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AND

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—O:O—

—OFFICE HOURS:—

9 to 11 a.m., 2 50 to 4 p.m., and 7 to 8 p.m.

Toronto, May, 1868.

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then, it appears that the Indian juice is more fluid than that collected in Asia Minor. Does this partly depend upon the absence of pectic acid or of mucilage? This investigation must be expected from chemists having at their command considerable quantities of the residues of genuine opiums; they may state whether I am correct in saying that a pectic body must have a place among the normal constituents of the poppy juice.

After the treatment of the opium with ammonia, water is without any action upon the residue, which even does not swell; I consequently cannot agree with those chemists who admit bassorine as one of the principles of opium.

Examined under the microscope, the opium powder thus deprived of all soluble matters, shows very distinctly that it consists now exclusively of fragments of the capsule, which by incineration yield some ash, but not the whole amount of it, the inorganic salts having been already partly removed by alcohol, water and acetic acid. Among them a comparatively large proportion of alkaline sulphates, as well as of sulphate of lime is always met with. Sulphuric acid is set at liberty, if the precipitate obtained by neutral acetate of lead is decomposed by sulphuretted hydrogen in an alcoholic solution, which causes the mucilage to be precipitated.

In the manner indicated I completely exhausted 10 grammes of good Turkish opium successively with the above liquids, devoting about a week to this task. The results will, I hope, clearly show which direction should be followed, in order to promote our knowledge of opium. It is that part extracted by alcohol which contains the constituents not yet known, and upon which further researches, which I hope to institute, may probably throw some light.

The following numbers, calculated for 100 parts, were obtained. The opium yielded—

To benzol, .	10.33 =	4.50 narcotine and
" alcohol, .	57.67	6.33 caoutchouc, with
		traces of fatty matter.
" water, .	9.67	representing about 20 per
" acetic acid, 1.73		cent. of unknown bodies.
		of mucilage.
" ammonia, 7.33		of pectic acid and
By incineration 10.38		coloring matter.
per cent. were burnt (cellu-		
lose), leaving		
2.39 ash; the whole amount of		
the ash in the drug under		
examination being		
equal to 5.32 per cent.,		
when it was directly		
burnt.		

100.00

I have observed that the pectic acid is not obtained immediately in a pure state; it appears to be always accompanied by some of the so-called humic bodies. Yet by dissolving it again in ammonia and precipitating by alcohol, it at last becomes nearly colourless and devoid of inorganic matter. It is always very difficult to powder; when heated, it evolves acid vapors, but in a less pure state it retains some albuminous matter yielding then ammoniacal vapors.

The purified pectic acid, when thoroughly boiled with water, partly forms a jelly, which at first is almost imperceptible, being perfectly colorless and transparent. Neutral acetate of lead somewhat thickens it, without

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C. W. WALKEM,

Secretary.

May 1868.

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