

hard and vitreous, as "pil. asafœtidæ comp.," or granular, as in "pil. aloes et ferri."

Having noticed the various altered conditions developed by age in the above mentioned preparations, it becomes of some importance to consider whether those changes can be prevented by the use of some more suitable excipient.

With the view of obtaining such a substance, glycerine was selected as a basis, since it has been found to prevent the damaging effects caused by evaporation. It cannot, however, be used by itself for this purpose, as it is open to the objection of causing pills thus prepared to "fall," and, in some cases, to run into a mass.

This tendency may be obviated by the addition of tragacanth mucilage in the following proportions:—

Gum tragacanth, in powder	. ½ oz.
Glycerine	
Water, of each	2¼ ozs.
Oil of Pimento	gtt. v.

Mix.

The above product will keep good for several years in an ordinary covered pot.

The weight of "tragacanth excipient" required for the following official pill masses and the Pharmacopœia quantities, is approximately as follows:—

Tragacanth excipient.	Conf. of Roses.
Pil. aloes et ferri 2½ oz	may be substituted for 4 oz.
Pil. aloes et myrrhæ 1 oz	" 2½ oz.
	Treacle.
Pil. rhei comp. 2 oz	" 4 oz.

3j of Howard's sulphate of quinine, and gr. xx of the tragacanth excipient make a nice mass; while only gr. vij of it are required to form a tough, plastic mass with 3j of compound ipecacuanha powder.

When this excipient is used there is but rarely the slightest tendency to adhesion between the mass and the pill mortar,—consequently there is no loss of materials.

Another point of some importance is, that the use of pill-powder in the operation of pill making is usually unnecessary.

The advantages as an excipient possessed by the substance just described, may be summarized as follows:—the small quantity necessary to effect the desired purpose; the facility with which it mixes with dry powders; its cleanliness; and its efficacy as a preservative.