Selecting and Keeping Dental Medicines.

While there may be many other things to modify the action of drugs, or the result of their application, we believe that many times negative results come through the use of inferior medicaments.

In the first place there are many impure drugs in the market, especially in the smaller towns; drugs that are either adulterated or have undergone a change from exposure or long keeping.

On the other hand, we may obtain pure drugs, but allow them to deteriorate through improper care, so that their efficacy is greatly modified.

Some of the dental medicaments that have been found adulterated are:—

Arsenious Acid, adulterated with lime salts, chalk and other substances.

Creasote. It is very difficult to obtain a pure beechwood creasote. Much of the so-called creasote has been found to consist of crude carbolic acid to which has been added creasole and phosole.

Essential Oils; often adulterated with fixed oils, oil of turpentine, chloroform, alcohol, or essential oils of an inferior grade mixed with those of a better quality.

Aconite tincture. This is one of the most uncertain remedies in regard to strength that we use. The commercial article may be strong, weak, or sometimes almost inert. This variation is due to varying quantities of the alkaloid used in its preparation. That prepared from the root is many times more powerful than that prepared from the leaves. The officinal tincture U. S. P. contains 40 per cent. aconite strength; Fleming's tincture has 79 per cent.; the German, 10 per cent.; the British, 16 per cent.; the French, 20 per cent.; so that care should be used in selection and use of this remedy.

Terebene, as found in the shops, is often contaminated with resin, turpentine, etc.

Cocain salts, may contain organic or other impurities.

Zinc salts. These may contain impurities of lead, copper, iron, aluminum or alkaline earths.

Hydrogen peroxid has been found to contain varying quantities of sulpnuric or hydrochloric acids, some samples contain also boric acid and barium.

Prof. H. E. Smith, of Yale College, made a test of some fifty samples of peroxid of hydrogen obtained from as many different stores in New York, New Haven, Hartford and Bridgeport, to determine the quality of this article as dispensed in small amounts. The samples were collected in one ounce glass-stoppered bottles and tested within twenty-four hours after purchasing.