ficial. There would then be a competition among them; not, as at present, to lower the standard of education and examination in order to sell their diplomas; but a competition among them to raise their standard, so that candidates, who would afterwards have to undergo the test examination, would seek the body that, by affording high education and examination, insured to its graduates or licentiates the best security for passing the test examination.

The good effects I should hope to see from such a plan as I have sketched would be, first, the advantage to the public of having well educated practitioners for the medical care of all classes, poor and rich; secondly, benefit to the profession itself by the exclusion of ignorant and incompetent persons, who, now, entering into competition for public appointments with the well informed, lower the rate of payment for all. Such persons would henceforward find their own level in other pursuits requiring less education and less knowledge than ours.

I am not wedded to details. I see the present state of the law is injurious to the profession and to the public. I give you the thoughts that have arisen in my mind, after some years of close attention to the working of the present laws. I feel how important it is that the next session of Parliament should not come upon us unprepared. My views may be wrong in some particulars, or in all, but I shall be well satisfied if the observations I have made here to-day awake your attention to the subject, for then from you will come a brighter light to guide us on our way. Mainly to you, and to our own Irish Association in conjunction with you, I now look for the intelligence and energy that will bring forth a measure good for the public and good for the profession, for the true interests of both are and ought ever to be identical.

REMARKS ON THE NEW FRENCH CODEX.*

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THE previous remarks on this work referred to the materia medica of the *Codex*, and the simple preparations contained in it. The following will relate to the compounds which have received the stamp of official recognition. It is doubtful, however, whether admission into the *Codex* implies of itself approbation; for, in the preface, a kind of apology for some of the preparations appears to be intended by the remark that "the *Codex*—the guardian of tradition—reproduces ancient empirical prescriptions, to which custom has assigned a place, as well as the most recent acquisitions from chemistry, and also the active principles of plants, etc."

The most striking feature of the compound preparations is their great complexity, the number of ingredients that enter into them, and their discordant composition in some instances. The most notorious example of this is the old-fashioned Theriaca, which consists of 61 ingredients, of the following characters: 1 drastic purgative, and 2 mild ones; 3 astringents; 3 turpentine, and 2 emmenagogues; 1 nauseating, and 9 bitter expectorants; 9 antispasmodics, and 1 opiate; 28 carminatives, aromatics, tonics, and stimulants; dried vipers; and sherry wine. It would, however, be very unfair to represent this as an average sample of the compounds in the *Codex*; for it is generally evident at a glance what is the prevailing character of the ingredients, though their number is much greater than we are accustomed to. In turning over the pages at random, and counting the ingredients as the formulæ presented themselves, there were 19, 11, 8, 9, 12, 5, 7, 6, 8, 11, in the different formulæ counted.

The large number of comparatively mild forms of medicine, such as Tisanes and Syrups, and their dilute condition, is an important feature in the *Codex*; for, whilst our Infusions and Decoctions, which correspond most nearly with the Tisanes, generally contain from half an ounce to an ounce of the active ingredient in the pint of water, the corresponding Tisane (e.g., gentian) contains only about forty grains to the pint, and that of senega contains a drachm and a half only to the pint. Our own list of Syrups consists of fifteen only, whilst there are about a hundred in the *Codex*; and, whilst our own list contains six or eight for the sake of their colour or flavour alone, the *Codex* contains about a score, including raspberry vinegar, syrup of red currants, of peach-flowers, orange-flowers, red poppy, and the like. Many of the remainder contain potent drugs, which we exclude on principle from a class of medicines so liable as Syrups to be taken incautiously. These are, prussic acid; the salts of morphia; strychnia; digitalis; belladonna; henbane, and even aconite. The proportion, however, of these active ingredients is so small, that the usual dose of each syrup is a tablespoonful; so that the risk of taking an over-dose is not very great.

The alcoholic preparations are puzzling from their number and the numerous titles given to them, which closely resemble each other.

Alcools, or medicines obtained by the action of alcohol on various substances, chiefly vegetable; *Alcoolats*, or what we generally term "spirits", viz., preparations obtained by distilling spirits from various substances, such as mint, lavender, etc., containing a volatile principle; and *Alcoolatures*, the term employed when fresh plants are employed for making *Alcools*,—are so much alike in sound, and in their derivation from alcohol, as to possess no distinctive characters in their names for the British physician. Amongst the *Alcoolats* is included "eau de Cologne" under its ordinary name.

Another well-known substance, "Cold Cream", is also introduced by its popular title into the *Codex*; and Court Plaster also has its place amongst the "Sparadraps", but it is under such a variety of names that it is at first difficult to recognise its identity. "Sparadraps de Colle de Poisson", "Taffetas d'Angleterre", and "Sericum Anglicum", do not at once recall this familiar substance to the mind.

