water and a few drops of solution of chloride of barium. A preci-Pitate will thus be obtained from any commercial specimen of pure If nitric acid containing small traces of H₂ SO₄ which do acid. not show on the mere addition of a solution of BaCl₂, is neutralized or nearly neutralized with pure carbonate of sodium (quite free from sulphate), the mixture will then turn cloudy on the addition of a solution of a barium salt. It is on this account that the presence of even very small traces of H_2 SO₄ is often very annoying to the analyst. The reason that manufacturers do not succeed in producing nitric acid of perfect purity by the method described, is that they do not reject enough of the acid passing over at the beginning, and that they carry on the distillation too far towards the end, and, finally, that they use impure nitrate of potassium. Howard's pure nitrate of potassium, generally considered as a very pure preparation, still contains appreciable quantities of chloride, which must be removed by recrystallization (stirring the solution well during crystallization, so as to prevent the formation of large crystals) before it can be used for the manufacture of pure nitric acid.

Hydrocyanic Acid .-- In a preparation like this, the strength must, of course, be a far more important feature than the purity. The traces of sulphuric acid frequently present seem to me very little, if at all, objectionable in a preparation, the medicinal dose of which is so very small, and which, moreover, is not required in a perfect state of purity for scientific purposes. But the great dis-Parity in the strength of different specimens of this acid is most objectionable and serious, considering its powerful nature. The pharmacopœia requires it to contain 2 per cent. of the anhydrous acid HCN, but my experience tells me that the hydrocyanic acid used for dispensing in druggists' shops varies from two to about a quarter of a per cent., and even less. I know of cases in which two drachms and half an ounce of the acid labelled Acidum hydrocyanicum P.B. have been given to dogs without bringing on the least indisposition. The reason of this is, that the preparation is kept in bottles, the stoppers of which do not fit tightly, so that HCN is continually escaping, and can be distinctly noticed by smell without moving the stopper. This is the case with nearly all the common 1 and 2 oz. stoppered blue glass bottles in which the acid is generally kept by retail chemists. How very necessary it is to keep it in bottles with well-fitting ground stoppers, and tied over with bladder or gutta percha tissue, and how very great a change it undergoes even in a short time, may be seen from the following:-I purchased a two oz. bottle of the pharmacopœia acid, treshly made, from a very respectable wholesale house, and at once estimated its strength by volumetric analysis. It contained 1.6 instead of 2 per cent. It was kept in the same bottle without being tied over, and the escape between stopper and neck was noticeable at some distance. After twenty-four hours it contained 1.2, after two