

The Drop in Cocaine.

Somewhat to the astonishment of wholesale druggists, the cocaine manufacturers on March 9th gave notice of a fresh reduction in the price of the anæsthetic, the decline in price on this occasion being a little over 8 per cent.—viz., from 14s. to 12s. 10d. per oz. for hydrochlorate in 100-oz. lots. The increased importation of crude cocaine and the reduced prices at which that product is said to be offered are put forward as reasons for the decline, but there are probably other contributory causes. At any rate, although cocaine is now lower in price than it has been since, in 1884, it first became a commercial article, very little confidence is felt in the stability of the alkaloid. Last year was a most unstable one in the cocaine market, the wholesale quotations having changed on an average once a month.

The cause of this disturbance lay chiefly in the appearance in the market of a new manufacturer, who began by cutting the convention rates, and provoked reprisals. After a sharp contest matters settled down in the autumn to a general price of about 14s. 6d., although the previously existing absolute unanimity among the makers had not survived the shock of the struggle. The general view was that prices would remain pretty low during the present year, but as far as supplies were known to exist in second hands a rather uneventful year was expected. All the wholesale firms are pretty well stocked, and, while it is believed that the article cannot bear much further cutting without becoming unprofitable to the manufacturers, the knowledge that any agreement among the makers to raise the price to an exorbitant figure would bring new manufacturers into the field suffices to preserve the peace of mind of middlemen and consumers.—*Chemist and Druggist*.

Action for Damages Against a Wholesale Drug House.

The case of Dr. F. R. England against Messrs. Kerry, Watson & Co., wholesale druggists of Montreal, was tried before Mr. Justice Archibald and a special jury. The circumstances of the case are probably well known to most of our readers. Dr. England, who evidently dispensed his own medicine, telephoned to H. H. Dart & Co. for two ounces of bismuth, and received a package marked "Bismuth Trinit, 2 oz." Mrs. England took a dose of from 30 to 40 grains. Shortly afterwards she complained of a pain in her stomach. Dr. England administered emetics, and gave relief. About ten days afterward Mrs. England died, and it was alleged that death was caused by the administration of the drug, and which Dr. England claimed was tartar emetic, which had been supplied in place of bismuth.

Mr. Dart claimed that the drug had been supplied to him as "bismuth" by Kerry, Watson & Co., hence the action taken against the latter firm. The de-

fence submitted that they had never sold the drug under the circumstances referred to, and therefore could not be held responsible for damages caused by a third party. They also claimed that death resulted from natural causes, and causes other than those alleged by the doctor. An analysis of the supposed "bismuth" which Mr. Dart had furnished was found to be tartar emetic. The evidence of the government medical experts, and Drs. Gidwood and Fafard, favored the theory that death had not resulted from poisoning, but from peritonitis and the other complaints mentioned.

The verdict of the jury was that Mrs. England's death had been accelerated, though not to any appreciable extent, by her having taken a dose of tartar emetic in mistake for bismuth, and that Dr. England himself had suffered no pecuniary loss by her death, and that his son had suffered loss to the extent of \$1,000. Judgment was therefore given against Kerry, Watson & Co. for this amount. The case will be appealed.

Vanilla Extracts.

(1) To 130 grams of vanilla, finely cut, and 1 gram of potassium carbonate, add 100 grams of boiling water, allow to cool, and then add 500 grams of 95 per cent. alcohol, macerate for at least 48 hours and filter. (2) Musk, 0.5 gram; potassium carbonate, 0.5 gram; vanilla beans (cut), 30 grams; boiling water, 120 grams; alcohol, 560 grams. The boiling water is poured over the musk, vanilla, and potassium carbonate, allowed to cool, when the alcohol is added, and the whole allowed to macerate 14 days, when it is filtered.—*Drug. Ztg.*

Fluid Extracts by Dialysis.

Golaz (*Annal. Pharm.*) proposes to obtain the active constituents of vegetables in their natural condition by extracting them by means of dialysis. To this end he bruises the medicinal plants and places the pulp into a dialyzer surrounded by 90 per cent. alcohol. The tincture thus obtained contains from 34 to 45 per cent. of alcohol, the extra water present being derived solely from the green plant. The author thinks these tinctures, or field extracts, exactly represent the medicinal virtues of the drugs. One part of the finished extract is supposed to represent an equal weight of the herb.

HIS DESCRIPTION.—A little boy whose elder sister is much interested in photography, and who gives the family the benefit of many observations about her work, was taken to the court-house to see the end of a certain trial. He came home and told his mother about it. "The judge made a speech to the jury," he said, "and then sent them into a little dark room to develop."—*Boston Transcript*.

Cycling Proverbs.

Politeness is like a pneumatic tire; there is not much in it, but it eases many a jolt in the journey of life.

A pleasant disposition, like oil in a bicycle bearing, reduces friction and prevents a world of wear and tear.

Ambition is like a bicycle saddle; though much sat upon, it generally manages to be on top.

The work of the world, like a bicycle, would soon stop, were it not for the cranks.

Like a link in a bicycle chain, we may not amount to much individually, but collectively we make the wheels go around.

Life is like a bicycle run; some worry, fret, and scorch along, and soon reach the end, while others take it easy and enjoy themselves as they go.—*American Journal of Photography*.

Rothschild's Rules.

The elder Baron Rothschild had these rules posted upon the walls of his bank: Skun liquors.

Dare to go forward.

Never be discouraged.

Never tell business lies.

Be polite to everybody.

Employ your time well.

Be prompt in everything.

Pay your debts promptly.

Bear all troubles patiently.

Do not reckon upon chance.

Make no useless acquaintances.

Be brave in the struggle of life.

Maintain your integrity as a sacred thing.

Never appear something more than you are.

Take time to consider, and then decide positively.

Carefully examine into every detail of your business.

"The Non-Hereditary of Inebriety," by Leslie E. Keeley, M.D., LL.D., is the title of a timely volume now in the press of S. C. Griggs & Co. The author endeavors to show that inebriety is a disease, and that it, as well as other diseases, is not hereditary. The work is said to differ from others on inebriety in its application of the doctrines of the variation of species and natural selection to cell life, thus showing the causes and nature of disease, its modern scientific treatment, and the philosophy of immunity to disease in general, and inebriety in particular—all in language within the comprehension of the general reader. The international reputation of the author as an original investigator in matters pertaining to inebriety should make this work of more than ordinary value to scientists, the medical profession, and to all who are, by legislation or otherwise, endeavoring to correct the evils of intemperance.