

Medical News in the Daily Press.

CHICAGO, Dec. 24, 1906.

To the Editor:—In the foreign departments of the *Tribune* and the *Record-Herald*, Chicago, Sunday, December 23, appears a generous extract from the *Practitioner* of London, cabled to this country.

After reciting the threatened epidemic of influenza a number of medical authorities are quoted on the subject, several of whom refer to the death of the victim through heart failure, without any reference whatever to the most probable cause of this heart failure, namely, the promiscuous taking of acetanilid and other preparations.

Among other authorities quoted, Sir William Broadbent is reported as having found quinin to be the best remedy. His usual prescription is "one drachm of ammoniated quinin and two drachms of liquor ammonia acetatis every hour for three hours, and then every four hours" (sic). Many readers of the papers are already curious to know about ammoniated quinin and are making inquiries in the pharmacies. Of course there is no such thing, but some one will probably be taking quinin sulphate in one drachm doses every hour with serious results.

It seems that when the metropolitan newspapers can afford to have half column articles on such a subject by cable, they should at least be able to submit the same to some local medical authority in order that such "valuable" contributions may at least not do untold harm.

"Ammoniated quinin" should be the ammoniated tincture of quinin, which contains one grain of quinin sulphate to the fluidrachm in diluted alcohol with a little ammonia water, a preparation of the British Pharmacopeia. C. S. N. HALLBERG.

Dr. Taylor's Dressing After Hare-Lip Operation.

PORT HURON, MICH., Dec. 22, 1906.

To the Editor:—Under the above heading Dr. Alfred S. Taylor of New York City calls attention¹ to the use of strips of adhesive plaster crossed at a point above the nose, first used by him at the Vanderbilt clinic in 1901. He makes the statement: "So far as I know, it was an original idea."

Dr. William H. DeCamp of Grand Rapids, Mich., was the originator, I think, of this idea, and described the method in a paper read before the Michigan State Medical Society in 1886.²

I saw the method used two years later in one of the London, England, hospitals by one who had heard of Dr. DeCamp's method.

Dr. Taylor, nevertheless, should have the gratitude of the medical profession for again bringing this method to its attention, and especially for illustrating it, which is the most efficient way to cause its adoption.

It is an excellent device which should not be overlooked or forgotten. I can vouch for it by my own experience.

C. B. STOCKWELL.

The Venereal Peril.

DAVENPORT, IOWA, Dec. 24, 1906.

To the Editor: In referring favorably to the "Circular of Warning" recently issued by the Scott County, Iowa, Medical Society, you say: "It would be better if the German plan, to which we referred some time ago, were adopted and leaflets prepared separately for circulation among the two sexes."

Can this view be rationally sustained? As a graduate of a coeducational college I am firmly convinced of the underlying truth that each sex is greatly benefited by sharing the viewpoint of the other; and this, I believe, is especially true as to education in sexual matters. Each needs to know the dangers of license, not only to his own sex but to the other as well; and all the better if each knows that the other is informed. This is not to say, however, that the one circular, one book or one lecture should come to each in the presence of the other.

In other ways our circular might be greatly improved, no doubt. Indeed it has already been slightly revised in view of its possible adoption elsewhere. As to the advisability of separate leaflets we are open to conviction. C. H. PRESTON.

1. THE JOURNAL A. M. A., vol. xlvii, 1906, p. 2091.

2. Trans. Mich. State M. S., 1886, p. 186.

Pharmacology

Relations Between Druggists and Physicians in Baltimore.

The druggists of Baltimore have addressed a circular letter to the physicians of that city, calling attention to the promising signs of an increase of friendly relations between the two professions and emphasizing the need of coöperation. With the letter is enclosed a sample of an official douche powder, Pulv. antisepticus (N. F.), intended to be used in cases in which boric acid alone will not serve the purpose. It is inexpensive and can be obtained from any druggist in quantities to suit. In subsequent letters attention will be called to ungt. resorcini comp. (N. F.), elixir gentian. glycerinati (N. F.), and other preparations of the National Formulary and the United States Pharmacopeia, usually the ones selected being those that are offered to take the place of certain advertised proprietaries. Such movements as this promise much for the advance of pharmacy and the establishment of cordial relations between physicians and druggists. It is well recognized that pharmacy as a special branch of medicine has made great advances and the physician need not be ashamed to admit his ignorance of many things about drugs which he can profitably learn from the educated pharmacist.

Method of Introducing New Preparations.

The report of a case of poisoning by purgen (phenolphthalein) is the occasion for some pertinent observations by Dr. G. Brach as to the proper introduction of such remedies to the medical profession (*Zeitschrift für Medizinbeamte*, Abst. in *Apotheker-Zeitung*, No. 59, 1906). He agrees with Best that all such remedies should first receive a thorough trial in an institution subject to state supervision, before they are advertised to the medical profession, so that their harmlessness in appropriate doses may be ascertained by a method free from liability to error. The manner in which the manufacturers introduced purgen to the profession and to the laity is to be condemned, and probably led to the symptoms of poisoning exhibited in the case of Dr. Best and tends to discredit a remedy which is harmless and efficient if used in proper doses. The manufacturer of such a preparation is inclined, for obvious reasons, to put the dose of his preparation much too high. The most important point, however, is the objectionable character of the names given to such articles. The organic compound phenolphthalein has been known for a long time and has been widely used as an indicator. Accidentally it was discovered that phenolphthalein possessed laxative properties and thereon it was proposed (1901) as a medicine under the name "purgen." It is sold in tablets containing 0.05, 0.1 and 0.5 grain phenolphthalein mixed with sugar and flavored with vanilla. The author says: "But it is very desirable—and I regard this as the most important part of my communication—that phenolphthalein should be received into the materia medica under its own name. The addition of vanilla and sugar and the designation as "purgen" by the manufacturers is to the highest degree superfluous and the arbitrary dosage in three strengths with the ridiculous designations 'baby,' 'for adults,' 'for patients confined to bed,' are merely calculated to prejudice the physician who is accustomed to individualize in his prescriptions, against a remedy which is in itself an excellent one." (See also Queries and Minor Notes, page 70.)

New Belgian Pharmacopeia.

Some of the peculiarities of the new edition of this work are described by Fl. Vecray, in the *Gazette med. Belge*, Oct. 25, 1906. Granules of active principles each containing 1 mgr. must be white and sugar coated. Granules may be prepared under another title and coated with silver. The pharmacopeia recognizes the chlorhydrate of morphin as the official salt of this alkaloid and directs that it shall be dispensed whenever the sulphate or acetate is prescribed. Similarly the nitrate of strychnin must be dispensed in place of the sulphate because the former is stable while the latter loses five molecules of water of crystallization on exposure to the air.

A formula is given for artificial Carlsbad salt which is identical with that given in the National Formulary under the