ART. XLI.—A new form of "Container" for use in Museums of Economic Botany; by GEORGE LINCOLN GOODALE.

It has been found so difficult to procure prismatic glass bottles with perfectly even sides and faces, that an attempt was made in May last, in the Botanical Museum of Harvard University, to prepare a new kind of "container" with a flat front. A simple modification of the well-known *passe-partout* appeared most practicable. Many experiments were tried in order to meet the obvious objections, and at last, a form was devised which has appeared to answer every reasonable demand. At the request of many correspondents, the following details are given.

The materials are (1) lantern-slide glass of best quality and of standard size. (2) Strips of hard wood of different widths, ranging from one-sixteenth of an inch to one inch, but of perfectly uniform thickness, namely one-sixteenth of an inch for the widths below one-half and one-eighth inch for the widths above this. (3) Strong fish-glue in a liquid form. That which comes in Dennison's tubes has proved satisfactory. (4) A strong solution of potassium dichromate or a twenty per cent solution of formalin. (5) Hard paraffin. (6) Strong binding-strips well made with good glue.

From three strips of the wood neatly fastened between two thoroughly cleaned glass slides, one procures a container of the desired thickness. This is filled with the specimen of seeds or other objects and then is closed by placing the fourth strip in position. All four edges are next dipped for an instant in the solution of potassium dichromate or of formalin, in order to render the glue, after drying and exposure to the sun, wholly unaffected by moisture. If preferred, these solutions may be put on with a brush. When the filled container is completely dry, the edges are placed in a thin layer of melted hard paraffin and quickly removed. On cooling, the excess of paraffin is carefully scraped off, and the binding-strips are then applied. The prepared container is now ready for installation in any exhibition-case. Its contents are proof against invasion by moisture or any museum pests. In the very few instances where insects have been subsequently detected in the container, a small hole was made in one side of the wood, and a little carbon disulphide or chloroform thrown in by a medicine-dropper, and then the hole was closed by a bit of soft wax. In no case has it been found necessary to repeat the dose.

When the specimen is a powder which it is desired to show in a thin layer, it has been found well to proceed in a different manner. First, a flat cell is made by cementing with glue the thinnest strips of wood, on all four sides, and then drying the whole. Into this cell the powder can be put in a perfectly even layer, and then covered carefully by the other slide.

Among the advantages which this easy method possesses are the following,—economy of material, absence of distorting refractions of the container, a convenient tablet form for any exhibition-case, and a free space for labelling. To these advantages may be added the slighter but not unimportant ones; exposure of both sides of the specimen, and security against damage when used as a hand-specimen for class-work. When the container is filled and finished, the whole work and the materials used in construction have together cost less than unsatisfactory bottles.

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