

occurs that physicians prescribe these remedies in minute doses for children, aged persons and delicate females ; it is, therefore, exceedingly important that they should not receive a fraction over the quantity prescribed.

The greatest care and attention should be given to this class of prescriptions, so that, when a third is prescribed, a half grain may not be given, which, in all probability, would result very seriously or produce a condition of affairs entirely different from that anticipated by the physician ; moreover, the uncertainty attending the weighing of fractions of grains by ordinary scales, renders it necessary for the pharmacist to first weigh one grain and then divide this into the quantity prescribed, in other words, virtually guess at the quantity.

To remedy this, and at the same time, secure to physicians and pharmacists absolute certainty, I would recommend that trituration of the poisons in common use be made of such a strength that each grain of the trituration shall represent a certain quantity of the poison, and the tituration be made only with sugar of milk. The reasons for using this substance are various. In the first place, sugar of milk is a harmless, hard, gritty, odorless and almost tasteless substance. It is less liable to attract moisture from the atmosphere than any other substance ; in fact, it possesses all the qualities desired for making a perfect trituration. The proportion I would suggest are one grain of the poisonous substance to seven grains of sugar of milk, making in all, eight grains,—the whole to be thoroughly triturated. The process of trituration is too well known to pharmacists to require elucidation in this article, and they are also well aware how important it is to carry out this process in an exact and careful manner.

Now, when a physician writes for a quarter of a grain of arsenious acid, all that is necessary is to weigh two grains of the trituration, and you have the quarter of the grain desired. This method I hold to be the safest in weighing poisons—a method by which very small fractions of grains may be obtained,—and where children, the aged or very delicate are interested, to be one of precision. The physician can also prescribe with a feeling of certainty when using those poisonous substances in this trituration, and he may have the assurance that, when he prescribes the one quarter of a grain, he obtains that amount,—for the reason, that two grains of any substance will turn the beam of an ordinary scale more readily than a quarter of a grain. I have seen scales in some of our first-class stores on which the half of a grain could not be weighed with any degree of certainty, but on which two or four grains could be weighed with accuracy.

Likewise, the pharmacist can be more expeditious in dispensing his order, thereby rendering the sick a prompt, safe and reliable prescription, and one exactly in accordance with the physician's wants.