

On the Approximate Measurement of Liquids.

A teacup	contains	about	four	fluid	ounces.
" wineglass	"	"	two	fluid	ounces.
" tablespoon	"	"	half	a	fluid ounce.
" dessert-spoon	"	"	two	fluidrachms.	
" teaspoon	"	"	one	fluidrachm.	
" drop	is	equal	to	about	one minim.

To demonstrate *how near* these measures coincide is the object of this paper, and to this end, a few experiments have been made which, together with some facts obtained from other sources, are now laid before the reader.

The habit of prescribing medicine to be administered in drops is fast falling into disuse. Indeed, in regular practice, it may be said to have ceased altogether. It frequently happens, however, that some of the quantities ordered in prescription are regulated by this mode of measurement. This is especially the case with regard to the essential oils; and, unfortunately with many of the recent class of fluid extracts, many of which are ordered *'guttatim*. In domestic practice, this mode is almost universal; and of all others, the stronger preparations, such as laudanum, are so estimated.

Various experiments have been made to determine the size of drops; amongst others, those of Alsop and Shuttleworth of England, and Durand and Procter, of America, may be mentioned as furnishing the chief authority on which the statements published in pharmaceutical works are founded. The first of these investigators found the size of drops to vary with the size and shape of the vessels from which they were allowed to fall. To remedy this an ingenious and simple little instrument was constructed which bears the name of Alsop's *minimeter*. A list of the number of drops afforded by a fluidrachm of different liquids as dropped from the minimeter, was given; from this we learn, that drops of different liquids have not all the same size, but under similar conditions, represent, severally, *tolerably* constant quantities. We need not detail the values assigned to drops of the liquids examined but refer the reader for further information on this part of the subject to the list of works appended below.*

From an examination of the records of the experiments referred

* Alsop. *Mohr & Redwood's Practical Pharmacy*, p. 46.

Shuttleworth. *Parciva's Prescription Book*, p. 114.

Durand. *Journal of the Phila. Col. of Pharm.*, 1, 169, or *U.S. Dispensatory*, p. 1638, 12th ed.

Procter. *U. S. Dispensatory*, 12th ed., p. 1247.