

The Preparation of Nitrate of Strychnine.

A useful paper on this subject has just appeared by M. Guignes, of Marseilles. He states that he has often noticed that students, in preparing this body by the official method of the French Codex, meet with somewhat bad results, in that the product they obtain is colored sometimes light, sometimes dark yellow. (This color is due to brucine.) He tried several times himself, following closely the directions of the Codex, and in every case obtained a colored crystal. The official method is as follows: Powdered strychnine is dissolved in nitric acid, diluted with five times its weight of water, adding acid until the reaction becomes neutral to litmus. The mixture is then evaporated on the water bath until there separate out crystals of the nitrate.

If the operation is conducted in the cold, the solution of the strychnine does not take place perfectly, and large excess of nitric acid is necessary. If the liquid be filtered and then evaporated it turns yellow, and the crystals obtained have the same color. Various experiments lead the author to state that the proportion of water in the Codex is too low. However, dilution up to 25 times the amount of water failed to produce satisfactory results, and the author turned to another method. He took

Strychnine 5 grs.
Distilled water..... 250 "

The strychnine was powdered and suspended in water, and placed on the water bath. Nitric acid (1 in 5) was then added, drop by drop, until the whole was dissolved, and the liquid was then concentrated, and the crystals obtained were quite colorless. These were dried between filter paper, and finally over sulphuric acid, in a dessicator. This latter operation can be conducted without fear, since the nitrate crystallises without water. A second crop of the strychnine salts can be obtained, leaving practically the whole of the brucine present as an impurity in the mother liquor. Experiments on the same sample, according to the method of the Codex, gave colored crystals.—*Journal de Chemie.*

LANOLINATED VASELIN AS AN OINTMENT BASIS.—G. Hell, in a communication to the Austrian Pharmaceutical Association, most highly recommends vaselin carrying 25 per cent of anhydrous lanolin, as a basis for ointments. Lanolin pure is somewhat too dear to use for this purpose, alone; but thus mixed this objection does not hold. Adeps lane added to three volumes of vaselin presents all the properties of pure lanolin, according to Hell, and the addition of water is altogether superfluous.

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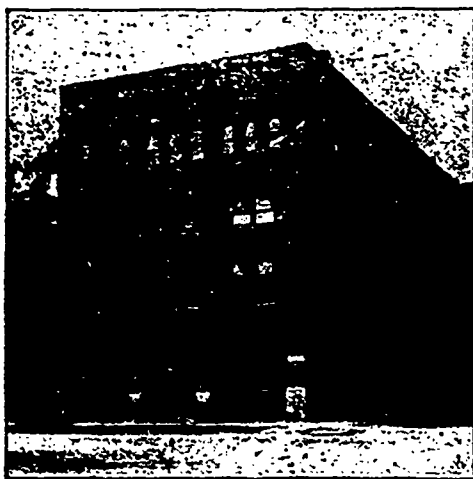
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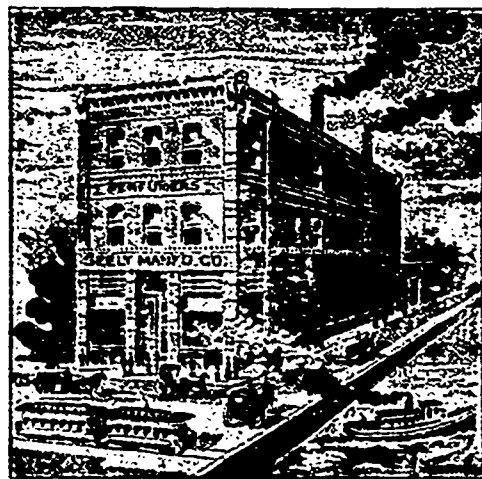


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