recent inflation in the price of iodide of potassium, and the high figure which it at present maintains, demand the utmost economy in its use. In view of this it may be opportune to review the various processes which have been devised for the preparation of the biniodide of mercury, so that we may be able to obtain the best results with the least possible expenditure of materials.

The first process which might be noticed is that in which the biniodide is formed by a direct union of the elements composing it. Mercury and iodide are triturated, or agitated together, a little alcohol being added to control the reaction. In inexperienced hands this process yields an imperfect product; is exceedingly wasteful and troublesome, and may be so dismissed.

A better process is that of the *British Pharmacopœia*, 4 parts of perchloride of mercury, dissolved in 60 parts of boiling water, are mixed with 5 parts of iodide of potassium, in 20 parts of boiling water. The iodide is, theoretically and practically, one-tenth of one part in excess of that actually required for the decomposition. Its object is to prevent contamination of the product with the mercuric salt. This excess appears useless, first, because, with any ordinary care, the operator can ascertain the moment the decomposition is complete; and again if any slight excess of mercuric salt happened to be present it would certainly be removed in the subsequent copious washings to which the biniodide is subjected. This excess is not only wasteful as far as the iodide of potassium is concerned, but of the biniodide also, as the latter salt is soluble in the former. The use of boiling water is unnecessary, as the quantity ordered would, if cold, dissolve the salts readily. The precipitate from a hot solution is more granular than that from one which is cold, and for the preparation of ointments, it will be conceded that the finer and softer salt is to be preferred.

In the process of the *U. S. Pharmacopœia*, the excess of iodide is the same as that of the *B. P.*, but cold water is employed for solution.

The most satisfactory and economical results I have obtained from the decomposition of the salts alluded to, have been by employing 4 parts of the mercuric salt, in powder, dissolved in 64 parts of cold water, adding a sufficient quantity of solution of iodide of potassum, (4·9 parts in 10 parts of water). The yield will be 6·7 parts, of a salt sufficiently dry to be pulverulent. This