

NOTE CONCERNING THE LAXATIVE PROPERTIES OF THE TRIBASIC SALTS OF PHENOLPHTHALIC ACID

L. G. ROWNTREE

From the Pharmacological Laboratory of the Johns Hopkins University

Received for publication, May 1, 1911

Owing to its efficiency as a laxative, phenolphthalein at present occupies a position of great importance in modern therapeutics. It has attained great popularity with the profession and also with drug firms in general by whom it is exploited alone or in combination with other laxatives under various trade names as Phenolphthaline laxative, Probilin, Prunoids, Laxine, Laxaphen, Exurgine, Phenalein, Phenolax wafers, Thalosen, Laxothalen tablets, Veracolate, etc.

Its pharmacological properties and its efficiency as usually administered by mouth have tempted various workers to utilize it or one of its salts or substitution derivatives as a subcutaneous purgative. Fleig¹ has introduced into medical practice as a hypodermic purgative, a soluble derivative of phenolphthalein which he has called "sodophthalyl." Abel and Rowntree² and Rowntree³ have demonstrated the value of phenolphthalein and more particularly of phenoltetrachlorophthalein in this connection when administered subcutaneously in solution in olive oil. It is established beyond doubt that these preparations possess very valuable laxative properties when so administered, and also that no general undesirable concomitant action is produced elsewhere in the organism. It must be admitted, however, that the bulkiness of injection (20 cc. of the oil solution) stands in the way of

¹ Archives Internat. de Pharmacodyn. et de Thérapie, xviii, 327.

² This Journal, vol. i, p. 231.

³ Jour. Amer. Med. Assoc., 1910, vol. liv, p. 344.