

One of the most difficult phases of this problem is the treatment of the menstrual disorders in insane women, and the importance of correcting any such disorders in this class of patients is realized by all who are aware of the fact, noted by numerous clinicians, that the improvement of the menstrual function leads to a marked amelioration in the mentality of these patients in very many instances.

In an institution like the hospital with which I am connected, we naturally come face to face frequently enough with the question of treating the amenorrhea that is noted as an accompaniment of mental disease, and for a long time I have been experimenting with various therapeutic agents recommended for the treatment of menstrual disorders without obtaining perfect satisfaction from any, until I tried the method of treatment which I am about to describe.

What I was looking for was a safe and efficient emmenagogue, which gave positive results in cases of amenorrhea, dysmenorrhea, and suppressed menstruation, without either exciting or depressing the patient, without causing any disturbances on the part of the digestive tract, or the urinary tract, such as are met with in the use of most of the remedies classed as emmenagogues.

I knew that apiol, the active principle of *Apium petroselinum*, linne (parsley), was a substance that had been long known to possess marked emmenagogue properties, but that had not been used extensively in this country on account of certain unpleasant after-effects connected with its administration. On investigation, I found that apiol was first isolated by Joret and Homolle in 1855, and was at first recommended for malaria, as a substitute for that specific of specifics—quinine. Later its emmenagogue virtues became known, but it found far less favor in this country than in France, the American physicians being especially prone to reject any remedy that has disagreeable after-effects. Apiol seemed to me the ideal emmenagogue, and I was even tempted to try it, administering it in some way as to neutralize its irritant action, when I came across a statement in an article on the subject, to the effect that the apiol of the market, no matter where purchased, was full of a series of impurities, and that the bad after-effects of this drug were due to these impure elements.

The ordinary apiol of commerce, it seemed, was simply a mixture of impure principles obtained from parsley by extraction. The question was, therefore, to obtain such a preparation of apiol that eliminates the impurities that do the harmful work of the ordinary preparation. A number of chemists, in various countries have tried to purify apiol with varying success, but finally, within the last few years a pure product was obtained. It seems that the preparation which contains the purest product obtainable, which was prepared by the new process mentioned, is a pharmaceutical