

7. Mrs. P., first pregnancy, full period. Returned home after midnight from a large dinner party, at which she had partaken of a variety of dishes and wines, and had been seated near a large fire. Labor came on at 4, A. M., and soon after she became incoherent, and said she felt her teeth falling out of her head. On attempting to drink some warm tea, she bit a large piece from the edge of the China cup, and crushed it between her teeth. Violent convulsions immediately followed. Copious venesection and an enema gave no relief. In an hour and a half the head of the child was within reach of the forceps, and it was applied, and the child was soon extracted alive. Although every precaution was taken to prevent any injury being inflicted on the mother during the time the head was being extracted, the perineum was extensively lacerated, from the impossibility of retaining her an instant in the same position. She died at 11, A. M. The child lives.

Of forty cases, in none did anything but mischief result from the use of the instrument before the greater part of the head had passed through the brim of the pelvis, and the orifice of the uterus was fully dilated. In no case was the employment of the forceps advantageous where the blades were applied and locked with great difficulty, and great force required to extract the head of the child. The lives of eleven children were saved, which otherwise must have been sacrificed, out of the forty-two, by the forceps, and the death of only three of the mothers can be referred to its injudicious use. Sixteen, however, suffered more or less severely from laceration, and sloughing of the perineum, vagina, bladder and rectum. By a little more caution most of these bad consequences might have been altogether obviated.—*Dr. Lee's Clinical Reports on Midwifery.*

REMARKS ON SOME PHARMACEUTICAL PREPARATIONS OF LOBELIA INFLATA.

BY W. PROCTER, JR.

THE only preparation of lobelia inflata which has been recognized by the Pharmacopœia, is the tincture. It has been generally admitted, both by Thomsonians and others, that heat exercises an injurious influence on the activity of this plant, and hence preparations in which heat is requisite have been necessarily dispensed with. In some observations of a chemical character on this plant, published in the thirteenth volume of the Journal of Pharmacy, the writer demonstrated several of the conditions under which this change by heat takes place, and showed that while the active principle in a free state was readily destroyed by heat, when it was in saline combination with an acid, it was capable of being subjected to a heat of 212 degrees Fahr., without injury.

Any one may be satisfied of this, by making two decoctions of lobelia, into one of which a small quantity of carbonate of potassa is thrown, and into the other as much acetic acid. The former will possess none of the peculiar acrimony of the plant; the latter, all.

The object of this communication is to take advantage of the above

suggestion in making several pharmaceutical preparations which require heat in the formation. It is believed that lobelia inflata has yet to receive from professional men that share of attention which it deserves, and it is hoped by presenting to the practitioner the virtues of the plant in a condensed form, that he will take up the subject.

Acetous Extract of Lobelia inflata.—Take of lobelia seed, bruised, eight ounces; diluted alcohol, four pints; acetic acid, one fluid ounce. Macerate the bruised seed in the diluted alcohol, to which the acetic has been added, for forty-eight hours, then throw the whole on a displacement filter, and after the liquid has ceased to pass, add sufficient diluted alcohol, that four pints of tincture shall be obtained. Evaporate this by means of a water bath, until it attains the consistence of an extract. The product thus obtained is about one eighth of the seed employed. In this form (as a pill) lobelia can be administered without that peculiar disagreeable effect upon the fauces, so characteristic of its exhibition in the form of tincture.

Vinegar of Lobelia inflata.—Take of lobelia, in powder, four ounces; diluted acetic acid or distilled vinegar, a pint and a half. Macerate the lobelia in the dilute acid, for twelve hours, and subject it to displacement on a proper filter, until twenty-four fluid ounces are obtained.

Syrup of Lobelia inflata.—Take of vinegar of lobelia, six fluid ounces; sugar, twelve ounces. Dissolve the sugar in the vinegar by the aid of heat, remove the scum which rises, and strain.

The oxymel may be prepared from the vinegar in the same manner as oxymel of squills; and a combination of the two has been highly spoken of by a physician of this city, in catarrhal affections.

In making an infusion of lobelia, some acid—vinegar, for instance—should always be added.—*Amer. Jour. of Pharmacy.*

HYDRARGYRUM CUM CRETA.

BY JAMES HAMILTON, M.D., BALTIMORE.

THIS medical preparation has fallen into partial disuse by the physician for some time past, in consequence of not fulfilling the indications in which it is often prescribed. It had been frequently observed that, when administered in the diseases of children, in which, from its nature, or perhaps from former use, it was deemed particularly applicable, instead of producing the effect of a mild antacid and alterative, violent continued emesis has been the result, to the risk of the patient and the confusion of the physician. Occasionally another variety of it would have the most delightful effect, and unaccompanied by any emetic property; but in consequence of the risk incurred in producing violent action in very young children, and the comparative uncertainty of its operation, this invaluable preparation is now seldom prescribed, and in lieu of it the pil-hydrargyri with carb. calcis. generally substituted. Of the merit of the latter combination it is not proposed to say aught, but simply to state facts as they have occurred in relation to the hydrargyrum cum creta in numerous instances.