

Frederick Stearns & Co.

Short Talks on Pharmaceutical Subjects—No. 23.

Cod Liver Oil

"AUTHORITIES AGREE that long before they came in contact with civilization, the Greenlanders, Laplanders and Esquimaux employed Cod Liver Oil as a medicine. The method used by these primitive people in catching the fish and obtaining the oil was exceedingly crude. The livers after being taken from the fish were exposed to the sun until the liver substance was gradually disintegrated and the oil exuded. The introduction of iron vessels, which occurred later, rendered the application of heat possible, and a larger amount of oil was obtained. The improvement in the process was one of quantity, but it is a question whether it was one of quality. In 1853 a new process for the manufacturing of Cod Liver Oil was introduced known as the steam process. The colorless oil produced by it was so completely different from the light brown oils hitherto in use and manufactured by the old process, that, according to its inventor, it was difficult to get people to believe that it was Cod Liver Oil at all. With the advent of the steam process there has not only been a great change in the color of the medicinal Cod Liver Oil from light brown to a very pale straw color, but something has been left out of the oil, namely, what is known by chemists as extractive matter. Richter, Schenck, De Jongh, Trousseau and Pidoux, Walsche, Oberghaus, Bouchardat, and a great number of other French, Dutch and German medical men consider the light brown Cod Liver Oil to be the most efficacious, and while it is admitted that the pale oil is more sightly in appearance, some of the best European physicians of to-day are protesting against it, and urging with good show of reason, that the active curative constituents which distinguish Cod Liver Oil from other oils and fats, such as butter, cream, the fat of meat, etc., etc., reside in the extractive matter left out of the oil by the modern steam process. They are accordingly prescribing the light brown oils of De Jongh, Isdahl, et al, and claim to obtain much better therapeutic effects therefrom.

"Now, when it is considered that the reputation of Cod Liver Oil was made several hundred years before the advent of the steam process, and that during all these years it maintained its high position as a medicinal agent, it must be admitted that the old time Cod Liver Oil possessed great value. Many of the virtues ascribed to Cod Liver Oil cannot be accounted for on the plea that it is simply a valuable fatty food, because no other fat has produced the same effects on the system as the oil derived from the liver of the cod. Since 1822 leading scientific men in various parts of the world have been investigating the subject of Cod Liver Oil chemistry for the purpose of ascertaining if possible to what principle, or principles, the peculiar alterative or stimulating properties of the oil were due. These researches have finally established the fact that the source of the extractive matter found in the oil is the liver parenchyma, and its occurrence in the oil is purely incidental. The fatty matter consists of nothing but fat, while the extractives contain the peculiar principles which have given Cod Liver Oil its great reputation as a therapeutic agent for so many centuries."

The above is an excerpt from our brochure "From Source to Finish," which gives a detailed description of the preparation of Wine of Cod Liver Oil. This little book we will gladly mail to any pharmacist who may be interested enough in the subject to write us for a copy.

Frederick Stearns & Co., Manufacturing Pharmacists,

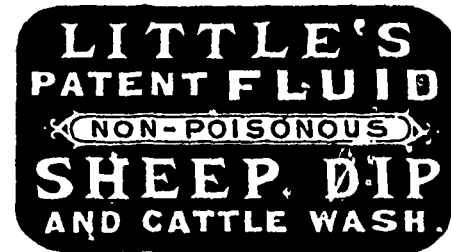
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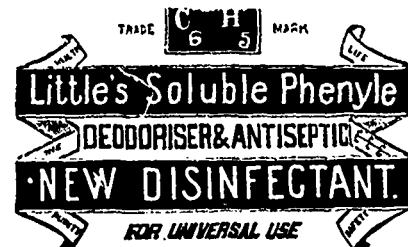
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