

**CAFFEINE AND THEOBROMINE.**—According to Riederer (*Ph. Ztg.*) the presence of caffeine in theobromine may be detected with ease, and certainly by dissolving the suspected alkaloid in caustic soda solution. Pure theobromine dissolves completely and readily, while even traces of caffeine remain undissolved. (*Ztsch. f. Ph.*)

**ALPHA AND BETA EUNOL.**—These two preparations, employed in the antiseptic treatment of wounds, are combinations of eucalyptol and alpha and beta-naphthol respectively. They are obtained by dissolving the naphthols in equal weight of eucalyptol. Alpha eunol crystallizes well, and may be purified by solvents.—*Pharm. Post.*

**DEODORIZING PETROLEUM AND BENZINE.**—To mask the unpleasant odor of petroleum, etc., an addition of 1 per cent. of amyl-acetate is recommended. To destroy the nasty smell of benzine and at the same time render the benzine colorless, Berninger proceeds as follows: To a mixture of  $\frac{1}{4}$  litre of sulphuric acid and 1.75 litres of water add, after cooling, 30 grammes of potassium permanganate, next mix with 4.5 litres of benzine, and allow to stand for 24 hours, shaking occasionally. After this period the benzine is lifted off and agitated for several hours with a solution of 7.5 grammes of potassium permanganate and 15 grammes of sodium carbonate in 1 litre of water. The separating benzine is said to be odorless and colorless, without having to be again distilled. — *Wiener Drogisten Zeitung.*

**DETECTION OF CITRIC ACID.**—G. Denigès, in a communication to the Société des Sciences Physiques de Bordeaux, has described the following test for the presence of citric acid, which has the advantage of being delicate and not being affected by the presence of other organic acids: To a 5 c.c. solution containing citrates is added 1 c.c. of a solution of mercuric sulphate, prepared from mercuric oxide, 5 grammes; concentrated sulphuric acid, 20 c.c.; water, 100 c.c. The mixture is boiled, and while warm five or six drops of permanganate solution are added. The solution rapidly becomes decolorized, and a typical white precipitate is slowly formed. In very dilute solutions one drop of permanganate will be found to be sufficient. The test, modified to meet the requirements of the case, serves to indicate the presence of citric acid in wine and milk.

## Pharmacy in England.

**The Boom in Quinine—Moisture in Quinine—Other Antipyretics—Toilet Cream—Influenza Again—The Treatment of Gout.**

(By our London Correspondent.)

Although the upward tendency of cinchona bark has been noticed for months past, the recent rise in quinine seems to have come as a surprise to many.

Manufacturers have long expected some such move, but even they were not quite prepared for the rapid nature of the advance or they would not have such large contracts still outstanding of quinine at low prices. Two years ago it was possible to buy manufacturers' quality of cinchona bark shavings from 5 to 10 cents per pound, and this assayed at least five per cent. of total alkaloids. But during the last six or nine months double this price had to be paid for exactly the same quality and yet quinine stood at 20 to 21 cents per oz. To-day no bark is obtainable under 18 to 20 cents per pound, and quinine has reached 40 cents per oz., and is talked up to 48 cents. There was just a flicker of hope during the Spanish-American war that these prices might be realized, but the real reason was not foreshadowed, except during the last few weeks. Supplies of bark are very short and consequently at each sale prices have been steadily mounting. The question is how soon can fresh supplies be pushed forward and the only doubtful reply is regarding Java. It was the action of the Java planters that caused the phenomenal fall in quinine, two years ago, when it reached the price of 16 and 17 cents per oz. Since then an attempt has been made to bring the Java planters into touch with German and English quinine makers, and the present firmness is stated to be due to a quasi understanding on the subject. At any rate it seems tolerably certain that for a month or two at least we shall have quinine at a high price and some makers say that it will be well on to the autumn before it is anything like down to the old figures. It is significant of the firmness of the situation that dealers have been covering their requirements for May and even June at the present high prices.

An interesting item in connection with quinine is the steady loss of water of crystallization which takes place when quinine is kept for any length of time. This always crops up when secondhand

parcels come on the market as they have done during the past week. Quinine that is eight to ten years old has changed hands, and brokers have naturally exacted that 100 ozs. should be supplied by re-weight. It is often found that the loss is as much as two to three ounces on the 100-oz. tin.

Some surprise has been expressed that the growing use of antipyretics such as antipyrin, aceanilide, phenacetine, etc., should not have discounted any great advance in quinine. But the malarial countries will still have quinine although it has largely been replaced as an antipyretic in England by the newer synthetic remedies. The larger doses of antipyrin and until recently its dearer price, have prevented its being such an antagonist as might have been expected. Still there can be little doubt that had these newer remedies not been discovered the consumption of quinine would be far greater than it is, and it is directly traceable to their use, according to our quinine manufacturer, that the consumption of quinine has remained almost stationary during the last three or four years in spite of increased population and reduced prices.

The popularity of a toilet cream made with lanoline or wool fat has steadily grown of recent years and many chemists now make a specialty of their own of this line. It is useful in summer and winter alike for all roughness and irritation of the skin. The remarkable absorbent nature of lanoline and its non-rancidity combine to make it a perfect basis for these preparations, and all that is required is to reduce it by the addition of odorless liquid paraffin or white soft paraffin to the proper consistency. As regards perfume tastes will naturally differ. But something like oil of bergamotte or neroli, with a trace of vanillin, gives a product that is much in demand in England. The most useful method of putting up the article is in small, collapsible tubes, which retail well at ten or twelve cents. These are usually displayed upon cards, whilst a larger size, to retail at about 25 cents, is put up in opal glass jars with colored celluloid lids or white metal tops. These with an effective