

conducted into a solution of potash. Additional water was added, and the process repeated four times. The dilute solution of potassium cyanide furnished by the distillate was then titrated with decinormal silver nitrate solution. In the second method the distillate was passed directly into silver nitrate solution, and the precipitate of silver cyanide weighed. The volumetric method was found preferable. Tests were made to ascertain whether it was possible to obtain all the hydrocyanic acid by distillation, and this was found difficult, so that the authors think that even with five distillations the deficiency of hydrocyanic acid will amount to about one per cent. of the quantity present. The average quantity of acid found in five samples of thick bark by the first method was 0.351 per cent., and in the thin bark, 0.260 per cent. This is more than twice the amount reported by previous observers.

Lodge Practice is not the worst manifestation of medical aberration. A lower form of degradation is that which has unfortunately shown itself in Toronto by the establishment of what is termed The Workingmen's Medical Association, of which the headquarters are to be found on Queen street east. The object of this concern, as set forth in the by-laws, is to provide its members with "the best medical skill and the highest grade of medicine at the lowest possible cost." This, it is stated, may be secured through the membership of the association, which can be secured by an entrance fee of ten cents, and a weekly payment of three cents. The only stipulation as to the supply of medicine is that members must furnish their own bottles. For medical calls after 8 p.m. an extra fifty cents per visit must be paid, and confinements, vaccinations, chronic diseases and major fractures are subject to extra charges. This cut will be hard on the physician who practises among the poor, and usually does at least half his work for charity, and it will also affect the dispensing druggist. If the advice and medicine are commensurate with the pay, the patient cannot certainly expect much, and is probably not likely to be disappointed.

Distilled Extract of Witch Hazel is now one of the most popular of external applications, and, as far as we have had opportunity of judging, is also one of the biggest humbugs. A manufacturer has to comply with the demands of trade, and, as such, we have, in the past, been instrumental in turning out some thousands of gallons of the stuff, but always with a conscience somewhat sullied, and a feeling of contempt for a public that insist on being humbugged. If the hazel were anything but *witch* hazel the charm would be lost, for few people could be persuaded to put their trust in a 10 or 15 per cent. mixture of alcohol and water, which, with a trace of acetic acid, and an

infinitesimal odor, the distilled hamamel is really is. Mr. W. D. Hœffken (*Bulletin of Pharmacy*), has lately made an examination of seventeen commercial samples, and finds the quantity of alcohol to vary from 8.76 to 12.79 per cent., by volume. The reaction was always acid, and in a few cases the extractive amounted to 0.1 per cent. The writer concludes by saying that the compound is "nothing more or less than a highly diluted alcohol, containing traces of valueless extractive matter, and a small quantity of a soluble oil, to which its peculiar and agreeable odor is due."

Carbolated Camphor, made from two parts of camphor and one of carbolic acid, and resembling camphor phenique, is known to every druggist, but it is not all that are acquainted with the fact the caustic character of the acid is neutralized or overcome by the camphor. A correspondent of *Merck's Market Report* emphasizes this, and also calls attention to the usefulness of the combination, in the form of a ten per cent. ointment, as an application for old sores, piles, and burns. For the latter, when the cuticle is unimpaired, the ointment gives speedier relief than any other common remedy. He also throws out the idea that camphor might be used as an antidote to carbolic acid, but, of course, in this connection, it must not be forgotten that camphor itself is a poison, and the combination may not be less so than the constituents. An intimation is given that spirit of camphor might be applied when carbolic acid is spilled upon the hands, as often happens, and this is certainly easy of verification.

The Presence of Starch in elm bark, flax seed, and mustard seed is a question of considerable commercial importance, as starchy substances are frequently employed as adulterants of the powdered drugs. This was made the subject of inquiry by Prof. Lloyd, who gave the results of his experiments in a paper read at the recent meeting of the Am. Pharm. Assoc. He found that elm bark gives the iodine reaction characteristic of starch, but that neither flax nor mustard seeds, when pure, contain this substance. Commercial samples are, however, generally mixed with foreign seeds, some of them containing starch, and ground mustard and linseed meal, will, from this cause, give the starch reaction.

The editor of *Merck's Market Report*, who is undoubtedly a gallant man, thinks that the new woman has a place in pharmacy which she has already commenced to occupy, and that she has come to stay. All doubts on this point are said to be dispelled by the recent action of the American Pharmaceutical Association, which elected a woman to its third vice-presidency. "The next meeting of the Association," says