

nearly 100 are new to science. Much interesting matter in relation to therapeutic products has also been accumulated. The author must have had great difficulty in obtaining such a mass of valuable information, and accordingly he deserves so much the more praise for his work, which indeed, we may say, is regarded by some of our best botanists as really good, thoroughly up to the mark, and as being one of the most valuable contributions that have been made to the science of botany in recent years.

REPORTS AND ANALYSES

AND

DESCRIPTIONS OF NEW INVENTIONS,

IN MEDICINE, SURGERY, DIETETICS, AND THE ALLIED SCIENCES.

PHENACETINE (BAYER).

THIS is another addition to the already long list of antipyretics of a purely chemical nature, recently discovered and introduced into medicine. "Phenacetine" is in reality a shorter name for a substance which might be more scientifically termed para-acetphenetidine. It is an acetyl compound of phenetidine; or in other words an acetyl compound of ethylic ether of paramidophenol. It is, therefore, closely allied to acetanilide or phenylacetamide, better known and generally prescribed under the name of antifebrin.

Phenacetine has been pretty extensively tried on the Continent, and Dr. G. Kobler, of Vienna, has more especially written an elaborate report upon its properties, and a record of cases upon which he has tried the new remedy. He finds that it is more effectual when given in single doses of from eight to twelve grains rather than in small doses repeated at frequent intervals, and that such a dose reduces the temperature from 3.6° to 4.5° F. He has never observed either actual vomiting or even nausea follow its employment, and certainly no symptom of cyanosis or collapse. In fact he has never seen any disagreeable or deleterious effects accompany or follow its use. Phenacetine does not seem to produce any diuretic effect, nor does it seem to irritate the already inflamed kidney, for Dr. Kobler gave it in doses of 12 to 26 grains per diem in a case of acute double pneumonia associated with acute nephritis. The amount of blood in the urine (considerable at the time of the commencement of administration of the chemical) became, if anything, less, the amount of albumen was not increased, and the patient finally made a perfectly good recovery.

A very large amount of attention has recently been given to the use of antipyretics, and there is possibly some danger of too much attention being paid to the symptom of high temperature, to the neglect of the actual disease, of which pyrexia may be only one of many manifestations. It is therefore satisfactory to note that Dr. Kobler used phenacetine "to reduce the fever temperature when it and the long duration of fever seem mischievously to affect the organization of the patient," and that in the majority of cases strongly pronounced euphoria accompanied the reduction of temperature, the patients becoming more cheerful, spontaneously stating that they felt relief, and asking for nourishment.

Dr. Kobler's results have been confirmed by other observers, Dr. Hoppe especially recommending the use of phenacetine for children, owing to its not causing any disagreeable symptoms. It has been found by Dr. Heusner to be a powerful nervine sedative and to be very useful in neuralgic affections of all kinds as well as in insomnia from overwork. In this country it has been favourably reported upon by Mr. H. Osborne (Grenfell) and it is being extensively tried throughout the country with, we believe, generally good results. So far the chief objection to its use seems to be its slight solubility in any convenient menstruum. It is manufactured by Friedr. Bayer and Co., of Elberfeld, and the English agents are Messrs. May and Baker, of Garden Wharf, Battersea.

WARNER'S PREPARATIONS: PILLS, PARVULES, AND BROMO SODA.

MESSRS. F. NEWBERRY AND SONS, of King Edward Street, E.C., as agents for Messrs. Warner and Co., of Philadelphia, have brought under our notice specimens of the above. Messrs. Newberry offer a great variety of pills and parvules made from more than 150 distinct formulæ. The pills are sugar-coated and of beautiful finish, and those we have examined are readily soluble. "Parvules" (Warner) may be defined as minute pills containing

minimum doses for frequent repetition. They are made to meet the demand of those who believe that small doses given at short intervals exert a more salutary effect than larger doses administered less frequently. The remarks we have already made with regard to the pills apply also to the parvules.

The bromo soda (with caffeine) submitted to us is an effervescent preparation; the formula is not published, but we presume it contains sodium bromide. The makers claim for this preparation that it is useful in nervous depression and similar affections, and that, as it contains sodium and not potassium compounds, it is the more acceptable to the stomach. It effervesces well, and is not unpalatable.

PODOPHYLLIN IN SCALES.

Messrs. Burgoyne, Burbidges, Cyriax, and Farries have also recently introduced a "Soluble Podophyllin in Scales." We find that this preparation is, as the manufacturers assert, soluble in water, proof spirit, and glycerine, and the aqueous solution is not unpleasant to the taste. The advantages of a reliable "soluble podophyllin" are sufficiently obvious, but we would suggest that the makers in future state the dose of their new preparation.

FLETCHER'S CONCENTRATED LIQUORS.

CONCENTRATED infusions and decoctions have long been in use, and we have now become accustomed to the employment of concentrated liquors for the preparation of syrups, but as far as we know it has only quite recently been proposed to prepare tinctures generally from concentrated solutions. Messrs. Fletcher, Fletcher, and Stevenson, of the North London Chemical Works, Holloway, whose name has been identified for a number of years with the manufacture of concentrated preparations, have submitted to our notice a number of their solutions from which tinctures and infusions can be made. They have introduced a distinct novelty in the form of those preparations which by dilution with a certain volume of spirit are converted into pharmacopœial tinctures, and by dilution with a larger volume of water become infusions or decoctions *B.P.* as the case may be. It is manifestly very convenient to have one concentrated liquor from which can be extemporaneously made either a tincture or an infusion of the drug at will. In order to attain this result the time-honoured strength of "1 in 8" cannot be maintained for the infusions, and some of the preparations are of a very high degree of concentration. Thus, "liquor jaborandi" requires dilution to twenty times its volume in order to become infusum jaborandi, while although "liquor digitalis" becomes tinctura digitalis on being diluted to eight times its bulk with proof spirit, one volume requires dilution with water to no less than 156 volumes to become infusum digitalis.

The manufacturers claim the following advantages for their concentrated preparations:—That the strength of the finished products is accurately determined in each case, and brought to *B.P.* standard; that in the method used for their manufacture the employment of heat is carefully avoided, and so all the aromatic and soluble constituents are retained; that where space is an object, as in field hospitals, ship stores, and the like, the advantages of tinctures having only one-eighth part of the usual bulk offer great and obvious advantages, and that, if the tinctures be dispensed in their concentrated form without previous dilution, seven-eighths of the cost of the spirit is saved.

We have compared tinctures, etc., made from these concentrated liquors, with similar preparations made exactly according to the *B.P.* methods, and we find that they are practically identical in character. There may have been in some cases minor differences, such as slight variations in colour, but it is very possible that these may have been caused by the fact that different specimens of the crude drugs were originally operated upon by Messrs. Fletcher and ourselves. The whole series is composed of fifty preparations. They are generally bright and permanently clear solutions. Some few, however, have a tendency to throw down deposit, notably liq. aurantii and liq. chiritæ. Messrs. Fletcher and Co. will, in the future, doubtless correct this tendency.

CORRECTION.—In the note on Mr. Cracknell's preparation of cascara sagrada in the *JOURNAL* of June 30th, after "liquidum" read "insipidum (Cracknell)."

In the recently published list of gentlemen called to the Bar appears the name of Dr. Henry Cooper Rose, of the Middle Temple, who has, however, it is stated, no intention of relinquishing the practice of the medical profession.