Throughout the *Codex*, we meet with what is really a characteristic feature; viz., the constant introduction of formulæ under the names of their proposers, without any indication in their title as to their composition. Thus we have "Sydenham's White Decoction"; "Weiss' Whey"; "Tisane Royale"; "Sydenham's Laudanum"; "Rousseau's Laudanum"; "Fioravanti's Balsam", which contains seventeen different resins and other ingredients; "Pills of Bontius"; "Dinner Pills"; "Regent's Pomatum"; "Dessault's Pomatum"; and so on. In some cases, there is a synonyme which gives a hint as to the composition; but this is decidedly the exception, rather than the rule.

Under the article "Pills", the *Codex* has adopted the plan which is said to have been proposed for adoption in our own *Pharmacopæia*, but rejected by the Committee. It has ordered the weight of each pill in nearly every instance; and this is generally less than what we are accustomed to prescribe; for the large majority are under four grains in weight, whilst ours frequently, even if they do not generally, exceed this standard. They are also very frequently directed to be silvered; and to be covered with a gelatinous or resinous solution, which, when dry, will protect them from the air. The great care and minuteness of the directions for this purpose are best illustrated in the Pills of Protoxide of Iron, the formula and instructions for making them occupying an entire page of the work. After the mass has been made, it is to be divided into so many pills, which are immediately to be shaken up in iron filings reduced to an impalpable powder: and they are then to be covered by a saturated solution of mastic and balsam of tolu in ether. Lastly, they are to be dried, and kept in bottles hermetically sealed. From the weight and composition of these pills, we derive something like an authoritative opinion as to the doses to be employed in France; and, estimated by this test, we find that gr. 14 of aloes, gr. 3-4ths of cambo, gr. 1-14th of arsenious acid, gr. 1-7th of muriate of morphia, gr. 3-4ths of iodide of iron, gr. 1-7th of corrosive sublimate, and gr. 1-3rd of extract of opium, are the doses for French prescriptions.

Amongst the Pills is a formula which is ordered to be kept in all shops, that might be usefully introduced into our own *Pharmacopæia*; viz., Compound Hyoscyamus and Valerian Pill. It contains equal parts of extract of hyoscyamus, extract of valerian, and oxide of zinc—a combination which at present we could not obtain, as the *British Pharmacopæia* does not possess an alcoholic extract of valerian, which is a preparation held in favour in the *Codex*.

Our remarks would extend too far, if the whole work were analysed in a similar manner to the above; and we must, therefore, content ourselves with observing that the "*Sucs*" of the *Codex* do not at all resemble the "*Succi*" of the *British Pharmacopæia*. They are merely the juices of various succulent fruits, etc., pressed out and filtered through paper for the subsequent formation of such preparations as Raspberry Vinegar, Syrup of Lemons, Syrup of Cherries, of Horseradish, and the like.

The Artificial Mineral Waters require a passing comment, to observe that they do not profess to be more than a rough imitation of the natural ones; for no Iodides or Bromides are introduced into any of the Artificial Waters, even though they may be known to be present in the natural ones, because "the *Codex* contains several preparations for the administration of these active medicines with greater security and in more accurate doses than can be attained in such compounds as mineral waters, which are taken *ad libitum*."

With a few comments upon preparations having nearly the same names that we are familiar with, but differing so much in strength or composition as to require notice, we shall conclude our remarks on the French *Codex*.

Laudanum is twice introduced by name into the *Codex*; and there is also a Tincture of Extract of Opium. But none of them correspond with our tinctures; for they contain respectively one-seventh, one-eighth, and one-fourth of their weight of opium, instead of the proportion of one grain in about fifteen minims of our tincture.

* Continued from page 766 of last volume.

The Syrup of White Poppies is not made from poppy-heads at all, but contains, instead, a small proportion of extract of opium (gr. 1-4th in an ounce of the syrup). The Medicinal Prussic Acid of the *Codex* contains 10 per cent. of anhydrous acid, and is, therefore, five times as strong as our own. Tincture of Aconite is made from the leaves, not the root, of the aconite, and is so much weaker than our own, that the Syrup of Aconite contains one-tenth of its weight of the Tincture; and the *Codex* states that the dose is a tablespoonful, which corresponds, therefore, with above twenty minims of the Tincture.

Syrup of Rhubarb (compound) contains chicory, fumitory and harts-tongue, alkongeni, cinnamon, and sandal wood; and is, therefore, a very different compound from what is commonly prepared in this country; and Confection of Senna contains barley, polypody, harts-tongue, mercurialis, and jujubes, in addition to the ingredients present in our own. Lastly, all the preparations of Cinchona are styled preparations of Quinquina in the *Codex*; so that *Syrup de Quinquina* and *Tincture de Quinquina* mean Syrup and Tincture of the Bark, not Solutions of the Alkaloid Quinine in Syrup and in Spirit. The favourite English prescription of Tincture of Quinine, if written simply Tinct. Quin., is, therefore, almost certain to be wrongly dispensed in Paris, as the *Codex* contains no tincture of the alkaloid itself.

