pable of doing its work a little more rapidly than the syphon tube can carry off the filtrate. I propose to call this instrument the *Syphon Filter*. I do not know whether this process has ever been described before—if so, I am not aware of it.

[NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—In some of the older works on chemical manipulation mention is made of a syphon with a trumpet-shaped extremity, to be applied for upward filtration, but, as far as Mr. Gregory is concerned, we are sure the idea is original. The simple contrivance can be easily and quickly made, and may be applied in many cases, with advantage. The slowness of filtration is the chief drawback; but this difficulty might be done away with, to some extent, by lengthening the lower leg of the syphon so as to increase the pressure by the greater difference of hydrostatic level.]

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## ON THE ASSERTED PRESENCE OF TANNIN IN GENTIAN ROOT.*

BY JOHN M. MAISCH.

The root of Gentiana lutea, owing to its importance as a medicine, has been frequently subjected to chemical analysis during the last sixty years, and none of the investigators have been able to prove the presence of tannin in it. The long list commences in 1815, with Schrader ("Berl. Jahrb. f. Phar.," xvi), who is followed by Henry, and by Guillemin and Foecquemin in 1818 ("Jour. de Phar.," v); in 1821 by Henry and Caventou (*ibid.*, vii); in 1836 by Denis (*ibid.*, 1836, January); in 1837 by H. Trommsdorff ("Ann, d. Phar.," xxi), and by Claude Leconte ("Jour. de Phar.," xxiii); in 1838 by Dulk ("Archd. d. Phar.," xv); in 1847 by Baumert ("Ann. d. Chem. u. Phar.," lxii); in 1861 by H. Ludwig ("Archd. d. Phar.," clvii), and in 1862 by Kromayer (*ibid.*, clx). To these investigations must be added the recent ones by Hlasiwetz and Habermann ("Buchn. N. Repert.," 1874, p. 631; "Amer. Jour. Phar.," 1875, p. 207). It is true that many of these analyses were undertaken with the principal object of isolating the bitter principle or the gentianic (gentisic) acid; but it is hardly to be supposed that a principle like tannin, the presence of which is so readily proven, should have been overlooked. More particularly is this the case with analyses of Henry and Caventou, Leconte and Dulk, the two

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