

is ever prescribed alone; I cannot recall an instance in my experience. It is generally associated in tonic mixtures, diluted with syrups or aqueous liquids, so that the dose of the tincture itself rarely ever exceeds a teaspoonful. It was, I think, an oversight in our Pharmacopœia to direct so fine a powder as No. 50 for this tincture.

When a weak spirit is used in the percolation of any drug, as for example, columbo, rhubarb, gentian, senega, &c., which contain a large proportion of albuminous, mucilaginous or gummy matter, a too fine powder should be avoided. When a coarse powder is used, the menstruum has better play, and the active principles are more thoroughly exhausted, while the inert and objectionable matters are left behind. I was forcibly impressed with this fact, several years ago, during a series of experiments in devising an improved formula for syrup of senega, which was published, with some practical hints upon the subject, in the *American Journal of Pharmacy*, pages 229 and 302, 1870.

In such cases, when a too fine powder is used, the menstruum soon becomes surcharged with soluble inert matter, which prevents the ready and thorough permeation of the drug particles, and at the same time blunts, as it were, its solvent action, in consequence of which the residue in the percolator is often left rich in the active principles of the drug. Every observing pharmacist, I presume, who has had much experience in percolation, has witnessed this condition of things.

I always have been, and am still, an advocate of fine powders for percolation whenever they are admissible, and especially when a highly concentrated solution of the active principle of the drug is required, as in fluid extracts, &c.

It should be our aim to endeavor not only to increase the stability, and improve the flavor and appearance of a number of our official tinctures, syrups, &c., which are yet needing amendment, but we should also endeavor to simplify and render the mode of their manufacture more easy to manage, so that even the young and inexperienced pharmacist may make his own preparations with ease and certainty.

No one will attempt to deny that the official formula for tincture of columbo is open to criticism and needs improvement, and if the formula proposed in this paper should be found, after a fair trial, to be faulty and is not satisfactory, I hope that some brother pharmacist may offer a better one.

I would here remark that many of our official tinctures might be very much improved in flavor, and thus rendered more palatable, by the addition of some aromatic substance or substances, without in the least interfering with their therapeutic value. In fact, I believe that in many instances their medicinal properties and usefulness would be greatly enhanced by their improved flavor. There are several of our official tinctures so insupportably bitter and dis-