

Pharmaceutical Notes.

ARTIFICIAL INDIGO.—A patent has been taken out by the Aktien-Gesell. für Anilin Fabrik., of Berlin, for the preparation of Indigo. Anthranilic (o-amido-benzoic) acid is fused with caustic alkali out of contact with the air. The fused mass is then dissolved in water, and oxidized by a current of air, when the indigo blue is developed. It is quite identical with natural indigo.—*Apotheker Zeitung*.

SAWDUST ABSORBENT DRESSINGS.—A. Neve, surgeon to the Kashmir Mission Hospital, India, strongly recommends the use of sawdust pads as a staple surgical dressing material. The sawdust is packed in muslin bags, and the pads are readily rendered either aseptic or antiseptic. In practice they are impregnated the day before use with a 1 in 2000 solution of mercuric zinc cyanide, or sterilized in a Cathcart's or Schimmelbusch's oven.—*Lancet*.

QUINOLINE RHODANATE, A NEW ANTISEPTIC.—Induced to experiment with sulpho-cyanhydric (rhodanhydric) acid, from the presence of that body in the saliva, which has itself certain antiseptic properties, Dr. Edinger has combined this acid with quinoline, producing pyridin-methyl-rhodanate. Solutions of this body, according to the author, have very energetic bactericidal properties, the specific microbes of cholera and diphtheria speedily succumbing to its influence. The solution is neither odorous nor caustic. A one per cent. solution has also been employed as an injection in gonorrhoea.—*Semaine Médicale; Pharmaceutical Journal*.

NOSOPHENE is a new iodo compound, tetra-iodo-phenol-phthalein, obtained, according to the *Medical Week*, by the action of iodine on phenol-phthalein, which is used in the form of insufflation in acute coryza, chronic rhinitis, and as a dusting powder for eczema. It is a yellow, odorless, tasteless powder, insoluble in water, soluble in ether and in chloroform. It contains 60 per cent. of iodine. It behaves as an acid, and combines with bases to form soluble salts. Nosophene is not toxic, and is said to pass through the body without undergoing decomposition, and therefore without giving rise to excretion of iodine in the urine.

ADULTERATED LINSEED OIL.—It is said that there is at present some quantity of linseed oil on the market adulterated with liver and blubber oils. To detect this admixture, 10 parts of the oil and 3 of commercial nitric acid are mixed thoroughly in a test-tube, and the two layers allowed to separate. If the fish oil be present, the oily layer is dark brown to black in color, whilst the acid has a deep orange red color. If, however, the oil be pure, the oily layer is only a dirty green

and the acid a golden yellow color.—*Seifensieder Zeit.; B. C. Druggist*.

THE PREPARATION OF GUAIACOL.—A fresh patent for the preparation of pure guaiacol has been taken out by a German firm. Veratrol (pyrocatechol di-methyl ether) is heated with equal quantities of alcohol and alkali under a pressure of 10 atmospheres for three hours at 180°C. It is necessary to separate traces of undecomposed veratrol, and the yield is 85 per cent. of the original weight of veratrol.—*Chemiker Zeitung*.

SEPARATION OF SYNTHETIC REMEDIES.—Lenzinger has examined the behavior of several new synthetic remedies when treated according to Dragendorff's shaking-out method. From an acid solution he found petroleum spirit removed guaiacolbenzol, guaiacol salicylate, benzonaphthol, alphon, agathin, salacetol, methylsalol, orthocresolol, paracresolol, metacresolol, benzocresolol, malakin, and thermodin, but traces only of guaiacol cinnamate and naphthol carbonate. Benzol removed salophen, pyrocin, guaiacol cinnamate, lactophenin, β -naphtholcarbonate, gallanol, symphorol Na, Li, and Sr; after previous boiling with hydrochloric acid—neurodin, malakin, thermodin, and traces of analgen. Chloroform dissolved pyrocin, and analgen. From ammoniacal solution, petroleum spirit removed phenocol; benzol, tolypyrine; chloroform, analgen; amylic alcohol, gallanol.—*Pharm. Post; Pharmaceutical Journal*.

