflex function in spinal disease, and as a sedative to irritated sexual organs. Dr. R. has found it especially valuable in convulsice and irritable coughs, like whooping cough. and the distressing cough of phthisis and bronchitis. In the latter it proves an excellent substitute for morphia, quieting the cough without disturbing the functions of the stomach and bowels.-Mich. University Journal.

#### Professor Seely on Ammonium Amalgam.

The Mcchanics' Magazine contains the following criticism on Professor Seely's recent papers upon this subject : "We referred so many times to Mr. Graham's experiments on the absorption of hydrogen by palladium, and his views on the metallic nature of hydrogen, that we may give a passing notice of the latest objections to Mr. Graham's theory. Professor Seely, of New York, has made some experiments with the so-called ammonium amalgam, and has come to the conclusion that it is no amalgam at all in the ordin-

froth produced by the entanglement with tho mercury of the mixture of ammonia and hydrogen set free on the decomposition of chloride of ammoniu.m. The strongest evidence in favor of the correctness of this view is to be found in the fact, that when the socalled amalgam is subjected to pressure, its volume langes apparently in accordance with Marriotte's law of gaseous volume. Thus, at all events, it must be considered as proved, that admitting the existence of ammonium in amalgam, it is weither a solid nor a liquid, but a gas. Professor Seely contends that the expansion of palladium on the absorbtion of hydrogen is analogous to the swelling of the mercury on the absorption of the two gasses named; and that if the particles of palla-dium were as free to move as those of morcury, a palladia froth would be produced. There may be something in this objection, which does not, however, touch Mr. Graham's strongest point. In another sentence the American Professor goes decidedly wrong when he asserts that oxygen is more readily absorbed by metals than hydrogen, and yet no one has a theory of oxygenium. Mr. Graham found that oxygen was less readily absorbed; and he distinctly announced his belief in the existence of the metal oxygenium.-Scientific American.

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#### On Benzoic Acid and Gum Benzoin.

Julius Löwe .- The contents of this paper are the answers given to four queries, viz :---(1) Does benzoic acid pre-exist in gum-benzoin ready-formed and in a free state (2) Is the benzoic acid present in the resin combined with a base ? (3) Is benzoic acid a product of the oxidation of a part of the resin formed by the taking up of oxygen during the melting of the resin ? (4) Is benzoic acid a product of a portion of the resin formed by the fusion of that substance? The author's experiments, detailed at great length, commenced with the finding of a reply to No. 8, and the result is a negativeviz., that when the process of sublimation (as usually employed for obtaining benzoic acid from gum benzoin) is carried on in atmospheres of hydrogen or carbonic acid gas, the quantity and quality of the acid obtained are the same as when the process is carried on in contact with air. As regards the re-plies to Nos 1, 2, and 4, a series of experiments made in various ways proved, undoubtedly, the pre-existence of ready-formed benzoic acid in the resin. The last portion of this paper is devoted to the very mi.utely-detailed description of the best practical method of the preparation of benzoic acid from the resin. -Jour. fur Praktische Chemie, Chem. News.

#### Coloring Syrups with Aniline Colors.

Prompted by various cases of illness caused by the use of syrups sold under the name of "raspberries," "currants," etc., Vandevy-vere, in Brussels, according to the Journal de Pharmacie d'Augers, has analyzed some of these syrups, and found that none of them contained a trace of the fruits after which they were named. Many consisted of a solution of glucose, colored with aniline red, Rubin impériale or fuchsine, and mixed with tartaric or citric acid and a few drops of fruit Vandevyvere discoved in 200 essences. the dilute sulphuric acid supplied as just ary acceptation of that term, but merely a grammes of syrup, 0.05 grammes of fuchsine,