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CANADIAN DRUGGIST,

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Pharmacy and Pharmacology.

From an inaugural address to the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain by Prof. J. C. CASH, M. D., F. R. S.

He first referred to the field of interest which is common to pharmacist and pharmacologist, dealing especially with the work of the former, and commenting upon the necessity for the strictest accuracy and care in preparing drugs and chemicals, in order to make good therapeutical agents. It is, he continued, the pharmacist who has to answer the question—Why do we use this drug? The pharmacist answers—How is it to be used? And the therapeutist replies to—When should it be used? He considered that these three classes could not be independent of each other; each must sympathize with, and be interested in, the labors of the others. This labor is demanded of all the workers, and in the future it will be more strenuously exacted than it has been in the past. It does not entail any rash prediction to forecast that the advent of every new remedy will be through the channels of close research and study, and that the scientific practitioner of the future will refuse to make use of anything which reaches his hands by less certain ways.

PURE EMPIRICISM IS DECAYING,

Credulity is losing its hold on all of us, and whether the cry is a new cancer-cure by green or yellow electricity, or a great Chinese cure, the rush of the credulous amongst those who have been educated to discern the right hand from the left in medical matters is a very small one. But it is not likely that in this generation, or

the next, the will o' the-wisp will fail of a following amongst the uneducated and the uninstructed. Prof. Cash spoke of the influence of the poisons schedule in warning people not to tamper with powerful remedies. It is right, he said, that they should be labelled "Poison." He then dealt with the advance of the practice of medicine, and the necessity for honest and ungrudging original work in order that it may continue. Recent records bear unimpeachable testimony to the extraordinary progress which is being made in the direction of furnishing the practitioner with fresh

REMEDIES OF DEFINITE CHEMICAL COMPOSITION.

There has been what one may term a genuine *pule** of bodies having germicidal, antipyretic, and hypnotic properties. To some a permanent position is reserved, others are already vanishing, and whilst of the latter certain could well be spared, a small residue which promised fairly have been jostled out of sight, and are in danger of being lost to us. If there is a fault in this wealth of production, it is that its very magnitude threatens to exceed the strength of pharmacologists. This is one reason why some of those bodies, whilst possessing considerable value, yet not having received the attention requisite to establish their action upon a firm basis, are liable to fall short of the position they are really entitled to amongst curative remedies. Attempts are being successfully made to produce modifications and combinations of certain carbon compounds of the aromatic and fatty series, with the object of enforcing and improving their effect, or else of eliminating some undesirable property. The fact that such a body as the synthetic product

SULPHONAL

has been proved to possess valuable hypnotic properties, but that its prolonged and unintermitted use is accompanied by some danger, has led to the introduction of trional and tetronal, which contain increasing proportions of ethyl. The theory advanced by Baumann and Kast, that the hypnotic value would be increased proportionately with the ethylic content, has not as yet been clearly supported by experiment, and it is premature to allot them a precise position. But if, as seems likely, Ranoni is justified in preferring them to sulphonal, not merely on account of their

*Scotch for "a river-flood."

more rapid primary effect, but because of the after-action being less disadvantageous, they may be used as alternatives to this drug with distinct advantage. The substitution of methyl in the phenyl group of antipyrin has led to the production of

TOLYPYRIN,

which possesses, according to Guttman, as full an action in reducing pain and pyrexia as the more current remedy. As the result of the search after substances which will prove toxic towards microorganisms, whilst relatively harmless towards man and the higher animals, colouring matters, many of them coal-tar derivatives, have passed largely into practice. These pigments have long been recognised as bacteriological stains for the purpose of demonstrating the presence of certain microbes, and it is highly interesting and instructive to note that the selective power they exert in this respect may indicate a destructive property which may be used to advantage in the treatment of disorders associated with such microbes and their products. Enlarging upon this topic, Professor Cash referred to the advantages of antiseptics or disinfectants in the

TREATMENT OF CHOLERA,

amongst them being salol, tannin, and beta-naphthol. A single drachm of the latter is sufficient to disinfect the alimentary canal, but, unhappily, it is not toxic towards the bacillus, &c., according to Sternberg, being required for that purpose. The rapidity with which cholera develops and progresses is probably our greatest difficulty. Increased facilities for the employment of iodine - which has admirable disinfectant properties, but is, unfortunately, both a powerful irritant and odorous agent—have also been sought for. Aristol, containing 46 per cent. of iodine, formed by the action of thymol in caustic-soda solution upon an aqueous solution of iodine with caustic soda, and also, more recently, iso-butylortho-cresol iodide, commonly known as europfen, have been introduced. Both of these bodies serve the purpose held in view, and so facilitate our employment of this important element. Iodopyrin is decomposed on entering the stomach, and therefore exerts the disinfectant action of iodine and the complex effect of phenazone. In a similar manner to this the Professor touched upon other drugs, such as caffeine and diuretin, and in speaking of gelsemium he emphasised the existence in that drug of two alkaloids—the first, gelsemine, having a te-