CEDAR CAMPHOR.—Recent researches have pointed to the non-existence of cedar camphor in cedar wood oil. A small quantity of cedar wood which had been kept in stock for many years was recently distilled and yielded a thick oil, which went almost solid by standing. Through recrystallization from alcohol a body was obtained in fine needles, softening at 78°, and entirely melting at 83°. It appears that the camphor is formed under these conditions, but is not a constituent of normal cedar oil.—*Schimmel's Report*.

ACTION OF GELATIN ON SOLUTIONS.—Mills and Sawers find that the introduction of gelatin into saline solutions results in the combination of the salts with the gelatin. Chrome alum (potassic) appeared to be taken up unaltered, the resulting compound being quite insoluble in boiling water, but it was slowly dissolved at a gentle heat by an equal weight of acetic acid diluted with about twice its weight of water, the solution leaving an insoluble residue when it dried up. Alumina alum (potassic) was absorbed by gelatin to form a compound, which dissolved slowly in boiling water; nickelous sulphate gave a partly soluble gelatin; cobaltous sulphate a completely soluble one; and cupric sulphate a partly soluble compound.—*Journal. Soc. Chem. Ind.*

NEW METHOD OF PREPARING SACCHARIN.—A chemical firm in Basle, Switzerland, has patented a new process for obtaining saccharin by transforming thiosalicylic acid into thiosalicyl chloride, and the latter into the corresponding amid-acid. This last is oxidized either with potassium permanganate or other oxidizing agent. The process is said to be more economical than the original.

STABILITY OF SUBLIMATE SOLUTIONS.—Vignon pointed out some time ago that 1 per mille solutions of mercuric chloride rapidly decreased in strength, and lost, therefore, their antiseptic power in contact with the air. Tanret now urges (*Bulletin*) that pure air has nothing to do with the matter, and does not cause any precipitation of the mercury. Vignon has taken up the subject again, and now demonstrates that Tanret's conclusions are correct, and that the decomposition is due to traces of alkali, derived either from the water or the glass in which the solutions were kept, and to dust and organic impurities from the air.

ARTEMISIN.—Merck reports that he has found in santonica-seeds, or rather in the mother-liquor from which santonin crystallizes, a beautiful crystalline body which resembles santonin, but is a distinct substance. One of its most marked peculiarities is that it crystallizes with chloroform, the compound being represented by the formula $C_{12}H_{18}O_4, CHCl_3$, but the chloroform is dissipated at 80°C. Artemisin melts at 200°C., and dissolves in sixty times its weight of boiling water. Its sp. rot. is -84.3° , and it may be easily distinguished from santonin by the iron and sulphuric-acid reaction. When 0.1 gramme of artemisin is dissolved in 1 c.c. of water and the same of sulphuric acid, and a few drops of ferric-chloride solution added, a slight turbidity and intense golden-brown color are produced, whereas santonin gives a characteristic violet color. Merck concludes that artemisin is oxy-santonin, for the molecule differs only from santonin in containing an additional oxygen atom. Whether this principle has any therapeutic properties or not is not stated.—*Chemist and Druggist*.

PURIFICATION OF ALCOHOL, SUGAR, ETC., BY POTASSIUM PERMANGANATE.—According to Maumené (*Comptes rendus*), alcohol, wines, syrups, and other organic bodies, and even potable waters, may be purified by the action of potassium permanganate. With impure alcohol, wines (red and white), etc., it suffices to agitate them with an aqueous solution of the permanganate (2 or 3 ccm. of the solution to the litre of alcohol). The purifying action is obtained through the formation of manganic oxides, which are precipitated, finally clarifying and purifying the liquid. The process seems destined to be of great service in refining sugars, etc.—*National Druggist*.