Editorial Summary.

PRESCRIPTIONS IN 1836 AND 1874.—In the *Pharm. Jour. and Trans.*, Mr. C. Eve institutes a comparison relating to the posological character of a large number of prescriptions dispensed in London during the years 1836 and 1874. From this it appears that very large doses have almost gone out of fashion. While in 1836, 5·5 per cent. of the prescribed medicines were ordered to be administered in two ounce doses, in 1874 we find this percentage diminished to 1·5. One and a half ounce doses declined from 14·0 to 4·5 per cent. Of medicines prescribed in one ounce doses the percentage has increased from 11·5 to 23·6 per cent; half ounce doses from 1·0 to 17·5 per cent.; and doses of one drachm and less from 5·4 to 10·5 per cent. The proportion of two drachm doses is about the same. Of the prescriptions dispensed in 1836 about 40 per cent. were in the form of mixtures; in 1874 the proportion is 58 per cent. Pills have declined from 42 to 32, and draughts from 10 to 1 per cent. Powders appear to have been slightly less popular, as also electuaries, which have diminished to one half their former proportion. The prices of medicines have also declined materially during the past thirty-eight years. Mixtures formerly averaged over 3½*d* per dose; now the average is 2*d*, showing a difference in favor of the purchaser, in 1874, of rather more than 1½*d* a dose.

FORMULA FOR EXTEMPORISING HYDROCYANIC ACID, B. P.—In a paper read before the British Pharmaceutical Conference, to which reference is elsewhere made, Mr. B. S. Proctor gave the following formula for the above purpose:—Water, one ounce; cyanide of zinc and potassium, twenty-two grains; tartaric acid, forty grains. Dissolve the cyanide in the water, add the acid, allow the precipitate to subside; decant the clear liquor, and preserve it in a corked vial. Renew the stock at intervals of three months.

DETECTION OF BEEF FAT OR LARD IN BUTTER.—During a discussion which followed the reading of a paper at the last meeting of the British Pharmaceutical Conference, the author, Mr. Stoddart, described a method of distinguishing between butter and other fats of animal origin. A quantity, say fifty grains, of butter is put into an ounce bottle, half filled with ether, and the mixture is well agitated. If the butter be genuine, perfect solution of the fatty matter