

quantity of mineral salts, and this seems to be also the case with rain-water, which contains invariably ammonia, nitrous and nitric acids; some sulphuric acid was also found in this water, derived from the smoke and cinders which fall on the roof of the building from the coal fires that heat the rooms. The following quantities of metals were found in one U. S. gallon of 231 cubic inches of the filtered water, that had stood in the pipes for one month :

1.079	grains	metallic	zinc.
0.537	"	"	iron.
2.503	"	"	lead.
0.082	"	"	copper.
0.049	"	"	arsenic.

4.250 grains.

Arsenic, copper, and probably iron, are derived from the lead pipe, manufactured from an inferior quality of lead and zinc from the lining of the tank. In supplying private houses or institutions with water through a system of pipes, care should be taken to find out whether the water to be supplied be pure or not; in the former case, and when rain-water is the source of supply, as it is in many sections of our State, lead pipes should be discarded, and tin-lined lead pipes substituted for them.

A NEW EXCIPIENT FOR SOME OF THE OFFICIAL AND OTHER PILL MASSES.*

BY G. WELBORN.

One of the subjects for investigation in the list compiled by the British Pharmaceutical Conference relates to the unsatisfactory condition which some of the pill masses of the Pharmacopœia acquire by long keeping.

It has doubtless been observed by every pharmacist who has had an extended experience in the preparation and dispensing of the official pill masses, that, as far as regards the keeping qualities of several of the masses in question, there is still much to be desired.

Deterioration is marked by widely different phases, and is dependent upon a variety of causes. In some instances, the masses are hygroscopic and become soft or sticky, *e.g.*, "pil. saponis comp.," "pil. scillæ comp.," and "pil. ipecac. c. scillâ." Others become dry through evaporation,—as "pil. colocynth. comp.," or, extremely

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