

the separation and crystallization of large quantities of phosphates, especially when made by the process I have described. Whether these phosphates are an item of its activity I am unable to state, but I am inclined to consider them as such.

According to Wenzell, to whose investigations I have previously referred, the substance to which ergot owes its principal activity, viz., ecbo-line, is soluble in water; this, therefore, is an additional reason for reducing the quantity of spirit. I will recommend, therefore, the addition of one-fourth instead of one half its volume of rectified spirit; thus prepared it maintains its therapeutic effects equally with the other.

From a consideration of the continental and transatlantic formulæ I am of opinion that our British liquid extracts maintains a superiority; that this may at some future period be replaced by a better is a reasonable desire. I have lately been engaged in the preparation of an ammoniated extract, the addition of ammonia being said to give ergot increased activity. Results that have been obtained from its use are promising; further therapeutic data are, however, required: when these are forthcoming I trust to be able to give you a report upon it.

These remarks principally consist of my own experience in the pharmacy of ergot; it is a drug to which we cannot devote too much care and attention, for it is often the thread upon whose strength the life of mother and offspring depends.

WINE OF TAR.*

BY J. B. MOORE.

The formula usually employed by pharmacists in making wine of tar is that recommended by the late Prof. Procter ("U. S. Dispensatory," edition 1870, page 680,) which, as is well known to all, is a very troublesome and rather complicated process, while it affords a very unreliable product, being feeble in tar strength and very unsightly in appearance.

The copious mucilaginous deposit which takes place in the preparation on standing, when made by that process, appears to carry with it almost all the virtues of the tar which it may have contained when freshly made, and leaves the supernatant liquid of little more than the strength of ordinary tar-water. This process of depletion seems to continue almost indefinitely.

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