

On recent physiological data, Moller reasons out a natural selection on the part of lecithin in the economy, for these newly discovered therapic and jecoleic acids, and claims that the therapeutic virtue of the oil depends upon maintaining the integrity of these glycerides in the natural oil by certain improved methods (Moller's), and that there is no active principle in cod-liver oil which can be isolated.

In Heyerdahl's examination for ptomaines, after the method of Gautier and Mourgues, using the light colored raw medicinal oil, he concludes that ptomaines have not had time to form. Gautier and Mourgues classify the alkaloids discovered by them as katabolic products formed during life (leucomaines). Moller claims that these products cannot be found in steam-prepared oil, but only in oil in which there has been opportunity for decomposition to occur—the light brown oil. In the case of the darker oil the temperature at which it is prepared volatilizes these substances, and therefore they are absent.

The clinician in searching for facts in the various investigations of cod-liver oil will get somewhat mixed. On the face of chemical arguments the opponents of the alleged alkaloids appear to have the best of the discussion. However, most of the arguments, both pro and con, are clouded with the appearance of commercialism, and must be taken for what they are worth. On the other hand, there are numerous reports on the clinical use of the so-called alkaloids giving favorable results, and while the majority of these reports appear to have been made on rather superficial observations, some credit must be given them. On account of the difficulty of administering cod-liver oil, I have for several years discarded its use. The clinical exhibition of the so-called alkaloids was undertaken with the view of determining their value, if any, as a substitute for the oil itself. The preparation used was Stearns' Wine of Cod-liver Oil, which is said to contain the alkaloids as isolated by Gautier and Mourgues. During a period of eighteen months this preparation has been administered to about seventy-five patients, private and clinical. The duration of treatment varied from three weeks to four months' continuous administration in each case. Some five or six cases have been more or less continuously under treatment for over a year. The nature of these cases has been already stated, and with the exception of two or three cases of gastro-intestinal troubles, were all such as are eligible for the administration of cod-liver oil. The general result noted in all such cases was increased facility in digestion and assimilation, and corresponding gain in strength and weight, with an improved appetite. The specific result noted in different classes of cases was as follows: In chronic bronchitis, either occurring alone or as complicating