of lime, more sandy impurities than usual, and only 43.5 per cent. of its active principle, the resin. The next variety, which may be called amylaceous scammony, presents a variable proportion of fecula, and along with this a less proportion of a principle corresponding in properties with lignin. Of several specimens of this kind I have examined, there is one which contained 20 per cent. of fecula, and about 10 of lignin; and its active resin formed only 37 per cent., being less than one-half of that of the genuine drug. This adulteration is not materially different from that indicated by Dioscorides; who says that the makers of scammony mixed with it the *ῥεσβινον αλωγον*, the flour of a species of pulse, believed on the authority of Sibthorpe to be the *Ervum ervilia*, or bitter vetch. The amylaceous scammony presents commonly an ash-grey colour, and generally a waxy, but at times a somewhat resinous lustre. The last adulteration of importance is with fecula and carbonate of lime together. The appearance of this sort is much the same with that of the last. Frequently where there is a large quantity of chalk, I have found about 4 per cent. of fecula, for the presence of which it is not very easy to account; but often also the proportion is much larger. In one specimen I have found 18.5 per cent. of carbonate of lime, and about 17 of fecula and lignin; and the resin amounted to 42.5 per cent. Now, all these spurious samples, containing only about half the active ingredient of the pure drug, were considered to be fair average specimens of the scammony of the English market. It need scarcely be added, that the compound colocynth pill made with pure scammony, instead of the common article of the shops, is very different in power from the pill usually met with. It has appeared to me, as we should expect, about twice as strong."—*Ibid.*

52. *New process for covering pills with Gelatine.*—M. GAROT describes, in the *Journal de Pharmacie* (Feb. 1838), the following process devised by himself, by means of which, pills of every kind may be enveloped in a covering of gelatine, and thus administered without the odour or taste being perceptible. The pills having been made of the desired size, are placed upon the point of a pin—M. G. uses long, very slender, black pins. Purified gelatin is then melted with a moderate heat, care being taken to add a little water, so that in cooling it becomes a very consistent jelly; two or three drachms of water are usually sufficient for an ounce of gelatine. When the gelatine is dissolved, it is kept in this state in a water bath, otherwise a pelicle will form on its surface, which impedes the operation. Things being thus arranged each pill is dipped into the melted gelatine, and then withdrawn with a rotatory motion, and the pin then stuck in a paste or pin-cushion, so that the pill is exposed to the air. After fifty pills have been covered in this way, the opening formed by the pin is to be closed. This is effected by holding the pin horizontally in one hand, the pill being held in the other, and exposing the pin to a candle, the heat melts the gelatine, and on separating carefully the pin from the pill the small opening closes. By this method two hundred pills may be covered in an hour by any one that has the least skill in manipulation. What is remarkable is that the same gelatine will answer for covering pills of different kinds, as assafoetida, copaiba, &c., the gelatine in which the pills are immersed not preserving the odour of the substance placed in it.

MEDICAL STATISTICS.

53. *Great Mortality of Foundlings brought up by hand.*—M. L'ABBE GAILLARD, in his *Recherches sur les enfans trouves*, states that at Parthenay, where the foundlings are suckled, the mortality was 35 per cent. the first year, whilst at X—, where the children are equally well attended to, but are brought up by hand, the mortality the first year was 80 per cent.; of 655 children received at this last hospital only 60 lived twelve years. The greater number of deaths at X—, took place the first month after birth; and the mortality was at a maximum in autumn, a fact confirmed by many years observation at X—, and other establishments, where the children are not supplied with natural food:—