

## Pharmacy in England.

Tablets in Pharmacy.—New Machines and New Ideas.—Cloudy Ammonia with Lavender Water for the Bath—How to Fit Up a Dark Room for Photography—Mr. E. M. Holmes and the Fluckiger Memorial Gold Medal.

(By our own Correspondent).

The introduction of several hand-machines, suitable for the manufacture of compressed tablets at the dispensing counter, should enable pharmacists to rescue these articles from the list of factory-made preparations. Most of these machines are designed by pharmacists in the United States where novelties are more rapidly seized, and their best features developed than in England. Whilst our chemists have been disparaging the tablet and honestly enough pointing out its disadvantages, the American has seen its good points, recognized the opening, and steadily gone on producing cheaper and more useful machines. Two of them, that I have lately had an opportunity of examining, agree very closely in essential particulars. The plunger is brought down with a steady pressure—not a blow—by means of a lever, and the mould is adapted for gauging the size of tablet by being set in a table upon which the powder is placed. So far the principle was exactly the same, the only difference in the machines depended upon the method of displacing the tablet after compression. In the one case the reversing of the lever was supposed to move an arm that pushed the pellet off the lower part of die, in the other a small brush attempted to perform the same operation. Both, however, failed to act properly, and this still appears to be the desideratum of hand-machines.

The convenience of compressed drugs has been recognized all over the world. To travellers they are undoubtedly a boon, and as they occupy so much less space, the public appreciate them, or at least that part of the public which is constantly taking medicine, and is not happy if there is not a dose of medicine in the pocket. There is no limit to the uses of this form of compression—antiseptic tablets are prepared of permanganate of potash, whilst a recent invention is "citroids," containing the ingredients for preparing impromptu lemonade. One or two of the tablets are dropped into a bottle of water which is then securely corked, and after some time a highly aerated water, of lemonade character, is produced. The Bovril Company have brought out a tablet containing their extract of meat in a compact and portable form. Cannot some inventive genius bring out a tablet of ink, so that on dropping one or two tablets into water, a good writing ink would be produced? I am convinced there is money in the idea. In photography, tablets of pyrogallie acid and other developers have been a boon to the amateur. There must be many other crafts where the method would prove advantageous.

The latest improvement upon house-

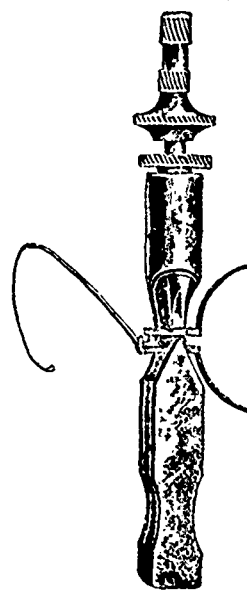
hold cloudy ammonia, first brought out by Scrubb's, is the addition of oil of lavender or bergamot. This form is recommended for the bath and toilet and is probably an improvement, although it is a question if it is worthy of the titles bestowed upon it, because it has been dignified as household ammonia with lavender water or eau de Cologne. These preparations are certainly popular if one may judge from the way that several "cutting" chemists have filled their windows with these articles. Probably this is because it is one of those lines which can be sold cheaply, look tempting, as a large bottle can be given, and yet leaves a good margin of profit. Usually a 10 oz bottle is supplied for about 16 cca. The stronger preparations like Scrubb's, have india-rubber stoppers, but the cutting chemists get over this difficulty by supplying a more dilute article, and can thus use corks. The easiest way to make a cloudy preparation is by dissolving a small quantity of curd soap in water and add strong liquid ammonia until the final product contains about one part of strong ammonia in seven part of distilled water. The addition of a few drops of oil of lavender makes the lavender water combination, and triple orange-flower water with a few drops of bergamot forms a fair eau de Cologne compound. Some attention should be paid to the label and the outside wrapper should be an attractive colored paper.

Many chemists would undertake to fit up a dark room and take up the sale of photographic cameras, chemicals, and accessories if they knew just how to proceed, and what little expense need be incurred. In some of the provincial towns in England, owing to the apathy of the chemist, the jeweller or bookseller, who has absorbed an optician's trade, has seen the need of providing accommodation for the amateur camerist. If there is a spare room at the back of the shop it can very easily be converted into a dark room. The window should have a frame, across which can be stretched American cloth, or other material impervious to light, with a square of about 12 inches cut out. This space should be covered over with two thicknesses of a ruby-colored fabric and one of orange-colored paper, which will afford just sufficient non-actinic light that is necessary. Under the window should be a bench or table with the necessary sink close at hand, and good water supply. A few shelves are required for the reagents and storing apparatus. If the door is not light tight, it is as well to have a curtain of thick, black material that can be drawn right across it. For use at night time, it is very convenient to have a gas supply, fitted with an argand-burner and ruby glass. Above all, let the chemist who undertakes photographic trade, master, at all events, the rudiments of the craft, as I mentioned in a previous letter. It means better business to himself, and more satisfaction to his client.

The award of the first Fluckiger Gold

Memorial medal, by the members of the German "Apotheker-Verein," to Mr. E. M. Holmes, the distinguished curator of the museum of the Pharmaceutical Society, is a valuable and substantial recognition of the important services rendered by Mr. Holmes in pharmacognosy. For nearly 25 years, Mr. Holmes has been the leading authority in England upon vegetable drugs, and his contributions, chiefly published in the *Pharmaceutical Journal*, have been most valuable, both in detecting adulterations and recognition of new plants. He is also one of the greatest living authorities on mosses, and has discovered a number of species himself. His modesty and retiring nature have doubtless prevented the earlier recognition of his merit, or we should have long ago seen his name with the appendage F.R.S. He is almost a public servant, inasmuch as all sorts of calls are made upon his knowledge of medicinal plants and his periodic visits to Kew, in order to compare specimens with the Kew herbarium, have made him frequently an adviser to the Government officials. His garden at Sevenoaks is filled with interesting plants, and under the glass frames are numerous exotic and rare plants, raised from seeds or seedlings, specially obtained from all parts of the world in order to solve the botanical origin of a drug that may be in doubt. Pharmacists are proud that out of their ranks has sprung a scientific man who has done such valuable work in promoting botanical knowledge, and that foreign recognition has unanimously placed its mark of approbation upon his services.

### A New Lens-Setting Tool.



Our illustration shows a little tool of interest to opticians that has just been placed on the market by W. G. Fay, Springfield, Ohio. Its object is to facilitate lens setting, and it is said to be very effective for this purpose. It is easy of manipulation, and greatly assists in placing the lens in the frame and keeping the screw and temple from falling out. It is specially adapted to gold filled rid-

ing bow frames, and is an effective time-saver. Those using the tool are said to appreciate it highly. Mr. Fay's various contrivances are noted for efficacy, and stand well in trade reputation. Mr. Fay's agents for Canada is the M. O. Co., Montreal and Toronto.