In summing up our impressions as a prescriber of the work now issued to rule French pharmacy for some years to come, we cannot too strongly regret the inexplicable want of arrangement, which renders it most difficult for reference; and its unnecessary size, which is a serious obstacle to its employment. The great preponderance of the vegetable over the mineral materia medica commends itself to our judgment, which inclines more and more in this direction with increasing experience; and the dilute condition of many of the preparations—the Tisanes, the Apozems, and the Syrups—is also beneficial to the patient; as a small dose of a medicine in a liquid form acts more mildly and efficiently when well diluted, than when given in too concentrated a state. The tendency of British practice has long been to obtain active principles and compact forms of medication; but it is doubtful whether our neighbours do not show their practical wisdom by retaining the small dose and the copious dilution, as illustrated by this work.

The excessive multiplication of remedies of the same general character renders it impossible to carry them all in the memory; but each practitioner will make his own selection for use, and dismiss nine-tenths of the materia medica from his thoughts.

The elegance shown in many of the preparations might advantageously be introduced more generally amongst ourselves, especially by enlarging the list of our syrups, and by the more frequent employment of benzoated lard in our ointments.

The multiplicity of ingredients in the compound formulæ is a greater objection to the pharmacist than to the prescriber; for, although such preparations as *Baume Tranquille*, with its score of ingredients, and *Theriaca*, with its three score, find no place in our regard, there are others which combine numerous diuretics, laxatives, or carminatives, with which we can find no real fault, except the trouble of preparing them, and the bulky vessels requisite for the operation. But, upon the whole, we lay down the work with a feeling of relief, and with little desire to see its principal features reproduced in our own *Pharmacopœia*.

THE GAS-CAUTERY OF NELATON.

By HOLMES COOTE, Esq., F.R.C.S.,

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I BEG leave to call attention to the advantages gained by the use of the gas-cautery in the treatment of cancerous ulcerations of the skin. These cancerous deposits, which commence in the form of soft warts, soon pass into the ulcerative stage, when they spread slowly, attended with great pain, until they involve the neighbouring structures. The face is a very common situation, where the evils attendant on the progress are much aggravated by the fact that the features become involved, and deformity ensues. All surgeons have met with cases in which, from a variety of causes, the use of the knife is inadmissible.

The gas-cautery possesses these advantages: it chars the surfaces acted on to any amount, and the pain soon subsides when the flame is removed; unlike the action of the Vienna paste, the chloride of zinc, etc., the action is very speedy, and seems to exert a marked influence in arresting the progress of the cancerous ulceration; the destruction of the cancerous surface is followed, after each application, by a most marked contraction and diminution of size, and this contraction seems the first stage towards recovery.

The use of the gas-flame is best where a general and powerful effect is required. Mr. Bruce's platinum point is useful where a limited and delicate application of the cautery is indicated, such as in operations about the eyelids.

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 10TH, 1867.

THE DUBLIN MEETING.

DUBLIN has been fairly taken by storm, and has given itself up with the most hearty hospitality to its invited invaders. The colleges, halls, and museums of the fair city receive with open doors the busy army of English and Scottish friends. They are received into the homes of their Dublin brethren, and welcomed with the most earnest and kindly attentions which cordial hospitality can devise and cultivated and delicate courtesy can suggest. The most satisfactory arrangements having been made for the prosecution of the business, the scientific work of the session was begun at once in right earnest, and is carried on in three sections.

The highly honoured President of the Association, Dr. Stokes, struck at once a key-note of elevated tone, to which the assembled members gave a hearty response. He rightly interpreted the feeling of satisfaction with which the visit to Dublin is regarded by the profession, both in Ireland and England. We desire to have the fellowship of our professional brethren in Ireland in our scientific work, in our educational progress, in our acts of public policy, and in our discussion of professional ethics; and they reciprocate the wish. Bound to them by the ties of a common profession and a joint nationality, having the same scientific pursuits, the same social and moral aspirations and high interests, which can be advanced best by joint action, we welcome into the bonds of association with us in the great work which we have at heart, the large body of our Irish brethren who have now joined our ranks. How far this accession to our numbers may be permanent, time only can show. There need be no illusion on this subject. Of the three hundred Irish members who have joined us, a certain proportion are influenced by feelings of pure hospitality and friendship, and probably have not yet formed the resolution permanently to associate themselves in the work. We trust, however, that familiarity with the scientific energy and moral and social earnestness of the Association, as shown by the members in the pages of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, and the opportunities which they will have during the year, through these columns, of exchanging opinions, knowledge, and suggestions, of affecting professional opinion throughout Great Britain, and of receiving its reflex influence, will bind them firmly to us in that real and natural union which gives irresistible strength.

The further proceedings of the Association during the week will be reported in our next issue; and meantime we may congratulate the members that the present position of the Association is one of unprecedented prosperity and power; that we are all fully agreed that that power shall be used only for the highest purposes; and that the present meeting presents all the most desirable of the multifarious aspects of the Society in their most agreeable and satisfactory aspects.

YELLOW FEVER is making sad havoc in Indianola, Texas, and all commerce with the port has been suspended. There is not a house in the town without its case of yellow fever. In the far West, at Forts Harker and Hayes, cholera is exterminating soldiers and settlers. In the first named fort, 50 cases with 17 deaths have occurred in one day. In Arkansas cholera is killing off swarms of the negroes: one planter has lost 25 labourers in a single week.