cept that the brand found on the American market contains acetphenetidin in place of the acetanilid which still persists in the product sold in Great Britain.

While for a long time this nostrum was presumably to be advertised to physicians only, it is now openly advertised directly to the public by samples, and circulars sent broadcast through the mails.

COMMENTS.

The above are brief statements of bald facts. Two of these facts should be emphasized: (1) When the Food and Drugs Act went into force, January, 1907, the manufacturers of Antikamnia, rather than acknowledge the truth of the past—we can imagine no other reason—materially and radically changed the composition of their preparation, and did this without notifying the medical profession or intimating in any way, so far as we can learn, that such a change had been made. We have no doubt they believed they had a right to do as they pleased with their own; that it was nobody's business but theirs what they did with their own preparation, or how they changed it. As they never had told physicians what it contained, there was no reason why they should do so now. This is logical, and we can not blame the manufacturers so long as the medical profession is willing to be humbugged. (2) For the same reason, we presume, they claim that they have a right to continue to use acetanilid in the product for the foreign market. The Food and Drugs Act applies only to the United States, of course, and acetanilid being cheaper, why not use it? What is the difference if one is more dangerous than the other? The fact that the Antikamnia sold abroad differs from that sold in this country some may say is of no special interest to us. Still this fact is worth noting: The dose of acetphenetidin—phenacetin—(7½ grains) is nearly double that of acetanilid (4 grains); one becoming accustomed to a certain dosage of the nostrum as sold in this country might, while abroad, unwittingly be led to take a double dose of acetanilid.

When the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry was first established, some proprietary manufacturers indignantly declared that there was no necessity for the investigation of their products. With one voice they insisted that "the honor and reputation of their firms was sufficient guarantee" of the integrity of their products. It is sad to relate that their position was endorsed by several of our supposedly reputable medical journals whose editors were so imposed on that they indignantly refused to believe that there could be any deception or dishonesty in the methods of the firms which had for so many years advertised in and (incidentally) supported their journals.

We leave our readers to draw further conclusions from the above facts. Possibly the opinion of the Antikamnia company is correct; possibly they have a right to misrepresent, as we have shown they have misrepresented. Can it be possible that some of our prominent medical journals, edited and supported by members of our profession, believe this and are willing to continue as co-partners and profit by fraud and deception?

Correspondence

Sudden Deaths Following the Use of Diphtheria Antitoxin.

[The attention of the Surgeon-General of the U. S. Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service was called to the three deaths* following the use of diphtheria antitoxin, and he was asked if any investigation of the antitoxin used had been made by the Service. The following is Surgeon-General Wyman's reply]:

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 30, 1908.

To the Editor:—I desire to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of January 25, referring to recent reports appearing in THE JOURNAL of fatalities following the use of diphtheria antitoxin, inclosing report of another case from Dr. E. L. Boone, New Martinsville, W. Va., and requesting to be in-

formed if the service has made any investigations in relation thereto.

In reply, I have to state that samples of serum of the same laboratory number and issued by the same manufacturer were received from Dr. Wiley of Norristown, Pa., who reported the fatal case in THE JOURNAL, Jan. 4, 1908. These samples were examined in the Hygienic Laboratory and found to be sterile, so far as bacterial contamination is concerned, and further, to contain no toxic substance for guinea-pigs or mice. Some of this serum was injected into guinea-pigs and subcutaneously into mice. Steps have also been taken to secure samples of the serum used in the cases reported from Cuba, N. Y., and New Martinsville, W. Va.

It is evident, from the examinations made thus far, that this serum was not contaminated, and this case in all probability is an example in man of hypersusceptibility to horse serum which can easily be induced in animals by spaced injections of horse serum. The phenomenon of hypersusceptibility has received very careful study in the Hygienic Laboratory during the past two years in connection with the examination of serums provided for in the law of July 1, 1902, and it can positively be stated that diphtheria antitoxin plays no part in the poisonous action of horse serum, and is itself harmless. The detailed results of these investigations have been published in Hygienic Laboratory Bulletins Nos. 29 and 36.

The symptoms following spaced injections of horse serum in animals are very characteristic, and indicate that the poisonous principle has a powerful influence on the respiratory centers. Paralysis of the respiratory centers is shown by the fact that respiration in fatal cases ceases long before the heart stops beating. Similar symptoms were reported in the human cases under consideration, and the patients were in all probability sensitized, in some as yet unknown way to horse serum. It is significant that two of the patients reported were afflicted with asthma, which disease is regarded as a neurosis. The results in these cases, and one other, of which the bureau has knowledge, may furnish important clinical information to the effect that antitoxin should not be used, or only with caution, in persons with asthma, or subject to asthmatic attacks.

WALTER WYMAN, Surgeon-General.

Medical Journals and Nostrum Advertising.

WARREN, PA., Jan. 18 1908.

To the Editor:—I canceled my subscription to the *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* because of the advertisement of Antikamnia and other fraudulent preparations, and Messrs. Lea & Co. sent me the following significant reply:

LEA BROTHERS & CO.,

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 24, 1907.

Dr. M. V. Ball, Warren, Pa.

Dear Sir:

The insertion of the advertisement to which you take exception does not, we believe, interfere in any shape, form or manner with the quality of the text pages of the *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, and it would seem to us a pity that you should deprive yourself of the continued services of an old friend, simply because you dislike the methods of a single advertiser. It was not so long ago since the most ethical of the weekly medical journals gladly inserted this advertisement and others of its kind, and as we have had a contract with the advertiser in question for many years, we do not think ourselves more justified to-day in declining to accept the advertisement than we did when we first made a contract with our friend.

In accordance with your instructions we have stopped your subscription, but we confess that we do so with the utmost reluctance, and we venture to hope that you will regard the matter from a more philosophical light and instruct us to continue to send you a journal for which you have, no doubt, a very high esteem.

Yours faithfully,

LEA BROTHERS & Co.

In other words, the publishers of this highly reputable journal have learned nothing in the last three years from all that

* See also editorial on the same subject.