

worth the druggist's while to risk the corner's censure and public approbrium because he unwittingly assist either the criminal poisoner or the suicide.

The Society of Chemical Industry with its numerous branches all over the country has made a good start, several practical papers having been communicated.

The Chemical Society has met in its old quarters at Burlington House but under an improved alteration of the premises. The seating accommodation has been rearranged and extended, the decorations are elaborate and the installation of the electric light in both lecture theatre and library a vast improvement. Sir Henry Roscoe, F. R. S., M. P., who presided at the first meeting congratulated the Society on its rejuvenated appearances. Amongst the papers contributed were two by Prof. Thorpe. One described the isolation and identification of fluorosulphonic acid and the other indicated that the interaction of iodine and chlorate of potassium produced iodate of potassium and free chlorine. Prof. Thorpe has been working for some years on the fluorine compounds and a very opposite question was put to him as to whether he could confirm M. Moissan's claim that fluorine could be isolated by electrolysis? In reply Prof. Thorpe admitted that he had spent a large amount of time and Government money in repeating these experiments but without success. Several interesting results were obtained, but when difficulties were met with he communicated with M. Moissan, who contented himself with merely acknowledging his letter and offered no suggestion or advice.

A question which is vexing the souls of wholesale druggists and manufacturers is the preparation of citric and tartaric acids free from lead. It has long been known that these acids are usually crystallized by the manufacturers in leaden pans and mere fire are particularly liable to contain traces of the metal. This occurs as the salt of the metal and also as free lead, the later being derived from the scraping of the pan. There has been no very great difficulty in obtaining citric acid free from lead, the manufacturers having substituted earthenware for leaden pans in which to crystallize the acid. Tartaric acid free from lead is with much more difficulty obtained and the one or two houses who guarantee the recrystallized article ask \$1 per lb. for the same—a prohibitive price. The average amount of lead present in commercial samples is about 0.2 per cent., a quantity that is absolutely harmless but yet sufficiently objectionable. One point it is well to bear in mind. Many chemists are in the habit of testing their acids for lead by ammonium sulphide after neutralizing the acid with ammonia. Now, nearly all the commercial liquid ammonia contains a trace of iron and unless a control experiment is performed with distilled water and the same amount of ammonia very incorrect results are obtained. The best plan is to pass sulphuretted hydrogen

through a solution of the acid contained in a beaker and compare the tint produced, when looking through the column of liquid standing on a white piece of paper.

Messrs. Richardson, of Leicester, England, are in the unfortunate position of having to defend an action brought by the Lanoline makers against them for infringing their patent for the purification of wool-fat. I recently pointed out in these columns that wool-fat, by no means answering the B. P. tests are being offered on the English market by German manufacturers. It is possible therefore that Messrs. Richardson are being sued for other people's delinquencies. Although it is only fair to state that they intend defending the case strenuously.

The recent announcement that Montreal licentiates advocate the passing of a resolution refusing recognition of the diploma of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain deserves more than passing attention. Let me at once say that the English Society have no power to recognize any diploma besides their own—in fact they are so absurdly placed as to be unable to recognize the Irish qualification. Whether the union of hearts, soon to be formulated under the title of Home Rule will alter this I do not know, but I am informed that a special Act of Parliament would be necessary before any reciprocity could be legally granted. On the other hand, as the penalties for keeping open shop as a chemist are usually inflicted through the prosecution of the individual by the Pharmaceutical Society, Canadian pharmacists need not be afraid of their being summoned should they start business here. I am also informed that more than one Irish Diplomat is practising here and that the Society will not interfere. If our Canadian friends knew something of the difficulty of attempting to push Bills through Parliament in which the public take no interest, they would not urge this point. Should the various pharmaceutical associations in Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, etc., memorialize the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain something might be attempted, but I am not sanguine of any success with Parliament. The assurance of sympathy and non-interference with colonial pharmacists desiring to establish themselves in the Mother Country might, however, be counted upon. Not until a British Imperial Zollverein is established will that proper amount of reciprocity be obtained which justice demands.

Communications.

To the Editor:

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your inquiry what answer we have to make to the articles that have appeared in the *Pharmaceutical Journal* concerning the proposed "Amendments to the Pharmacy Act," I expressly stated at the Convention of Druggists that the amendments would require to be put into proper legal form by the College solicitors, and that

there might be some unimportant changes made by them to harmonize the whole with our Act. For that purpose the Committee on By-laws and Legislation met with our solicitors in Toronto on Oct. 28th and carefully went over the whole ground, and all concurred in what was done. There was present Messrs. Petrie, D'Avignon, Daniels, Clark, McKenzie, and the writer. The matter, which takes time, is in the hands of our solicitors, and I see no especial urgency. If Mr. Petrie has the original draft I am sure by applying to him any person can see it now, or could have made a copy of it at the convention or Council meeting; every one heard it read there clause by clause and there was ample time. Everything else about that convention is reported in the *Pharmaceutical Journal*, why not it? As soon as our solicitors hand over their work, and before the Bill is put before the Legislature, the large and influential committee appointed by the convention to assist in passing the Bill, will be consulted. I am sure the druggists have every confidence in their committee, no member of which, I believe, has complained of delay. The reason the druggists have not been informed before of the delay in this matter and also our side of the Eaton and other prosecutions is not our fault. About Nov. 16th I wrote to the editor of the *Pharmaceutical Journal* asking his consent to publish in his journal a reply to his many severe, and, as I considered, unfair criticism of these matters, a former communication of mine having been suppressed. I have had no acknowledgment of my letter yet, and can only regard it as a refusal. Perhaps the editor may believe that the following clause in the *Journal* contract prevents us using any organ but his to reply to anything he may say about us, and remember there is no condition in it that he shall publish anything we write, however fair:—"That they will not sanction, encourage, assist or in any way recognize the publication of any journal of a similar kind to the said *Pharmaceutical Journal* during the continuance of this agreement."

Respectfully,

JOHN A. HALL.

P. S.—I have just received a letter from our solicitors, dated Dec. 10th, regretting the delay in forwarding the amendments, and explaining that the delay is caused by the "Deputy Attorney-General who has them in hand and who has been written to twice with reference to them and has promised to hasten their examination. But he is at present in great confusion moving to the new Parliament buildings in the park." I am satisfied that Mr. Cartwright will not delay the matter one minute longer than necessary.—JOHN J. HALL.

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