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SURPRISING number of remedial agents have been obtained during recent years from the aromatic group of carbon compounds, and new compounds from this source are brought to the notice of the profession almost daily.

The most marked action of the lower members of the aromatic series is their antiseptic, antipyretic and analgesic power. The discovery by German See unat many of the powerful antipyretics also possessed pain relieving power has greatly extended their usefulness as in many cases they equal if not surpass the alkaloids. Unfortunately the administration of these drugs is followed by many disagreeable after effects. This has led to the trial of other members of the group with the hope of securing a prompt, effective and at the same time a thoroughly safe remedial agent. Among the number experimented with for this object phenacetin deserves special attention.

Phenacetin was discovered and experimented with by Hinsberg and Kast who published their results in 1887. Since that date the drug has been used extensively by many competent clinical observers, among whom might be mentioned Kobler. Hoppe, Greenfell, Roe, Lewis, Jones, Strumpf and Dujardin-Beaumetz. The evidence so far is satisfactory and indicates that we have now available an effective antipyretic and a powerful analgesic, the administration of which is comparatively free from the risk of toxic effects.

Phenacetin, or acetphenitidin, is technically known as para-acet-phenetidin, is the most active member of a group of derivatives, viz., the phenacetins. Two others have been studied, viz., meta-acet-phenetidin

and ortho-acet-phenetidin, the former inert, the latter being one-half less powerful than para-acet-phenetidin. They are derivatives of carbolic acid and are obtained by a complicated series of operations, the process of manufacture not being a trade secret as in the case of other agents of this group; the cost is consequently reasonable.

Phenacetin occurs as a white inodorous crystalline powder, very slightly soluble in water, but freely so in alcohol. It is perfectly tasteless. It is analagous in its constitution to antifebrin. The chemical formula for the group is :

$$\mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{6}} \mathbf{H}_{\mathbf{4}} \begin{cases} \mathbf{OC}_{\mathbf{2}} \mathbf{H}_{\mathbf{5}} \\ \mathbf{N} \mathbf{H} \mathbf{C} \mathbf{OC} \mathbf{H}_{\mathbf{3}} \\ \mathbf{OC} \mathbf{H}_{\mathbf{3}} \mathbf{H} \mathbf{H} \mathbf{H} \mathbf{C} \mathbf{OC} \mathbf{H}_{\mathbf{3}} \end{cases}$$

On account of its insolubility it is not adapted for hypodermic use.

When administered to animals in ordinary doses it has no effect, but in very large dozes produces vomiting, irregular gait, hurried respiration and somnolence, followed by general cyanosis and discoloration of the blood. In man no ill effects have been observed except in very debilitated subjects.

The most satisfactory dose for an adult is about 8 grains, and children bear it very well. In febrile conditions the dose should never exceed 15 grains. It is best given in the form of *cachets*. As an antipyretic it has been used in a number of diseases, such as phthisis, pneumonia, typhoid fever, etc., the temperature under its influence falling from 3° to 4° F. Its action begins about half an hour after its administration and continues for 4 or 6 hours, the fall of temperature being gradual. In from two to three hours the rise of temperature commences, and in about eight hours the influence of the drug disappears. It produces copious sweating and sometimes a sensation of collapse, but no other disagreeable effect has been observed. As an antipyretic it is therefore effective and safe.

In respect to its analgesic power we have strong testimony from Dujardin-Beaumetz, one of the best authorities of the present day on all questions connected with therapeutics. He states (B. M. Journal, 1889, page 522.): "But it is above all as an analgesic that phenacetin outrivals its predecessors. While it is quite as powerful as antipyrin and antefebrine it does not cause the pain in the stomach and the scarlatini-form rash of the latter. However prolonged may be its administration—and we have given it for months in doses of 1 to 2 grammes per day—we have never observed any bad effect. We have used it for the relief of every form of pain (neuralgias,