

CHAPTER II.

CLASSIFICATION OF DRUGS—GALENICAL PHARMACY.

Drugs may be classified broadly under two general divisions:—

(1) Drugs of Inorganic origin.

(2) Drugs of Organic origin.

Inorganic Drugs include—

(a) The Non-Metals, such as Chlorine, Sulphur, etc., with their salts and preparations.

(b) The Heavy Metals, such as Mercury, Iron, etc., with their salts and preparations.

(c) The Alkalies and Alkaline Earths; such as Potassium, Ammonium; Calcium, Magnesium, with their salts and preparations.

Organic Drugs from vegetable sources, include:—

(a) Those portions of plants which contain active principles, as Digitalis Leaf, Calumba Root, Quassia Wood.

(b) Fixed Oils.—Compounds of the fatty acids with Glycerin, obtained by expression from fruits, seeds, etc., as Castor Oil, Olive Oil.

(c) Volatile or Essential Oils.—The fragrant principles of plants obtained by distillation, as Oils of Peppermint, Eucalyptus and Turpentine.

(d) Resins.—Solid preparations obtained from volatile oils by oxidation, these are insoluble in Water, but soluble in Alcohol and Ether, as Podophyllin and Scammony Resins.

(e) Oleo-Resins.—Compounds of Volatile Oils and Resins, semi-liquid in consistency, as Oleo-Resin of Male Fern and Copaiba.

(f) Balsams.—Which are Resins or Oleo-Resins either liquid or solid, containing either Benzoic or Cinnamic Acids or both, as Benzoin, Balsams of Tolu and Peru.

(g) Gums.—Solid or semi-solid exudations of plants either dissolving in water to form a mucilage or forming with it an adhesive jelly, as Acacia and Tragacanth.

(h) Gum Resins.—Compounds of gums and resins having the properties of both, as Asafetida and Myrrh.

(i) Vegetable Acids.—Which may occur free in fruits, etc., or be obtained by the decomposition of their salts, or by distillation, as Citric, Tartaric and Acetic Acids.

(j) Glucosides.—A small but important class deriving their name from the fact that they may be broken up into Glucose plus some other substance which differs in character from the original glucoside. They