

which has been and still is the atomic theory, hence the present is the Period of the Chemical Atomic Theory. The dependence of chemistry on pharmacy and medicine—at one time pharmacy was the only road to the study of pure chemistry—ceased, and chemistry became an indispensable aid to practically the whole range of natural science. The history of the birth and development of the atomic theory and of organic chemistry is traced in an interesting manner and with considerable minuteness. In the latter half of the work is given the special history of the various branches of modern chemistry, outgrowths of an ever increasing specialization.

To physicians this work recommends itself strongly for various reasons. First of all is the great value of genuine historical study for the understanding of general chemistry, the increasing and fundamental importance of which to medicine is evident to all. And then the historical relations between medicine and chemistry seem to make the history of chemistry attractive on medico-historical grounds as well. Many of the brightest pages in the history of chemistry are written by physicians: Paracelsus, Van Helmont, Stahl, Black, Berzelius—"the brilliant model for ages to come"—and others. Finally von Meyer's work recommends itself because of its style and form; taking it all in all, it is a book of rare educational value.

**PHYSICAL CHEMISTRY in the Service of Medicine.** Seven addresses. By W. Pauli. Authorized translation by M. H. Fischer. First edition. Cloth. Pp. 156. Price, \$1.25 net. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1907.

It is a pleasure to observe that publishers find encouragement to put books of this character on the market with ever increasing frequency, for it indicates a healthy growth in the number of physicians who are endeavoring to keep abreast of the progress of the sciences fundamental to medicine. Fischer has translated a collection of seven lectures by Pauli, each of which represents a general summary of the relation of recent studies in physical chemistry to various aspects of biology and medicine. They make no pretense to a systematic consideration of physical chemistry, or even of the relation of physical chemistry to the problems selected for discussion, but rather select certain features which are of interest because of the definite progress recently made or because of special application to medical problems. Consequently the reader needs at least an elementary knowledge of the principles of physical chemistry in order to follow the author intelligently, although most of the elementary principles are brought out at one place or another in the book. One is impressed with the idea that Pauli's lectures have their greatest value as supplementary reading to such a work as Cohen's "Physical Chemistry for Physicians," which the same translator rendered into English a few years ago. This smaller, more recent book generalizes the principles elucidated by Cohen, and brings the subject of the relation of physical chemistry to medicine well up to date. The physician will find particularly interesting and suggestive material in the lectures on the therapeutic studies on ions, and on the relation between physico-chemical properties and medicinal effects. The translator has succeeded unusually well in transforming the shades of meaning, so delicately carried in the German original, into idiomatic English; the work being free from the abnormal construction so commonly seen in translations from the German.

**SAUNDERS' POCKET MEDICAL FORMULARY**, with an Appendix, Containing Posological Table: Formulas and Doses for Hypodermic Medication; Poisons and their Antidotes; etc. By W. M. Powell, M.D. Eighth edition, thoroughly revised, enlarged and adapted to the eighth revision (1905) of the U. S. Pharmacopeia. Flexible Morocco. Pp. 299. Price, \$1.75 net. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1906.

This new edition of a standard work introduces in its prescriptions the more important of the recently discovered drugs. The revision in accordance with the new Pharmacopeia, the blank interleaves for additional formulæ, the variety of emergency information, the convenient pocket-book form, and the numerous prescriptions signed with the names of prominent practitioners will gain new friends for this valued *vade mecum*.

**PARAFFIN IN SURGERY.** A Critical and Clinical Study. By W. H. Lockett, B.S., M.D., Attending Surgeon, Harlem Hospital, and Frank I. Horn, M.D., Assistant Surgeon Mt. Sinai Hospital Dispensary, New York City. With thirty-eight illustrations. Cloth. Pp. 118. Price, \$2.00. New York: Surgery Publishing Company, 1907.

The indications and contraindications for the use of paraffin in surgery are discussed in detail. The literature on the subject has been drawn on and supplemented by the clinical and experimental experiences of the authors. The application of paraffin injections in the treatment of hernia and their value for cosmetic purposes in saddle-nose deformity are shown by means of illustrated case reports.

## Correspondence

### A Migratory Shingle Nail.

OGDEN, UTAH, Feb. 25, 1907.

*To the Editor:*—I have followed with interest the recent symposium in THE JOURNAL relating to the migrating needle, and now that about every one who cares to has told his story, I venture to obtrude with one that is authentic. A few years ago I was attending a convalescing patient for whom I ordered chicken broth. During the preparation of the chicken it was discovered that the liver, normal in every other way, was transfixed by a common nail some two or three inches long, usually called a shingle nail. It was not a modern wire nail, but one of the old-fashioned cut affairs. The nail was situated about the anatomical center of the liver and protruded equally on each side of that organ. The indications seemed to be that the nail had been in place a long time. The nail was of a bright iron color, as if it had just been made, perfectly fitted the clean-cut mortise and was surrounded, even with the surface of the liver, by a rectangular collar, which was hyaloid in character, bluishly translucent and very hard. It was indeed a curiosity, and after it was shown for some time to the local fraternity and others, I sent it to the Smithsonian Institution, where it still remains.

A. S. CONDON, M.D.

### "Alcohol in Official Preparations."

ST. LOUIS, Feb. 24, 1907.

*To the Editor:*—A letter in THE JOURNAL, February 9, page 535, by Dr. George Homan, on the above subject, interests me. The statements regarding the dangers from the use of alcohol in medicinal preparations when not necessary, are very much to the point. Adding his views to the many others recently expressed, it seems that the time has really come to curtail the employment of alcohol as far as practicable.

Speaking pharmaceutically, I would call the prescriber's attention to the fact that the U. S. Pharmacopeia and the National Formulary as now constituted offer the choice of so many non-alcoholic liquid medicines that it is scarcely ever necessary to have to resort to those containing even small quantities of alcohol. Those containing objectionable amounts could be ignored and would never be missed.

The entire therapeutics of the Pharmacopeia and the National Formulary must be dictated by the medical profession, and I trust that many more medical writers and practitioners will take sufficient interest in the matter, so that future pharmacopeias and formularies, when issued, will be recognized as their standards in practice.

A vehicle similar to aromatic elixir but containing no alcohol can be had by physicians for the asking: Anise, cinnamon and fennel waters are now official; if needed, coriander, lemon and orange waters can be added. Any and all of these mix clear with simple, orange or any other syrup or with glycerin. Pharmaceutically, it is an easy matter to make similar amendments all down the line. All we pharmacists want to know is: What does the physician require?

I would advocate standard elixirs, syrups and the other elegant pharmaceuticals of the National Formulary and U. S.