

SELECTIONS.

SILICEOUS EARTH (terra silicea, Kieselguhr) has been recommended as a superior diluent for triturations of alkaloids and other potent remedies, being perfectly harmless and insoluble.

†††

ARTIFICIAL OIL OF CASSIA, so called, is now being sold at prices less than those asked for the natural product. It is believed, however, to be a swindle, and that this "artificial" oil is nothing but camphor oil with just enough oil of cassia to give odor; or, as some believe, "neutral" oil with a little oil of cinnamon and oil of sassafras. Neutral oil is an odorless petroleum product, sold largely for adulterating volatile oils. — *Western Druggist*.

†††

A NEW GLUCOSIDE.—A new glucoside, which has been called cerberine, has been obtained from a Mexican plant of the Genus *Tevetia*, belonging to the Apocynaceae. It is a yellow amorphous powder, very bitter, soluble in water and in alcohol, and yields, on hydrolysis with dilute sulphuric acid, glucose and cerberesine. A therapeutic investigation on this body has been carried out by Dr. Zotos, and has shown that hypodermic injection of the glucoside produces nearly similar effects to those of digitaline. — *L'Union Pharmaceutique*.

†††

TO REMOVE THE TURPENTINE TASTE FROM OIL OF LEMON.—Take for each pound of oil thirty grains of potassium permanganate and dissolve in a small quantity of water. Now add the solution, a little at a time, to the oil of lemon, shaking the bottle well between each addition. Continue to shake at frequent intervals throughout the day, and then draw off the oil from the solution. Finally, wash the oil by shaking it up a few times with a little warm water, and then decant into a fresh bottle. This treatment is said to give entire satisfaction. — *Phar. Review*.

†††

A STERILIZED EMULSION OF IODOFORM in oil possesses, according to Stubenrauch, advantages not to be obtained with gum or glycerin mixtures. The following process is recommended: The olive oil, first sterilized by heating to boiling, is introduced into a wide-necked glass-stoppered cylinder. The necessary amount of iodoform—10 per cent.—is added, and suspended in the oil by violent shaking. The glass cylinder should be washed with a solution of corrosive sublimate and then with ether before use. The iodoform should be powdered as fine as possible.

†††

ALANGINE.—This body is an alkaloid extracted from the root, and to a smaller extent from the stem and bark of the *Alangium*, a plant belonging to the natural order, Cornaceae. It acts as an emetic, and is useful in cases of dysentery in the place of ipecacuanha. In small doses it is

a febrifuge. It is a bitter amorphous alkaloid, soluble in ether, chloroform and alcohol, but insoluble in water. It yields salts with acids, and answers to all the usual alkaloidal tests. Sodium molybdate and concentrated sulphuric acid give in the cold a fine indigo blue coloration. Nitric acid gives a red-brown solution. — *Journal Pharmaceutique d'Anvers*.

†††

PRESERVATION OF VACCINE LYMPH.—A correspondent of the *Lancet* states that he has had satisfactory results by mixing equal volumes of vaccine lymph, glycerin and water. This mixture has been successfully used for more than a year. The preservative is added to the lymph directly this is taken from the subject, and the mixture is at once transferred to capillary tubes. By the adoption of this plan the fluidity of the lymph is said to be retained and its absorption ensured, no failure having occurred where it has been employed. It may be suggested here that before adding the glycerin and water it would be well to sterilize the mixture by boiling, otherwise foreign micro-organisms might be introduced into the lymph and cause ill-effects in inoculated patients.

†††

BROMIDE OF GOLD.—C. Patrouillard has prepared this compound rapidly by warming together one gramme each of chloride of gold and bromide of potassium, $\frac{1}{2}$ grammes of 10 per cent. sulphuric acid, and a sufficiency of distilled water. The mixture assumes a dark red color, and at a moderate temperature, the reaction is completed in a few minutes. On cooling, the solution is agitated with 10 c.c. of ether, and this process is repeated several times until the aqueous layer is left nearly colorless. The separated ethereal solutions are then mixed, agitated with fused chloride of calcium to remove remaining traces of water, and the liquid decanted into a capsule. This is placed upon a warm brick, the heat from which is sufficient to cause the ether to evaporate, leaving the bromide of gold behind. — *Bull. Commercial*.

†††

GLYCERIN-SUPPOSITORIES WITH ALEIN, CITRULLIN, AND COLOCYNTHIN.—Kohlstock, from the Senator's Klinik in Berlin, has made some experiments on the hypodermic and rectal introduction of the vegetable products aloin, colocynthin, and citrullin (colocynthinidin) into the human body as purgatives; and he states that the rectal application of these three drugs is specially successful. None of these remedies produce any irritation in the rectum; the action is in most cases agreeable, pains are very seldom felt, and no inclination to constipation has ever been left through their use. Also at different Kliniks in Vienna the same successful results have been obtained. The strength of the suppositories generally used was $\frac{1}{2}$ gramme *pro dosi* for aloin, 3 centigrammes *pro dosi* for colocynthin, and 2 centigrammes *pro dosi* for citrullin; the two

latter especially being prescribed in most obstinate cases. — *Br. and Col. Druggist*.

Digestive Ferment in *Angallis Arvenis*.

Two Italian pharmacists, Sig. Dacomo and Tommasoti, have isolated a digestive ferment from the common shepherd's weather glass, which is a common weed in Italy as it is in England. Their attention was directed to the plant by the fact that in Tuscany the peasants employ it as a remedy for warts. The plant is crushed between two stones, and the bruised mass obtained applied to the warts. The authors have tested and confirmed its solvent action on raw flesh and on fibrine. The ferment is isolated by precipitating the fresh juice with subacetate of lead, decomposing the lead compound with sulphuretted hydrogen, and fractionally precipitating the ferment with alcohol. Thus obtained, it gives on drying a white amorphous powder, with an odour recalling that of yeast. By its means fibrine is entirely peptonized in four or five hours. — *Annali di Chimica e de Farmacol.*

The Use of Acetic Acid as a Solvent.

Attention has again lately been directed to the excellent solvent action of acetic acid on essential oils and aromatic resinous bodies as well as the active alkaloidal constituents of some plants. The great difference in the price of acetic acid as compared with that of alcohol makes further experiments in this direction desirable. The well known firm of E. R. Squibb & Sons has already placed upon the market a full line of fluid extracts of aromatics, intended primarily for culinary purposes. The list includes cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, pepper, ginger, mace, nutmeg, celery, pimento, garlic, mustard, vanilla and tonkabean. They are of the strength of one grain of the respective material in each minim of finished fluid extract, and represent the aromatic principles in concentrated and convenient form, admirably adapted to the purposes for which they are intended. Experiments made with nux vomica and belladonna disclosed the fact that complete exhaustion can be obtained in less time than with an alcoholic menstruum. For many solid and fluid extracts an acetous menstruum may be found advantageous, especially as the excess of acid in the weak percolates can be recovered to a great extent by distillation, and thus only a comparatively slight acidity be retained in the finished product. The acid fluid extracts of the aromatics above mentioned have been found to be perfectly miscible with water. — *Pharmaceutical Review*.

I will do human nature the justice to say that we are prone to make other people do their duty.